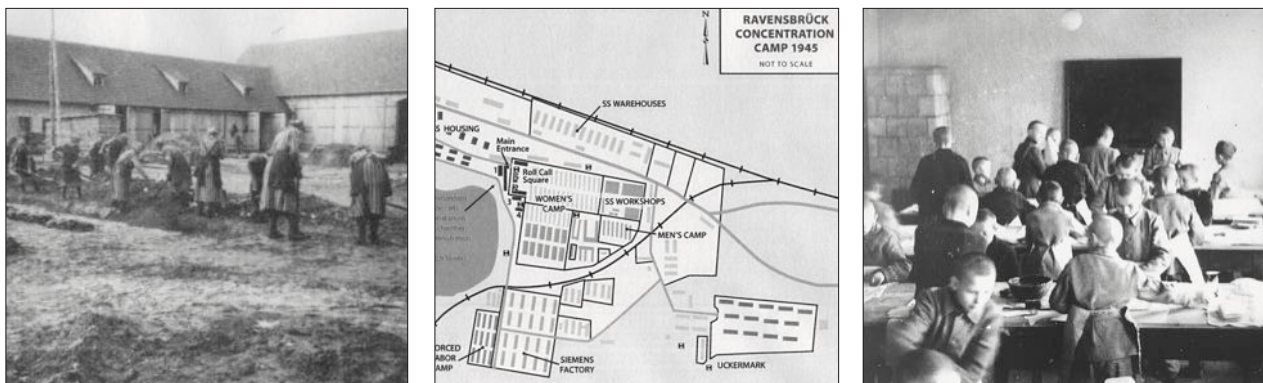


**The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**  
**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945**

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General Editor Geoffrey P. Megargee



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# Encyclopedia of CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

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## VOLUME I

Early Camps, Youth Camps, and Concentration  
Camps and Subcamps under the SS-Business  
Administration Main Office (WVHA)

### Part B

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## KRAKAU-PLASZOW



An entrance gate to Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp.  
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## KRAKAU-PLASZOW MAIN CAMP

The Krakau-Plaszow (Polish: Kraków-Płaszów) camp became the major detention place for Jewish forced laborers in the Kraków district of the General Government and only in early 1944 was transformed into a concentration camp, which then existed for 12 months. Planning for the camp started in June–July 1942, as a consequence of the mass deportation from the Krakau ghetto to the Bełżec extermination camp, which lasted until June 4.

The staff of the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) in the Kraków district, Julian Scherner, started to erect a camp in the Płaszów suburb of Kraków in October 1942.<sup>1</sup> The Płaszów train station had already served as a transit point for the deportations to Bełżec, and there was a small camp there for Jewish railway workers, the “Julag I” (Judenlager or Jews’ camp). The new camp, which several hundred ghetto inmates built, was situated nearby, partly on the site of two Jewish cemeteries. Until the spring of 1943, the camp area was approximately 10 hectares (25 acres); it was expanded to 81 hectares (200 acres) by September 1943.

The camp itself was divided into several sections, one for German personnel, including the commandant’s villa; one for the work facilities; and a section for male and another for female prisoners, each divided into separate accommodations for Jews and non-Jews. Some existing buildings were used for the camp administration, especially for SS housing. In addition, more than 100 new barracks were built in 1943. The several hundred forced laborers of the barracks construction (Barackenbau) unit worked under extremely harsh conditions, since the camp was to be erected at record speed.

Until January 1944, the camp was officially called the Jewish Forced Labor Camp of the SS and Police Leader in the Kraków District, Krakau-Plaszow (Jüdisches Zwangsarbeitslager des SS und Polizeiführer im Distrikt Krakau, Krakau-Plaszow).<sup>2</sup> Scherner’s staff was responsible for building and running the camp. All leading camp personnel belonged to the SSPF office, such as the first acting camp commandant Horst Pilarczyk (until November 1942), about whom relatively little is known, and his successor Franz Josef Müller.<sup>3</sup>



Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp's industrial sector, 1944.  
USHMM WS #08864, COURTESY OF IPN





Krakau-Plaszow prisoners haul a food container, 1943–1944.  
USHMM WS #50693, COURTESY OF LPPC/MSW

On February 11, 1943, Amon Göth took over for Müller. Göth, who transferred from the staff of the SSPF Lublin, had been involved in *Aktion Reinhardt*, the mass murder of Polish Jews. He served as camp commandant until September 13, 1944, and was replaced for some months by Philipp Grimm and then by Kurt Schuppke. Important camp administrators were Lagerführer Edmund Zdrojewski, Josef Grzimek, and the chief of the guard unit, Paul Raebel. The camp for Poles (built later) was led by Oberscharführer Landdorfer.

Most of the guards were non-Germans, such as Ukrainian members of the Schutzmannschafts-Bataillon 206 and about 110 men who had served in the SSPF Lublin training camp in Trawniki, so-called Trawniki men, some of whom had served as guards in extermination camps.<sup>4</sup> From the German perspective, these men were not considered to be reliable.<sup>5</sup> The so-called Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst, auxiliaries transferred from the Kraków ghetto, kept order inside the camp.

On October 28, 1942, during the “Ghettoaktion” in Kraków, the Germans sent approximately 2,000 ghetto inmates to Plaszow instead of exterminating them. The next major change in the prisoner population occurred during the liquidation of the Krakau ghetto on March 13–14, 1943. Between 8,000 and 10,000 Jews were marched from the so-called

ghetto B (for workers and their families) in Kraków to the camp. (In December 1942, Scherner had ordered that all Jewish workers from Kraków be concentrated in Plaszow.)<sup>6</sup> In the spring of 1943, Plaszow, with its 10,000 prisoners, was one of the biggest forced labor camps in occupied Poland. The prisoner population grew even further with transports from other camps such as Rymanów in July 1943 and Tarnów on September 2, 1943.<sup>7</sup> In September 1943, the Jewish workers in the Kraków district were increasingly concentrated in Plaszow. In May 1944, almost 6,000 Jews from “Greater Hungary,” who had been deported through Auschwitz, arrived. They stayed only for a few months, some to be deported back to Auschwitz, others to be transferred to Austria.

Up until the summer of 1943, almost all the prisoners were Jewish, but non-Jewish Poles were also interned in Plaszow as punishment for small offenses. They were put into separate barracks first; then a camp section was built for them in the second half of 1943. Apparently, this camp section also served as a work reeducation camp (*Arbeitserziehungslager*) for people whom the Nazis considered unreliable workers. Those Poles were usually imprisoned for three months, but this period could be extended. The *Arbeitserziehungslager* expanded from a capacity of 1,000 to approximately 6,000 prisoners. Almost 10,000 Poles were imprisoned there during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, among them hostages taken in Kraków to avoid any similar revolt. Most of those prisoners were released after a while. Some Gypsies were also kept in the Polish part of the camp.

In comparison to other camps, Plaszow’s inmate population included a comparatively high proportion of Jewish women and children. Among the thousands of Jews who came to Plaszow in March 1943, approximately 65 percent were men. The transports from Hungary consisted to a high degree of women. While most of the Jewish children under 14 in Poland were killed by the end of 1942, there were still some in the so-called Julag III until 1943 and in Plaszow until the spring of 1944. Female Jews had a lower chance of survival in



Female prisoners pull a rail cart along “Industry Street” inside the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp, 1943–1944.  
USHMM WS #50705, COURTESY OF LPPC/MSW

comparison to men, since most of the working facilities were meant for male prisoners.

Conditions in the forced labor camps for Jews in the General Government were generally inhumane but could vary according to camp and time. The survivors give a rather diverse picture of camp life. The food was totally insufficient, and a typhus epidemic in June–July 1943 took hundreds of lives. The working conditions varied. In the textile works, they were not nearly as bad as in the stone quarries, where male laborers were driven to total exhaustion.

The worst features of Plaszow were the mass executions and the random violence of the camp officers and guards. Beatings by guards, either spontaneous or as official acts of punishment, were an almost daily feature. Göth was infamous for individual murders. He randomly beat prisoners to death, shot them, or sent his two trained dogs to attack them. Frequently Göth had members of working detachments shot after they were apprehended smuggling food into the camp. Inmates tried to avoid any contact with Göth if possible, and they especially feared his murderous roll calls or the barrack searches. He was certainly not the only functionary to kill prisoners, however; some survivors claim that SS-Untersturmführer John behaved even worse. The foreign guards, most of them Ukrainians, were also infamous for their excessive violence.

The Plaszow camp functioned not only as a detention and forced labor site but also as an area for mass murder for both camp inmates and prisoners brought from outside to the camp area. Immediately after the March 13–14, 1943, Ghettoaktion in Kraków, the corpses of approximately 2,000 Jews were brought to the camp and interred in a mass grave. Jews later apprehended while hiding in Kraków were shot near the camp, behind the so-called swimming pool (*Badeanstalt*). Further, during the *Lageraktionen* from May to July 1943, at least 250 Jews were shot. The main targets were old and sick inmates who had been transferred from the camp hospital. In April 1943, 50 members of the Jewish police met that fate. Polish

inmates were also sometimes killed, for example, for keeping contacts with the outside world. From June–July 1943 on, the perpetrators moved their activities to a fortification from World War I, which the inmates called Hujowa Górka; from mid-1944 on, at a hill called Lipowy Dółek. The Security Police and camp personnel such as Oberscharführer Albert Hujer also murdered Poles there, including priests, who had been arrested.<sup>8</sup> These mass executions apparently started in September 1943; one of the biggest massacres took place on February 2, 1944, when 200 inmates from Kraków prison were killed. It has been calculated that approximately 2,000 non-Jewish Poles were shot near Plaszow; 2 out of 3 had been transferred from the Montelupic Security Police prison. According to Polish estimates, 3,000 to 4,000 prisoners were shot in the area surrounding the camp. By the end of 1944, there were at least 10 mass graves situated around the camp.

Resistance was much more difficult in the camp than in the ghetto. After escapes, Commandant Göth usually had about 10 prisoners shot for each 1 who escaped. Nevertheless, people did escape. Mutual aid was more common. There were even organized assistance groups, such as the *Zehnerschaft* (The Ten), women who organized support for other inmates. In October 1943, a small underground group was formed by several Jewish Kapos, calling themselves the Jewish Fighting Organization. They were able to collect some weapons, but after the murder of their leader, Adam Stab, the resisters chose not to try an uprising but to wait to be evacuated to the West.

To a certain extent, Plaszow prisoners could rely on help from outside. The *Jüdische Unterstützungsstelle*, a welfare organization that the Germans tolerated, could supply the inmates with some food and medical care. Stanislaw Dobrowolski, the head of the Kraków branch of the Council for Aid to Jews (*Rada Pomocy Żydom*, or *Żegota*), supported inmates, as did the famous pharmacist Tadeusz Pankiewicz,<sup>9</sup> the *Rada Główna Opiekuńcza*, the Polish welfare organization, sent extra food to Polish prisoners, some of whom shared it with Jewish inmates.

The camp inmates, as well as some average Polish workmen who were not imprisoned and could go home every evening, worked for several German firms, most of them for the *Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke* (German Equipment Works, DAW) of the SS, which supplied the SS with uniforms and repaired goods that had been taken from murdered Jews. The Austrian enterprise *Madritsch*, whose owner secretly supported his workers, made uniforms for the *Wehrmacht*. Some of the inmates even worked for a Nazi academic institution, the *Deutsche Ostinstitut* in Kraków.

Despite the SSPF's order not to locate Jewish workers outside Plaszow, it had several subcamps.<sup>10</sup>

Efforts to bring the forced labor camps of the SSPF under supervision of the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) in Oranienburg had been under way since early 1943. Apparently, in early September 1943, decisive negotiations were undertaken between the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF), the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), and the armaments inspectorate.<sup>11</sup> In late October, the WVHA



Krakau-Plaszow's commandant, SS-Hauptsturmführer Amon Göth, stands shirtless and armed on the balcony of his villa, which overlooked the camp, 1943.

USHMM WS #05276, COURTESY OF LPPC/MSW

decided to take over Plaszow as a concentration camp.<sup>12</sup> That is obviously one of the reasons why no major massacre of all Jews took place in the camp, unlike during the *Aktion Erntefest* in Lublin district on November 2–3, or in Lemberg-Janowska on November 19. The branches Julag II and III were dissolved around November 15, 1943, and their prisoners transferred to the main camp. Some skilled workers were sent to other forced labor camps in the General Government.

From January 10, 1944, the camp was officially called Konzentrationslager Krakau-Plaszow, but the actual changes were few. All orders now came from Oranienburg or from the SS-Wirtschafter at the Higher-SS and Police Leader in Kraków. To a certain extent, Göth, who did not represent a typical concentration camp commandant, was now restricted in his actions, since he had to obey the general rules for camp management and was obliged to report everything of importance to Oranienburg. (Göth was finally arrested in September 1944 for corruption and other offenses.)<sup>13</sup> After a while, an SS-Totenkopfverband (Death's Head Unit), the Wachsturmbann Krakau, numbering approximately 600 men and women, took over guard duties. An SS camp doctor arrived, first Dr. Jäger, later Dr. Blanke. Even a small group of German concentration camp inmates, who were to take over some functions in the camp, arrived in June 1944. But in general, Plaszow was never fully integrated into the standardized system of concentration camps because of the late date at which it was incorporated. The majority of inmates were still Jews, and there were few official prisoner-functionaries (Funktionshäftlinge). The exchange of prisoners with other concentration camps remained, before mid-1944, of minor importance. Instead, prisoners were still sent to other forced labor camps, such as when 2,000 Jews were sent to the Skarzysko-Kamienna camp in March 1944.

In early May 1944, Göth received the announcement that approximately 10,000 Jews from Hungary were to be transported to Plaszow. In order to make room, he prepared deportations to the Auschwitz extermination camp. On May 14, he ordered all children in the camp to be transferred to the "kindergarten," which had been installed in March. This turned out to be a pretext for their deportation to Auschwitz on May 15, where they were killed.

At the same time, evacuations to Plaszow from other camps located farther east intensified. In April and June 1944, transports from the eastern Galician cities of Drohobycz and Boryslaw arrived; in July, prisoners from other camps in the Kraków district arrived.

In August–September 1944, the camp leadership started to erase the traces of its crimes. It is not clear whether this was organized within the framework of "Sonderkommando 1005," the Gestapo's program to destroy mass graves in Eastern Europe. A group of 170 Jews, who were kept isolated from the other inmates, was recruited to unearth the mass graves and burn the corpses. This horrible task took until mid-October. Nevertheless, during this period executions of Poles continued.<sup>14</sup>

During the course of the Red Army summer offensive in June–July 1944, preparations were started to evacuate the

camp. The biggest evacuation transport left Plaszow on August 6, deporting 7,500 to 8,000 Jewish inmates to Auschwitz. Somewhat later a train left for the Mauthausen concentration camp, from which the prisoners were transferred to its branches. Probably on August 7, 4,000 to 5,000 Jewish women from "Greater Hungary" were deported through Auschwitz to the Stutthof camp in the north of Poland.

On January 1, 1945, there were still 453 male and 183 female prisoners left in Krakau-Plaszow, together with 87 male guards. Right after the beginning of the Soviet winter offensive, on January 14, HSSPF Koppe gave the order to evacuate the remnants of the camp—according to official data, 623 inmates—to Auschwitz.<sup>15</sup> Only 180 prisoners arrived in Auschwitz on January 17. Units of the Red Army reached the camp area in Kraków that same day.

Due to the lack of documentary evidence, only estimates are possible on the general number of prisoners in Krakau-Plaszow. The card index of prisoners was destroyed. Apparently, in the autumn of 1943, there were around 12,000 inmates; in July 1944, 17,000; in September 1944, for a short time up to 25,000. All in all, probably between 30,000 and 50,000 prisoners went through the camp, some only for days. Approximately half of the prisoners were non-Jews.<sup>16</sup> Between 5,000 and 8,000 prisoners were killed there, not including those who were transported to the camp area to be shot immediately. Probably the majority of those Jews who were evacuated from Plaszow in 1944–1945 died during the final period of the war inside the Reich.

The crimes in Krakau-Plaszow were the subject of relatively few postwar trials, the most important of which dealt with Göth. He was sentenced to death and executed. At least one other German camp staff member and two Jewish Kapos were brought to court in Poland.<sup>17</sup> West German prosecutors started to systematically investigate the crimes in Krakau-Plaszow only at the end of the 1950s.<sup>18</sup> Two camp functionaries were brought to trial: the former camp commandant Müller and Karl-Heinz Bigell, an employee of the Madritsch enterprise.<sup>19</sup> Several of the foreign guardsmen, who were captured by the Soviet secret police, were tried in the Soviet Union.

**SOURCES** There is no scholarly monograph on Krakau-Plaszow; two unpublished Hebrew dissertations were not available to the author: Reshef Ben-Tsion, "Mahane Plashov" (Ph.D. diss., Tel Aviv University, 1990); and Shlomi Barmor, "Mahane Plashov al reka' ha-mediniyut ha-Natsit ba'avodah kefiya shel Yehudim be-General Guvernman" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University, 1995). Several useful articles and booklets also exist: Aleksander Bieberstein, "Przyczynek do dziejów obozu w Krakowie-Płaszowie," *PL* 1 (1977); Roman Kiełkowski, "Obóz pracy przymusowej i koncentracyjny w Płaszowie," *PL* 1 (1971); Magdalena Kunicka-Wyrzykowska, "Kalendarium obozu płażowskiego 1942–1945," *BGKBZHwP* 31 (1982): 52–86; Angelina Oster, "Im Schatten von Auschwitz: Das KZ Krakau-Plaszow—Geschichte und Erinnerung," *DaHe* 19 (2003): 170–179; and a brochure by Tadeusz Wroński, *Obóz w Płaszowie, miejsce masowej eksterminacji ludności żydowskiej, polskiej i innych narodowości w latach*



1942–1945 (Warsaw: Sport i Turystyka, 1981). Important chapters are included in Roman Kiełkowski, . . . *Zlikwidowac na miejscu! z dziejów okupacji hitlerowskiej w Krakowie* (Kraków: Wyd. Literackie, 1981); and in the mixture of memoirs and research by Aleksander Bieberstein, *Zagłada Żydów w Krakowie* (Kraków: Wyd. Literackie, 1985). On mutual assistance, see Judith Tydor Baumel, *Double Jeopardy: Gender and the Holocaust* (Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 1998), pp. 103–114.

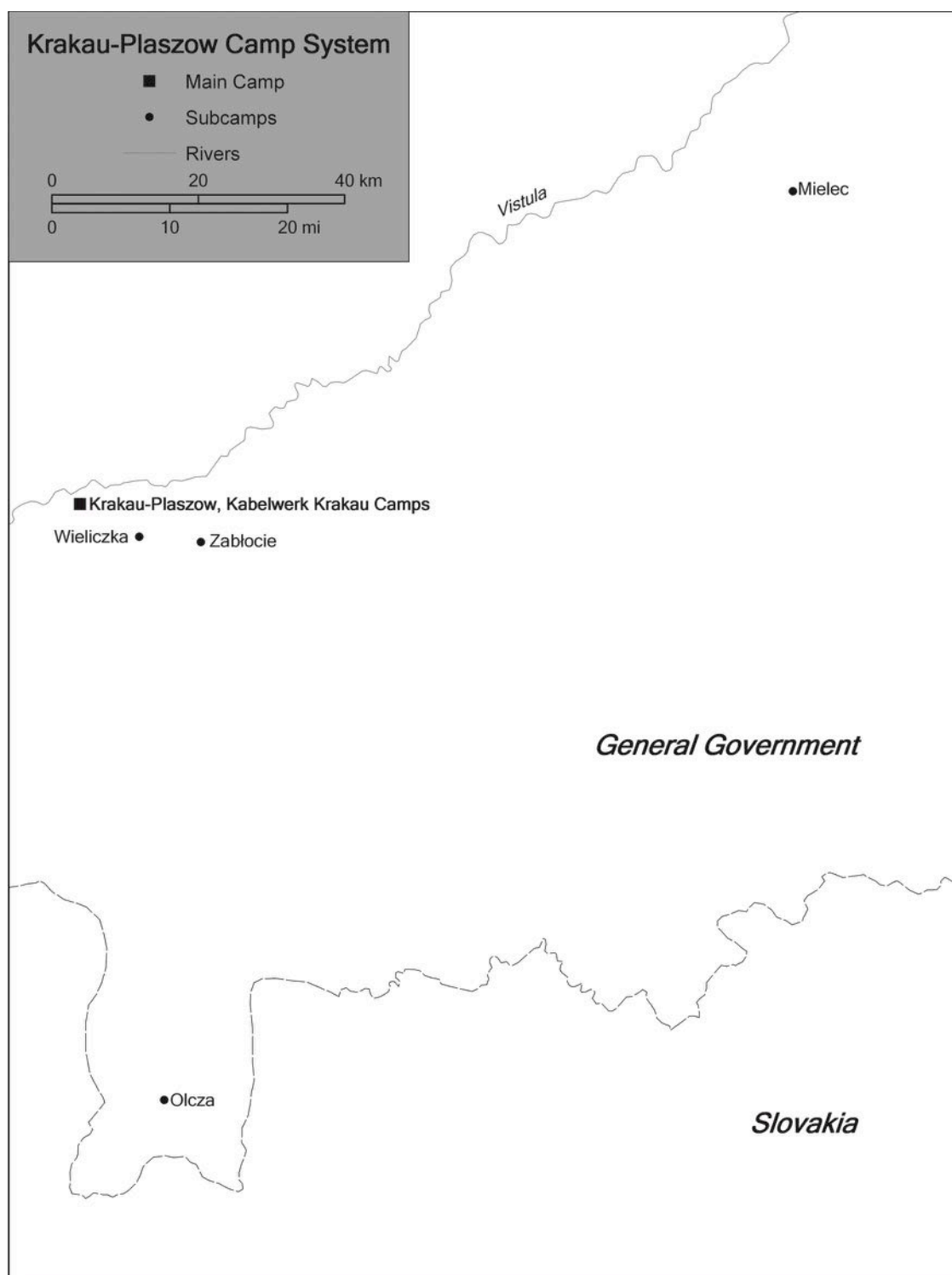
Only tiny fragments of German documentation on Krakau-Plaszow survived the war, especially from the WVHA and other concentration camps (BA-K, NS 3; BA-DH, RGVA R-1367K) and the Kraków SS and Police (IPN). Other sources in Polish archives, such as reports of the Polish welfare and underground, are listed in *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: informator encyklopedyczny*, ed. Czesław Pilichowski (Warsaw: PWN, 1979), p. 391. Published documents on Krakau-Plaszow are available in *Dokumenty i materiały do dziejów Żydów w Polsce pod okupacją niemiecką* [DiM], vol. 1, *Obozy*, ed. Nachman Blumental (Łódź: CZK, 1946), pp. 270–274; and *Faschismus—Getto—Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des 2. Weltkrieges*, ed. AŽIH (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961). Polish trial proceedings are located in IPN. On the Göth trial (microfilm in USHMMA, Acc. 1998.A.0248), see *Proces ludobójcy Amona Leopolda Goetha przed Najwyższym Trybunałem Narodowym* (Warsaw, 1947); *Law Reports of Trials of War Criminals*, vol. 7 (London: HMSO, 1948); and interviews with Göth's daughter, Matthias Kessler, “*Ich muss doch meinen Vater lieben, oder?*” *Die Lebensgeschichte der Monika Göth, der Tochter des KZ-Kommandanten aus “Schindlers Liste”* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn, 2002). West German investigation files are stored in the BA-L: LG Mosbach Ks 2/61, re: Franz Josef Müller, BA-L 206 AR-Z 225/59; Sta. Mosbach 21 Js 3892/77, re: Lüth, BA-L 206 AR-Z 1276/63; Sta. Bayreuth 1 Js 546/67, re: Grimm, BA-L II 206 AR-Z 600/67; Sta. Deggen-dorf 1 Js 108a-c/66, re: Kiermaier, et al., BA-L 206 AR-Z 48/66; LG Berlin 3 P (K) Ks 2/72, re: Bigell, BA-L II 206 AR-Z 601/67. The verdict of the Müller trial is reproduced in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen. Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1966*, ed. Adelheid L. Rüter-Ehlmann et al. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1977), 17: 234–253. The Soviet investigation files against—at least—four Trawniki guardsmen in Krakau-Plaszow are in the custody of the CAFSSRF. For prisoner memoirs, see Joseph Bau, *Dear God, Have You Ever Gone Hungry? Memoirs* (New York: Arcade 1998); Yosef Bosak, *Vebayil lo ne'ebaz ba-sevakh: korot-hayav shel Avraham (1939–1944)* (Tel Aviv: Moreshet, 1986); Malvina Graf, *The Kraków Ghetto and the Plaszów Camp* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1989); Stanisław Jagielski, *Sclavus saltans: wspomnienia lekarza obozowego* (Warsaw: Nakt Lekarskiego Instytutu Naukowo-Wydawniczego, 1946); Marian Krawczyk, *6 sierpień 1944 r. Garść wspomnień z obozu koncentracyjnego w Plaszowie* (Kraków, 1945); Halina Nelken, *And Yet, I Am Here!* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999); Jakub Stendig, *Plashov: ba-tabanah ba-abaronah shel Yabadut Krakov*, trans. from Polish by Aryeh Bauminger (Tel Aviv: ha-Menorah, 1970); Tadeusz Śliwiński, *Periturus* (Kraków: Wyd. Literackie, 1979).

Dieter Pohl

## NOTES

1. See the SSPF query to the insurance company Bayerische Versicherungsbank AG from October 1942 in Peter-Ferdinand Koch, *Menschenversuche: Die tödlichen Experimente deutscher Ärzte* (Munich: Piper, 1996), p. 110.
2. See the printed letterhead in Göth to Schindler, March 23, 1943, in *Schindlers Koffer: Berichte aus dem Leben eines Lebensretters*, ed. Claudia Keller and Stefan Braun (Stuttgart: Stuttgarter Zeitung, 1999), p. 19.
3. See Verdict District Court Mosbach Ks 2/61 re: Müller, April 24, 1961, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen. Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1966*, ed. Adelheid L. Rüter-Ehlmann et al. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1977), 17: 234–253.
4. Former Polizeischützenregiment 32; see commander-in-chief of the Orpo in the GG to RFSS, September 3, 1943, BA-B, R 19/115, p. 365.
5. Transfer rosters of SS-Ausbildungslager Trawniki to Krakau-Plaszow, not dated, CAFSSRF.
6. Circular letter by Scherner, December 14, 1942, and guidelines, February 9, 1943, *Faschismus—Getto—Massenmord: Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des 2. Weltkrieges*, ed. AŽIH (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1961), p. 448.
7. Verdict LG München I 116 Ks 1/70 re: Johann Unterhuber, June 18, 1970, pp. 11–12.
8. Verdict District Court Hannover 11 Ks 2/76 re: Heinemeyer, March 30, 1979, pp. 53–54, IfZ, Gh 05.24.
9. See the detailed information on the camp in the report of the Żegota, n.d. (probably end of 1944), in *DiM*, vol. 1, *Obozy*, ed. Nachman Blumental (Łódź: CZK, 1946), pp. 270–274.
10. Circular letter by Scherner, August 30, 1943, *Faschismus*, p. 453.
11. See the conferences on Lublin camps on September 3 and 7, 1943, a protocol of the latter in *Faschismus*, pp. 459–460.
12. Order Pohl, October 22, 1943, Nuremberg document NO-60.
13. Letter HSSPF Koppe to Himmler, September 6, 1944, BA-K, NS 19/2586, p. 2.
14. Information of Żegota, not dated, *DiM*, 1: 274.
15. BA-K, NS 3/439, p. 2; Report on the departure from Krakau-Plaszow, February 2, 1945, BA, NS 3/650.
16. See the preliminary list of 1,852 prisoners: “Indeks imienny więźniów obozu w Plaszowie” (MSS, IPN, 1980).
17. Lublin District Court against Paul K. in 1948, who served in several concentration camps; see Elżbieta Kobierska-Motas, *Ekstradycja przestępców wojennych do Polski z czterech stref okupacyjnych Niemiec 1946–1950* (Warsaw: GKBZpNP, 1992), 2:121.
18. A camp member was acquitted in 1947 by LG Berlin.
19. Verdict District Court Berlin 3 P (K) Ks 2/72 re: Bigell, June 4, 1973, IfZ, Gb 06.111; Paul Raebel was tried for his crimes in eastern Galicia.





## KABELWERK KRAKAU

Polish Jewish men and women were forced to work between July 1942 and September 1944 manufacturing cables for Kabelwerk Krakau. Kabelwerk in Krakau-Plaszow had been compulsorily acquired from the German electronics concern Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) by the German military authorities in 1941 after the occupation of Poland.

The factory site, almost 120,000 square meters (143,500 square yards), about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) to the southeast of Kraków, not far from the Plaszow railway station, was the site for the manufacture of electrical and telegraph cables. In 1941, around 1,400 male and female Polish blue- and white-collar workers were employed there. Following the compulsory acquisition by the Rüstungsinspektion (Army Armaments Inspectorate) Krakau in September 1939, the cable factory, which was owned by the Polish Fabryka Kabli S.A., was placed under the trusteeship of Verwertungsgesellschaft für Montanindustrie GmbH (Montan), which in turn was controlled by the Army High Command (OKH). The Montan contracted with Reichswerke Hermann Göring and the AEG for the management of the operation.<sup>1</sup> In July 1941, the AEG leased the Kabelwerk. It acquired the stock and raw materials and undertook "to directly or indirectly give preferential treatment to Wehrmacht contracts."<sup>2</sup>

Administratively, the Kabelwerk was controlled by Kabelwerk Krakau GmbH (KWK), which was established by the AEG in September 1941. In 1941, the AEG placed the 43-year-old senior engineer Ewald Böhme as factory manager. Böhme had been working in the Kabelwerk Oberspree (KWO) in Berlin-Oberschöneide since 1925. KWO, the largest of the AEG cable factories, relocated its production orders and materials such as lead and copper to Kraków.

Kabelwerk Krakau produced field cables for the Wehrmacht and telephone cables for the Deutsche Post Ost. The product mix included deliveries to the AEG sales office in Kraków, which sold, among other things, switches and lighting systems produced by the Berlin AEG factories to the Wehrmacht, the "Ostbahn," and the SS. It is most likely that Jews from the forced labor camp at Pustków were used in installing electrical and lighting systems for the AEG at the Waffen-SS troop training ground at Dębica. The AEG had been installing these systems since 1941 as part of a large contract.<sup>3</sup> On not so grand a scale, the AEG Krakau also took over contracts from armaments firms such as the Heinkel aircraft factory at Mielec.

In April 1944, the former owner of the cable factory, the Polish company Fabryka Kabli S.A., stepped into the lease with the AEG.<sup>4</sup> The Mährische Bank from the Czech town of Brno (Brünn) then claimed possession on the basis that since 1939 it had been the sole shareholder of the Fabryka Kabli S.A. The Mährische Bank was controlled by the Creditanstalt Bankverein AG from Vienna. The Deutsche Bank had been the largest shareholder since 1941 in this, the largest, Austrian bank.

In the middle of 1942, Böhme representing KWK negotiated with the Arbeitsamt Krakau on the use of Jewish laborers from the Kraków ghetto. It was intended that mostly women would be used in the cable factory, as there were no available men. The inmates were to go back and forth daily in groups from the ghetto to the cable factory. Initial security for the prisoners was to be provided by the cable factory's security. The Jewish forced laborers were to work in a cable factory and a plastics factory and in checking field cables. They were to be fed the same amount of the factory's soup as the Polish labor force.

Böhme also successfully negotiated that in exceptional cases he could decide whether to give the Jews consumer goods. The management used such means as pressure to reduce the high absentee rate in the Polish workforce, which in turn was the result of the German occupation policy that had resulted in a catastrophic food shortage in the General Government. In April 1942, more than 20 percent of the Polish workforce was missing either daily or for part of each day. The management demanded that the Arbeitsamt Krakau transfer individual Poles to the labor camps as a deterrent measure.<sup>5</sup> In 1942–1943, the absentee rate was reduced to 2 percent, due to the distribution of food.<sup>6</sup>

Böhme announced, however, at the end of August 1942, that the Jewish forced laborers "were not to receive any more special rations until otherwise stated. This included all goods which had been distributed."<sup>7</sup>

Oskar Schindler, who had business dealings with the Kabelwerk's management, told of seven laborers from the Kabelwerk who were transferred to Krakau-Plaszow where they were hanged by the SS. According to Schindler, "Director Dihle stated that it had a visible increase in production."<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the use of Jewish women from the Kraków ghetto, it is likely that from the end of August 1943 a group of 96 male Jews from Wieliczka were deployed in the Kabelwerk. The men were accommodated in a "barracks-type" area in the Kraków ghetto.<sup>9</sup> After the evacuation of "Ghetto A" on October 27 and 28, 1942, all Jewish forced laborers in the cable factory were transferred to the newly established forced labor camp at Plaszow. Following the final liquidation of the Kraków ghetto on March 13, 1943, the company's management housed them in barracks on the factory grounds.<sup>10</sup> As was the case with Schindler's enamel factory, the Kabelwerk Krakau established a "firm camp" (*Firmenlager*).

A total of between 200 and 300 Jewish forced laborers were assigned to work for Kabelwerk, probably 50 percent male and 50 percent female.<sup>11</sup> From the beginning of September 1942, they worked in three shifts. Among them was Leontyna Opoczyńska who was 20 in 1941. She was assigned to work in the wire factory within the Kabelwerk. According to Opoczyńska, they were given substitute coffee in the morning, bread and soup for lunch, and bread in the evening. The Polish workers with whom she worked secretly gave her additional food.

Even though the forced labor and their accommodation on the factory grounds initially protected the Jewish prisoners

from deportation, it did not protect them from persecution. Opoczyńska stated that following a nervous breakdown, it was only the solidarity of her fellow prisoners that prevented her from being selected. "I was not taken away and shot," said Opoczyńska, "because my fellow workers put part of their output down on me."<sup>12</sup>

The AEG commenced the evacuation of the Kabelwerk at the beginning of August 1943 in the following order: unfinished products and raw materials such as cable wrapping, copper wires, or artificial silk were shifted to an AEG raw material depot to the east of Berlin and sold to the Berlin KWO.<sup>13</sup> Food such as vegetables, which had been grown on the fields of Kabelwerk Krakau to feed the workers, was also removed. The production facilities including the wire factory, where many of the Jewish prisoners worked, was shut down. The AEG relocated the enamel wire factory to the Sudetenland. Other attempts to relocate machines were refused by the armaments authorities. Representatives of the Mährische Bank stated that "those machines which probably would be damaged during transport and whose reassembly would be uneconomic should remain [in the Kabelwerk]."<sup>14</sup>

Unlike Schindler's case, the Jewish forced laborers in Kabelwerk were not evacuated. They were transferred to the forced labor camp at Plaszow, which in January 1944 had become a concentration camp. Opoczyńska, with many other female concentration camp prisoners from Plaszow, was deported to Auschwitz. When Auschwitz was evacuated, the SS transported her via the Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald concentration camps to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, where she was liberated by British soldiers in April 1945.<sup>15</sup> She and more than half of the Jewish forced laborers at Kabelwerk Krakau survived the deportations.

**SOURCES** Some background information on the AEG project in Kraków may be found in Artur Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka zagłady Żydów* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1961). For the documentary record of Schindler's business relations with the KWK, see Erika Rosenberg, ed., *Ich, Oskar Schindler: Die persönlichen Aufzeichnungen; Briefe und Dokumente* (Munich: Herbig, 2000). For more on Schindler's role, see Mietek Pemper, *Der rettende Weg: Schindlers Liste—Die wahre Geschichte* (Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 2005).

Details on the use of forced labor are contained in the file notes and correspondence of the KWK management as well as in memoirs of former Jewish forced laborers. There are only scattered details on the history of the Kabelwerk Krakau GmbH in the AEG files. Files of the Fabryka Kabli are held in the APK;KWK files in the BA-B, the LA-B, and the DTM-AEG-A. Reports by survivors are held in the archives of the USHMMA as well as in YVA.

Thomas Irmer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. See Kabelwerk Krakau an Kabelfabrik AG, Bratislava of August 26, 1940, Betr.: Kündigung des Gestionsvertrages, as

well as Bl. 124, Beschluss Kreisgericht Krakau, September 14, 1940, DTM, I.2.060 A, Nr. 00580, pp. 223–224.

2. See 1. Entwurf of November 25, 1940, DTM, I.2.060 A, Nr. 00580, p. 220; as well as Ulrich Dihle to AEG FKU Abt. W. of June 19, 1941, LA-B, A Rep. 227-06, Nr. 11.

3. Artur Eisenbach, *Hitlerowska polityka zagłady Żydów* (Warsaw: Książka i Wiedza, 1961), p. 436.

4. See Abschrift Pachtvertrag JB-Vertragsarchiv Nr. 424, DTM, I.2.060 A, Nr. 00581, pp. 67–72.

5. See KWK an Arbeitsamt Krakau of May 19, 1942, Betr.: Säumige Gefolgschaftsmitglieder.

6. See Werkmitteilung SEK of July 29, 1943, Betr.: Anruf des Herrn Böhme; Rundschreiben Nr. 47/4 of August 21, 1943, LA-B, A Rep. 227-06, Nr. 15.

7. See Kabelwerk Krakau, Rundschreiben Nr. 50/42 of August 31, 1942, in LA-B, A Rep. 227-06, Nr. 14.

8. As cited in Erika Rosenberg, ed., *Ich, Oskar Schindler: Die persönlichen Aufzeichnungen; Briefe und Dokumente* (Munich: Herbig, 2000), p. 104. On the KWK and Oskar Schindler, see Ewald Böhme and Ulrich Dihle to Oskar Schindler April 27, 1944, LA-B, A Rep. 227-06, Nr. 9.

9. See Kabelwerk Krakau, Aktenvermerk Nr. 108/42 of September 2, 1942, Betr.: Judeneinsatz, LA-B, A Rep. 227-06, Nr. 14.

10. See Leontyna Davies, Questionnaire transcript and photo album, USHMMA, RG 02.070, pp. 5–6; Mietek Pemper, *Der rettende Weg: Schindlers Liste—Die wahre Geschichte* (Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 2005), p. 104.

11. Opoczyńska estimates the numbers at 300 people. After 1945, the AEG stated there were 200. See Davies transcript, USHMMA, RG-02.070; as well as the letter from Max Stein to E. Katzenstein and the Claims Conference of April 21, 1960, Re: AEG and Telefunken, YVS [YVA], 400/1, Korrespondenz Telefunken (Akte Dr. Stein).

12. Davies transcript, USHMMA, RG-02.070.

13. See Versandscheine und Aufstellungen über Räumungsgüter, LA-B, A. Rep. 227-06, Nr. 8 + 12.

14. See Protokoll Aufsichtsrat Kabelfabrik A.G., September 8, 1944.

15. Davies transcript, USHMMA, RG-02.070.

## MIELEC

The town of Mielec lies about 120 kilometers (75 miles) east of Kraków and about the same distance to the southwest of Lublin. For a few weeks during the war, there was a Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp labor detail located in Mielec. The forced labor camp that was established after the occupation, as well as the subcamp that came later, was located at the site of the former aircraft factory at Mielec. This was a small-to medium-sized camp that only existed for a short time as a subcamp. As a result, only a few records remain. Prisoner statements, which form part of the documents in International Tracing Services (ITS) documents, suggest that at first a forced labor camp was established on March 7–9, 1942, for male Jewish prisoners in this part of the General Government.<sup>1</sup> The first mention of female Jewish prisoners in the Mielec forced labor camp is dated from March 1942.

Contradictory statements about the date of closure make it impossible to determine the precise period it existed as an independent camp. In the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg, an interrogation report on the Plaszow camp titled “Die mörderische Aussiedlungsaktion” (The Murderous Deportation Operation) can be found. According to that report, 2,000 prisoners of the detachment were taken from Mielec to Plaszow on July 26, 1944. However, there are a number of postwar witness statements challenging this evacuation report. The testimonies state that prisoners from this detachment were transferred to the Wieliczka labor detail and the Flossenbürg concentration camp on July 22, 1944. Another statement, made sometime after the events, suggests the camp still existed in August 1944.<sup>2</sup> There is no further mention of the outside detail after this date. The reason for the rapid evacuation of the outside detail was the approaching Soviet Army into the steadily shrinking territory of the Third Reich.

A file note of the Chief of the Office W IV of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), dated January 13, 1944, shows that the Krakau-Plaszow main camp remained a Jewish forced labor camp until January 11, 1944, and only from then on became a concentration camp. This means that the Mielec forced labor camp could only have become an outside detail of the now-independent concentration camp, the main camp Krakau-Plaszow, sometime later, namely, on June 12, 1944.<sup>3</sup>

According to the statements of prisoners and the few remaining personnel documents, the inmates were solely Jews of Polish nationality. On the other hand, the little available literature points to the Mielec prisoners as being “Poles and Jews.”<sup>4</sup> As was the custom in most forced labor camps, prisoners wore civilian clothing with colored stripes; in addition, Jews were forced to wear a yellow star. After the transformation of the camp into a concentration camp, the prisoners had to wear the conventional striped camp clothing. The prisoners were accommodated in barracks for the entire duration of their persecution.

A peculiarity of this camp was how the prisoners were tattooed. In contrast to the usual practice at Auschwitz where the entire prisoner number was tattooed on the left forearm, those responsible at the Mielec detail only tattooed the letters *KL* on the forearm. According to the literature, this was done alternately on the right and the left forearm. However, numerous postwar prisoner statements say that the tattoos were only made on the right forearm. The same procedure, that is, tattoos with the letters *KL*, possibly occurred in Budzyń (a Lublin subcamp) and Wieliczka.<sup>5</sup>

The Mielec inmates worked at the Heinkel aircraft works. The surviving registration cards often display the abbreviation “FWM” in the top left-hand corner, which stands for Flugzeugwerke Mielec. The aircraft works were enclosed by walls, and on top of the walls was an electric wire. The work was done in two shifts, from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. and from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M. The prisoners’ main task was rivetting aircraft wings. The prisoners also had to perform cleaning

and general metalwork. The prisoner cards of the Mielec subcamp as well as the concentration camps to which the prisoners were transferred, such as Flossenbürg, state, among other things, the main trades, which include bakers, tailors, plumbers, and assemblymen, and the prisoners’ secondary trades, such as locksmith or unskilled workers (*Bau Hilfsarbeiter*). There are also notations for the actual work, that is, deployment, such as turner, brush maker, milling, drilling, and unskilled workers.

The available sources vary regarding the total size of the subcamp: from 800 to 2,000 to even more male prisoners and from 50 to 300 female prisoners. The largest number of prisoners at the Mielec camp, which was closed during the summer of 1944, is 4,000; however, there is no precise date for this figure, which was estimated by the Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes in Poland by the Council for the Protection of Monuments, Struggle and Martyrdom (Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce Rada Ochrony Pomników Walki i Męczeństwa).<sup>6</sup>

The prisoners were fed one meal of soup at lunch and received 1.4 kilograms (3.1 pounds) of bread per week.<sup>7</sup> Initially, the prisoners were guarded by members of the Luftwaffe and later by the SS and the Ukrainian SS, respectively. According to postwar documents, the Gestapo and SS shot prisoners in the Mielec camp.<sup>8</sup>

**SOURCES** The following reference books were helpful in preparing this entry: GKBZHWP, Rada Ochrony Pomników Walki i Męczeństwa, *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw, 1979); and Edward Kossoy, *Handbuch zum Bundesentschädigungsgesetz (BEG), Law & Notarial-Offices Apelbom* (Munich, 1956), p. 166.

This essay on the Mielec subcamp is based nearly exclusively on sources that are contained in the general collection of ITS. The sources include statements and the documents generated from investigations by former prisoners, referring to the total period of their persecution and imprisonment, respectively. This makes possible a distinction between information relating to the forced labor camp and the later subcamp. The prisoner cards of the Mielec aircraft works as well as the Flossenbürg concentration camp provide documentary confirmation, as the cards refer to the Mielec labor camp as the place of admission.

Charles-Claude Biedermann  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. March 7, 1942, according to a statement dated December 24, 1959, and held by ITS. On the other hand, the OK-BZNwK puts the opening date as March 9, 1942.
2. ITS, Call number Documents M3 Mielec, Statement of the former prisoners Fried. Sz.
3. First Supplement to the “Verzeichnis von Ghettos, Zwangsarbeitslagern und Konzentrationslagern,” August 1, 1953, presented by the Oberregierungsrat Dr. Ungerer, München, on January 1, 1954.



4. GKBZHwP, Rada Ochrony Pomników Walki i Męczeństwa, *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945; informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw, 1979), ¶ 2719, p. 318.

5. Edward Kossoy, *Handbuch zum Bundesentschädigungsgesetz (BEG), Law & Notarial-Offices Apelbom* (Munich, 1956), p. 166.

6. GKBZHwP, *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945*, ¶ 2719, p. 318.

7. ITS, Call number Documents M3 Mielec, Statement of the former prisoners Fried. Sz.

8. ITS, Call number M3 Mielec, note regarding investigations into the dead at the Mielec camp, filed by the former prisoner St. Sy.

(*Biuletyn IPN*/October 2001, “To jest sprawa człowieczeństwa,” p. 5). This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1:166; and in “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1851.

There are few original sources on the subcamp. The camp is listed in the material of the GKBZHwP, Signatur Zh III/31/35/68, obozy pracy, województwo krakowskie, p. 34.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## **OLCZA [AKA ZAKOPANE, ZAKOPANE-OLCZA]**

Zakopane lies 90 kilometers (56 miles) to the south of Kraków (Krakau). Between 1943 and the spring of 1944, in nearby Olcza a subcamp of the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp was in operation.

At the beginning of the 1940s, a hydroelectricity power station was constructed in Olcza. The construction workers were initially members of the Górska Służba Ojczyźnie (Polish Highlanders' Homeland Service). This service was similar to the Reich Labor Service (RAD) and comprised the Polish national minority, the Goralen (Polish Highlanders), who were regarded by the Germans as a separate “race.” Some of the Goralen people were classified as Group III of the German national list (*Volksliste*).

These workers were replaced at the beginning of 1943 by around 150 male Jewish prisoners from the SS labor camp in Krakau-Plaszow. When this camp was converted into a concentration camp, Olcza became a subcamp of the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp.

The prisoners were accommodated in the Villa Prymówka. According to *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich*, around 10 prisoners died during the camp's existence. The camp was dissolved in the spring of 1944 due to the approaching front.

**SOURCES** The history of the Krakau-Plaszow Olcza subcamp near Zakopane is largely unresearched, which in part is a factor of the short life of the camp and the relatively small number of prisoners in the camp. Józef Marszałek provided a short description of the camp in *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1998), p. 53; and in Czesław Pilichowski et al., eds, *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1979), p. 481, entry 5609. Information on the history of the Jews in Zakopane (including Olcza) under the German occupation is to be found in *Pinkas ha-beyahadut: entsiklopediyah shel ha-yishuvim ha-Yehudiyim le-min bivasdam ve-'ad le-ahar Sho'at Milhemet ha-'olam ha-sbeniyah* (Jerusalem: YV, 1984), pp. 144–146. There is some information on the history of the Goralen as a national minority under the German occupation at [www1.ipn.gov.pl/download.php?s=1&id=3874](http://www1.ipn.gov.pl/download.php?s=1&id=3874)

## **WIELICZKA**

The Wieliczka subcamp of the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp is closely connected with the underground production of Heinkel aircraft at the end of the war. The production site was the salt mines at Wieliczka about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) to the southeast of Kraków (Krakau). It is a site of world cultural significance due to its geological uniqueness and because for hundreds of years it operated as a salt mine.

Heinkel established in the early 1940s a number of aircraft production sites in Poland, for example, at Mielec and Budzyń. Production of the He 111 and He 177 aircraft intensified in the spring of 1943. In the Mielec camp, work was done by people who had either no or limited qualifications, that is, by forced laborers including many *Junaks*, or unskilled non-Jewish Poles. In the spring of 1942, 2,000 Jews from Krakau-Plaszow were brought to Mielec. A camp for Jews (*Judenlager*) was established at the factory. In addition to the Jews of Polish nationality, there were also Hungarian Jews from the Auschwitz concentration camp in Mielec. At the beginning of July 1944, they were deported first to Krakau-Plaszow and from there to the Wieliczka mine, where Heinkel continued its production.

A second Heinkel production site was at Budzyń near Krasnik. This forced labor camp was established in the autumn of 1943 by the SS and was administered from October 1943 by the Lublin-Majdanek concentration camp. According to historian Józef Marszałek, who cites a report by the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa, AK), from the middle of March 1944, there was a camp in Mielec with 2,457 Jewish prisoners, which included 319 women. The prisoners were of German and Polish (Jewish) origin. Among the men there were at least 800 engineers and technicians. In May 1944, the relocation of this camp began due to the rapid advance of the Eastern Front and the fear that the production facilities would be bombed. The prisoners at the Budzyń camp were deported to Majdanek and to the camps at Skrzysko, Starachowice, and Wieliczka. The final group of prisoners deported, 450, were deported to Germany. Morris Wyszogrod, a survivor of the Wieliczka camp, stated that he arrived in May 1944 in Wieliczka in a transport from Budzyń that included about 900 prisoners. The transport was relatively bearable, with about 40 to 50

prisoners in each railway car. For the journey, the prisoners were given straw as bedding as well as bread, cheese, and water. There were already 2,000 prisoners in the camp when they arrived. With the arrival of the new transport, there were about 2,900 prisoners in the camp. According to Wyszogrod, after the prisoners arrived at the camp, they went through the usual procedures: they were deloused, cautioned, and threatened. The prisoners' hair was shaved in stripes (so-called lice streets), and the letters *KL* were tattooed on their wrists. The tattooing was done by the camp doctor, Dr. Mosbach, and a German soldier. All the prisoners were given strips of cloth with prisoner numbers, which they had to sew onto their clothes.

In May 1944, the Jews deported from Mielec and Budzyń began to assemble the production facilities in Wieliczka. The prisoners had to construct the barracks in the camp, the barbed-wire fence, and guard towers. According to survivors, the prisoners lived in small, dilapidated houses (others say barracks), with two-tiered beds. Wyszogrod stated that an SS officer, Schragner, was the camp leader (*Lagerführer*). The camp was situated on the edge of Wieliczka, and on one side there was an open field. According to *Obozy hitlerowskie*, the camp was located in the Królowa Kinga Park directly adjacent to the salt mine. On the other hand, Wyszogrod stated that the prisoners had to walk 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) before they went into a large basket that was lowered several hundred feet into the mine.

The salt supplies that gave Wieliczka its existence continued to be mined by Polish workers during the period of the concentration camp. Wyszogrod described the difficult conditions in the mine and the devastating effects on the malnourished and poorly clothed prisoners: the tunnels with their chasms and underground lakes were a dangerous place for the weakened prisoners, who staggered around the dangerous work site. The air was cold and damp, and salt water dripped from the ceilings and the walls. According to Polish historians, the total number of prisoners in the Wieliczka camp was around 6,000. Included in this number are the women, who probably had their own camp, working mainly in the kitchens and as cleaners.

Armaments production in Wieliczka lasted only for a few months: in September 1944, production ceased, and the camp was abandoned. The reason was the advance of the Soviet Army as well as the high humidity and the salty air in the mine. Machines and tools were dismantled and transported to Germany. The Wieliczka prisoners were initially sent to Plaszow. From there, they were taken to Gross-Rosen and Flossenbürg.

**SOURCES** A short description of the Wieliczka camp as well as its precursor camps in Mielec and Budzyń is provided by Józef Marszałek in *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1998), pp. 101–103. Marszałek provided detailed sources on the history of the three camps. Czesław Pili-chowski et al., eds., *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945: informator encyklopedyczny* (Warsaw: Państwowe

Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1979), refer to the Wieliczka camp as entry 5302 at p. 560. Information on the history of Jewish life in Wieliczka can be obtained from the following: Shmuel Meiri, ed., *Kehilat Wieliczka; sefer zikaron* (Tel Aviv: Wieliczka Association in Israel, 1980); and Abraham Wein and Aharon Weiss, eds., *Pinkas bakehillot Polin: entsiklopedyah shel ba-yishuvim ba-Yehudiyim le-min bivasdam ve-'ad le-ahar Sho'at Milhemet ba-'olam ba-sheniyah* (Jerusalem: YV, 1984), pp. 131–136. This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1:166; and in “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1849.

The AŻIH holds several statements of survivors of the Wieliczka camp under the collections Wspomnienia 2352, as well as Pamiętniki 1018, 1166, and 5266. Other documents on Wieliczka are to be found in the following archives: IPN, Signatur 48, Karte 107; Bestand “Bd” Signatur 4362, Bestand “Z,” Signatur 924; Najwyższy Trybunał Narodowy, Signatur 327, k. 6-7, Signatur 326, p. 150; AIZ, Dokument V 26, vol. 4, p. 96; and GKBZHWp, Signatur Zh III/31/35/68, obozy pracy, województwo krakowskie, pp. 82–84. There are several survivors' accounts on the camp, including that by Morris Wyszogrod, *An Artist in the Death Camps* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1999), where reference is made to Wieliczka at pp. 183–187.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## ZABŁOCIE

Although very little and only incomplete source material exists on the outside detail Zabłocie of the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp, the name Zabłocie (Polish; Zabłocie) has become well known since the film *Schindler's List* appeared in 1993. The movie is a strong portrayal of the suffering of many prisoners and shows the chronology of the persecution of a group of Jewish prisoners in the Kraków area—including a detailed account on their imprisonment in the Zabłocie detachment. The film reveals the contradictions of people being subject to forced labor by the National Socialist regime, which at the same time provided a chance for survival. For many, the suffering began in the ghetto Krakau-Podgorze, which was located in the city of Kraków.

At that time, many inmates were already forced to walk to and from work in Zabłocie every day. This continued after their transfer to the forced labor camp for Jews, Krakau-Plaszow, which was a little further to the east.

As the prisoners were often late for work, Oskar Schindler negotiated with the SS authorities to get permission to establish a camp in the vicinity of their work. He was supported by other employers who also used Jews from the camp at Krakau-Plaszow. After permission was granted, the Jewish forced labor camp in Zabłocie was opened in the spring of 1943.

On January 11, 1944, simultaneously with the transformation of the Jewish forced labor camp Krakau-Plaszow into an

independent concentration camp, the Zabłocie outside detail became its subcamp. The outside detail was located at 4 ulica Lipowa, in an industrial area in the southern district of Kraków. It exclusively contained Jewish men and women of Polish nationality. According to statements in the novel *Schindler's List*, the prisoners were guarded by the SS.<sup>1</sup>

The majority of the prisoners in Zabłocie worked at Oskar Schindler's firm Deutsche Emailwarenfabrik—Email- und Metallwaren aller Art (German Enamel Factory—Enamel and Metal Wares of All Types, DEF). The prisoners worked not only in the enamel factory but also in the munitions factory that was also established there. They worked in three shifts.

The prisoners were accommodated in barracks on Schindler's factory grounds. Altogether there were between 1,000 and 1,200 prisoners.

When questioned, the prisoners replied that they worked in a munitions factory, knowing full well that this was an essential war activity; this provided a certain degree of protection from deportation. In addition, the prisoners were used as forced labor by the Neue Kühler- und Flugzeugteile-Fabriken (NKF)—Kurt Hodermann—Spezialfabriken für die Flugzeugindustrie—Werk Krakau GmbH (New Cooling and Airplane Parts Factory—Kurt Hodermann—Special Factories for the Aircraft Industry—Factory Krakau Ltd), 9 ulica Romanowicza,<sup>2</sup> and at the crate factory, Kühnpast.<sup>3</sup>

There were also men imprisoned in the outside details who had previously, from the late summer of 1943 on, worked in the so-called Siemens detachment. Their task was also of service to the war industry. They had to construct a new building for punching machines for Schindler's firm. The prisoners, who supposedly numbered between 200 and 300, were required to excavate, pour foundations, and erect the side walls.<sup>4</sup> After the war, many prisoners remembered an accident in which a young Jewish prisoner was buried during the first excavation work. According to a report of the Compensation Trust, the "Stanzhalle" was finished except for the roof. Electrical installations had begun as well as the installation of a few machines.

Personnel files of concentration camps to which former prisoners of the Zabłocie subcamp were transferred to, as well as statements made by liberated prisoners after the war, refer to the following trades in the camp: metalworker trainee, metal processing worker trainee, office worker, laborer, automotive welder, female accountant, wood turner, lathe operator, iron worker, homemaker, woodworker, skilled builder, salesman, plumber, engine assembler, machinist, pharmacist (female), nurse, locksmith, apprentice locksmith, tailor (male and female), grade school pupil, university student, metal presser, and skilled textile worker.

The approaching front line caused the evacuation of Zabłocie to begin in the summer of 1944. The evacuation was complete in October 1944. The prisoners who worked for the

NKF and the crate factory were transferred back to the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp, together with prisoners who had also worked at Schindler's DEF.

At the same time, one or two U.S. airplanes were shot down and crashed at Zabłocie. As a result, a few barracks burned down completely; however, they were not occupied because the evacuation had already begun. As a result, the remaining prisoners were transferred back to the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp, as were most of the prisoners prior to the evacuation. This resulted in the complete liquidation of the subcamp, since the prisoners kept walking daily to and from Zabłocie only for a short time. They had to load machines that were to be transported to the Brännlitz detachment.<sup>5</sup>

From Krakau-Plaszow, the prisoners were deported to various concentration camps. The female prisoners were sent to Auschwitz, among other concentration camps, and the males were sent to Gross-Rosen. Thanks to Schindler's intervention, these prisoners were transferred from Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen to the outside detail at Brännlitz, which was administered by Gross-Rosen. They worked in his newly established company in Brännlitz until they were liberated.

Other prisoners, for instance, were transferred to the Flossenbürg and Mauthausen concentration camps.

**SOURCES** There is no history of the Zabłocie subcamp of Krakau-Plaszow apart from the historical novel by Thomas Keneally, *Schindler's List* (Munich: Goldmann Verlag, 1994).

Due to the lack of sources, most knowledge on the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp Zabłocie subcamp is derived from the interim report on Siemens-Plaszow by the Compensation Treuhand GmbH, New York, dated February 4, 1965. This report is based on statements made by former prisoners. Statements by former victims of persecution, which are to be found at ITS, have provided additional information. They have been valuably complemented by the evaluation of personnel files, particularly of prisoners who were transferred to Brännlitz. Two letters to the SSPF Lublin dated March 9, 1943, provide documentary evidence of the work deployment. Because of the lack of primary sources, two collection vouchers dated March 9, 1943, were used to provide details about the firms' headquarters. They were issued by the DEF as well as the NKF.

Charles-Claude Biedermann  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Thomas Keneally, *Schindler's List* (Munich: Goldmann Verlag, 1994), p. 169.

2. ITS, Call number: Technical Document M 3 Zabłocie, Statements by former prisoners.

3. Interim Report Siemens-Plaszów by the Compensation Trust GmbH, U.S. Advisory Board, New York, dated February 4, 1965 (ITS call number: Documents M 3 Zabłocie), p. 2

4. Ibid., p. 3.

5. Keneally, *Schindler's List*, pp. 232, 329.





## LUBLIN



Post-liberation view of Lublin-Majdanek concentration camp's Field III section.  
USHMM WS #50519, COURTESY OF IPN

## LUBLIN MAIN CAMP [AKA MAJDANEK]

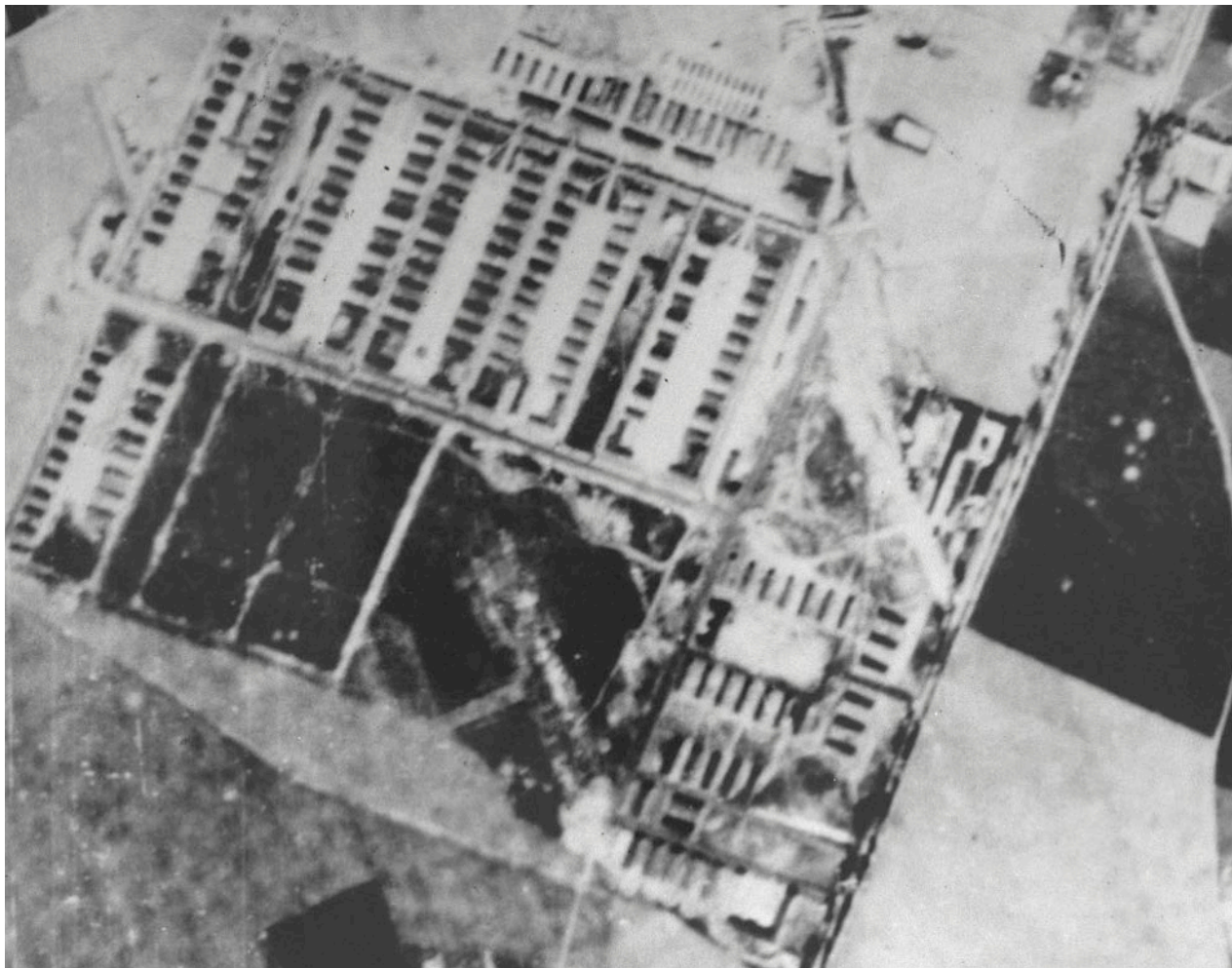
Majdanek was the “other Auschwitz,” the only other SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) concentration camp that engaged in the mass murder of Jews by means of poison gas. The 1941 decision to construct a major concentration camp outside the Reich in the Polish city of Lublin was an integral part of Heinrich Himmler’s plans to make Lublin the center of an SS military-industrial complex, where SS-owned industries using SS-controlled slave laborers would produce supplies for SS forces in the East. On July 20–21, 1941, Himmler charged SS and Police Leader (SSPF) Lublin Odilo Globocnik to build a concentration camp for 25,000 to 50,000 prisoners.

To evade the Lublin civilian authorities’ opposition to a concentration camp, the SS announced it would build a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp there. Officially designated Waffen-SS

Prisoner of War Camp (Kriegsgefangenenlager der Waffen-SS) Lublin, the camp derived its Polish (and more widely known) name from its location in the Majdan Tatarski suburb. Eventually the camp consisted of five compounds or “fields,” with a capacity for 25,000 prisoners, with one more compound still under construction when the camp was liberated.

Although designated a POW camp, Majdanek was always subordinate to the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) and adopted the same organization and regulations as all other concentration camps. On February 16, 1943, Majdanek’s official designation changed to Lublin concentration camp (Konzentrationslager Lublin).

Himmler’s special plans for Lublin and the peculiar tasks he assigned to Globocnik caused Majdanek to be more heavily influenced by the SSPF and more intimately involved in the



Aerial reconnaissance photograph of Lublin-Majdanek concentration camp, 1943–1944.  
USHMM WS #89983, COURTESY OF NARA

activities of the SS and police than was generally the case with other camps. For example, the Order Police (Orpo) and the Security Police (Sipo) each administered a special section within Majdanek, and in pursuing Himmler's plan for Germanizing the Lublin District, Globocnik sent the Polish families he displaced to Majdanek for eventual shipment to the Reich for forced labor.

Globocnik's greatest influence over Majdanek, however, came from his leadership of Operation Reinhard, the program to implement the "Final Solution" in the General Government. Globocnik used Majdanek to realize three of the operation's goals: exploiting Jewish workers, utilizing Jewish assets, and murdering Jews. Majdanek's principal role in the operation was to concentrate Jews who had been temporarily spared extermination to work for the SS. The camp's gassing facilities served primarily to dispose of the overflow from the other Reinhard killing centers, Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka.

Between April 29, 1942, and November 3, 1943, Jews constituted the overwhelming majority of prisoners registered at Majdanek. Research indicates that the SS deported between 74,000 and 90,000 Jews to the Majdanek main camp. At least 56,500 of these people were Polish Jews: 26,000 were from the Lublin District; 20,000 were from the Warsaw ghetto; 6,500 were from the Białystok ghetto; and roughly 4,000 were deported between November 1943 and May 1944 from other labor camps. At least 17,500 came from other European countries: 8,500 from Slovakia; 3,000 from Bohemia and Moravia; 3,000 from Germany and Austria; 2,000 from France, the Netherlands, and Greece; and 1,000 Jews from countries other than Poland, transferred to Majdanek after November 3, 1943.

Poles represented the largest minority in the camp. In mid-October 1942, out of a total of 9,519 registered prisoners in the camp, 7,468 were Jews (78.45 percent) and 1,884 were non-Jewish Poles (19.79 percent). In August 1943, there were 16,206 prisoners in the main camp: 9,105 were Jews (56.18 percent); and 3,893 (24.02 percent) were Poles. Other prisoners at Majdanek included Germans, Austrians, Czechs, Ukrainians, Soviet POWs, Soviet civilians, and a handful of others.

Majdanek also frequently served as a transit camp or a temporary stop for Polish and Soviet civilians being deported to the Reich for forced labor or being held temporarily after the Germans removed them as undesirables in a resettlement project. During the summer of 1943, for example, transports of victims of "pacification" operations in Russia, Galicia, and Belarus, along with Polish political prisoners and Jews, brought Majdanek's prisoner population to 23,000, making it the third-largest of the concentration camps, behind Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen.

In October 1942, on Himmler's orders, Majdanek opened a women's camp, whose population reached 7,800 in mid-1943. Although Himmler's January 1943 order that Majdanek establish a camp for children was ultimately rescinded, infants and children accounted for 6.2 percent of the camp's total identifiable population.

After the Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*) killings of November 3, 1943, Majdanek no longer had a majority of Jews among its prisoners. At the end of 1943, of 6,562 prisoners registered at Majdanek, approximately 71 were Jews. In mid-March 1944, as surviving Jews from various subcamps of Majdanek were brought to the main camp for eventual evacuation west to Auschwitz and other concentration camps in the Reich, 834 Jews were imprisoned in Majdanek. Some were killed in the gas chambers between March and July 1944; the SS transferred the rest to Auschwitz and Krakau-Plaszow.

After Majdanek was almost completely evacuated in April 1944, the German army opened a camp for Poles conscripted to build fortifications. Last-ditch pacification operations brought more peasant families into the camp in June. Majdanek was finally evacuated on July 22, 1944. When Soviet troops arrived the next day, they found 500 disabled Soviet POWs and more than 1,000 recently seized peasants.

Majdanek's SS leaders fostered corruption and sadism among the staff and guards. The first three commandants were "old school" managers from the prewar camp system: Karl Otto Koch (October 1941 to August 1942) had been commandant of Buchenwald; Max Koegel (August to October 1942) had commanded Ravensbrück; and Hermann Florstedt (October 1942 to September 1943) had been Buchenwald's Schutzhaftlagerführer. The SS executed Koch and Florstedt for corruption in 1945. Only Martin Weiss (September 1943 to May 1944) adopted the "practical" wartime SS management philosophy by modestly improving working conditions. Majdanek's last commandant, Artur Liebehenschel, had previously overseen Auschwitz.

Koch's deputy at Buchenwald, Hermann Hackmann, was Majdanek's first Schutzhaftlagerführer. The SS commuted his death sentence for corruption. Arnold Strippel, Majdanek's first Rapportführer and last Schutzhaftlagerführer, had also served at Buchenwald. Schutzhaftlagerführer Anton Thumann (1943–1944), infamous for extreme cruelty, had previously served at Dachau, Auschwitz, and Gross-Rosen. The women's camp was guarded by female SS guards from Ravensbrück, led by SS-Oberaufseherin Elsa Ehrich and her deputy Hermine Braunsteiner.

Majdanek's SS-Death's Head Guard Battalion, the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann KL Lublin, consisted largely of ethnic Germans recruited primarily from Yugoslavia and Romania. By late 1943, it had five companies and a canine unit, but its manpower was never adequate to guard the camp alone. For a year from November 1941, the 2nd Lithuanian Schutzmannschaft Battalion of Kaunas reinforced it, followed by two companies of SS auxiliaries from Trawniki and then by the 252nd Lithuanian Schutzmannschaft Battalion.

There were at least 270 labor details at Majdanek, many employed in maintaining the camp and its farm, vegetable gardens, and greenhouses. Majdanek's intended purpose, however, was to supply prisoners for SS-owned workshops and enterprises. In 1942, the prisoners built the Old Airfield (Alter Flughafen) forced labor camp across the road from





Forced labor at Lublin-Majdanek.  
USHMM WS #04394, COURTESY OF NARA

Majdanek, where the SS-Bekleidungswerk (Clothing Works) employed both Majdanek prisoners and Jewish forced laborers to sort and process clothing looted in Operation Reinhard. The Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke (German Equipment Works, DAW) opened workshops that employed Majdanek prisoners in such enterprises as repairing uniforms, making furniture, and converting gas engines to burn charcoal. Majdanek also supplied laborers to various formations of the SS, Waffen-SS, and police in Lublin.

In March 1943, Globocnik and the WVHA founded Ostindustrie GmbH (Eastern Industries, Ltd., Osti) as a joint venture to run existing and planned enterprises employing Jews in forced labor camps and to exploit formerly Jewish-owned assets. Majdanek prisoners worked in Osti enterprises at both the Old Airfield camp and at Majdanek by, inter alia, reconditioning aircraft parts, manufacturing brushes, and building an iron works with materials from the Warsaw and Białystok ghettos.

Lacking “productive” jobs, some Majdanek inmates were forced to perform tasks with little or no purpose other than inflicting suffering, such as moving and breaking up stones. The official workday lasted from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. between April and November; otherwise, from 6:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. Prisoners often had to work within the camp in the evenings as well.

On September 7, 1943, the WVHA announced that it would take over the SSPF Lublin’s labor camps, which would all become subcamps of Majdanek. On paper at least, Majdanek became a far-flung camp complex in which more than 45,000 Jews and tens of thousands of other prisoners labored to feed, clothe, house, and arm the SS in such enterprises as textile works, a sawmill, brickworks, peat processing, and munitions plants.

This empire collapsed on November 3–4, 1943, when Operation Harvest Festival wiped out most of the Jews in Lublin. SS enterprises that were dependent upon Jewish laborers shut down, although a few at Majdanek and the Old Airfield camp continued operating with non-Jewish prisoners. Majdanek did acquire new subcamps in January 1944: the remaining

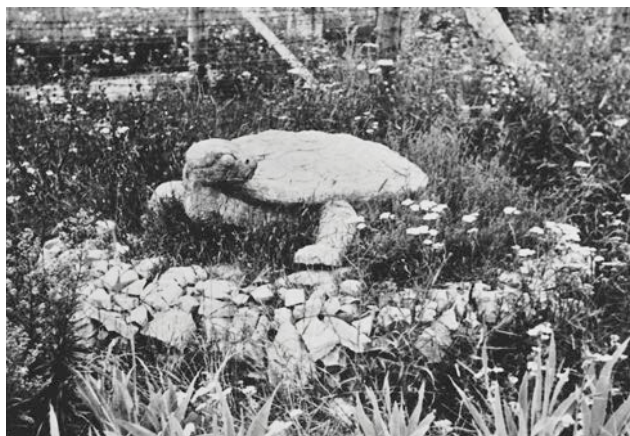
Jewish forced labor camps at Blizyn, Budzyń, and Radom, as well as Warsaw (until April 1944) and the reactivated Lipowa Street camp. Osti was dissolved in early 1944, however, and most of Majdanek’s able-bodied prisoners were sent elsewhere.

Three factors favored resistance activities at Majdanek, particularly from 1943: (1) the proximity of a large city; (2) the employment of civilian contractors on some projects within the camp; and (3) the influx of Polish political prisoners. Nearly every Polish political party and resistance group had an organized presence within the camp. Civilian contractors carried messages back and forth, so the Polish government-in-exile could stay informed about conditions. Resistance groups even planned an uprising at the end of 1943 but had to give it up in view of the massive SS presence in and around Lublin.

Escapes were most frequent in 1942, while the camp was still under construction. More than 100 Soviet POWs escaped as a result of several mass attempts that year. Several dozen Jews and Poles also succeeded in escaping during the camp’s existence, fleeing singly or in small groups, often taking advantage of opportunities offered by outside work details.

The SS destroyed most of Majdanek’s records before evacuating the camp, so figures for arrivals or deaths are only estimates. The accepted minimum number of registered prisoners is 240,000 to 250,000, but that does not include those who were killed immediately, nor does it reflect the latest research. Estimates of the number who died in Majdanek range from 80,000 to 110,000 for the main camp and another 15,000 to 20,000 in the subcamps.

Considering that in less than three years some 250,000 prisoners passed through a camp with a prisoner capacity of 25,000 and an actual population that seldom exceeded 15,000, it is clear that prisoners either were quickly transferred or died. Conditions were so catastrophic that they shocked even experienced prisoners. Inmates suffered from extreme over-



Post-liberation photograph of a turtle sculpture, produced by Majdanek prisoners on the commandant’s orders; its designer was artist Albin Maria Boniecki.

USHMM WS #50520, COURTESY OF IPN

crowding, bad (and scarce) water, inadequate food, and practically nonexistent sanitary facilities. Epidemics inevitably resulted from these conditions. Typhus was the most deadly, and sometimes infected the SS as well. Although the SS killed prisoners whom they suspected of infection during an outbreak in the summer of 1942, a new epidemic caused the camp to be quarantined from January to March 1943. A camp “hospital” lacked basic medicine and supplies. Several fields had a rubbish block (*Gammelblock*), a barracks surrounded with barbed wire, where debilitated prisoners were isolated without any care or sustenance. The prisoners were removed periodically and, if still alive, gassed.

In December 1943, Majdanek became a camp for prisoners who were no longer able to work. As no improvement in medical supplies or care accompanied this change, these prisoners were simply sent to Majdanek to die.

Fragments from Majdanek’s death books record that in the autumn of 1942 approximately 25 percent of the camp’s population died each month. In August 1943, the WVHA listed Majdanek with the highest mortality rate of all the camps: 7.67 percent for men and 4.41 percent for women. The camp’s first crematorium could cremate 200 corpses a day, which quickly proved inadequate. Even after a new crematorium opened in the autumn of 1943 that could incinerate 1,000 bodies a day, corpses continued to be burned on pyres. The ashes were spread on the camp’s farm.

Numerous Majdanek prisoners died at the hands of the camp’s staff, guards, or prisoner-functionaries, many of the latter professional criminals from the Reich. But systematic murder claimed vastly more victims. From its inception, Majdanek was an execution site to which Poles and Jews were brought to be shot in pits behind Field V or in the nearby Krepiec Forest. Prisoners were also hanged or clubbed to death or dispatched with lethal injections.

Gassing probably claimed the largest portion of Majdanek’s murder victims. The three gas chambers known to have operated at Majdanek were constructed in late 1942 and 1943 next to the bathing barracks across from Field I. The two smaller chambers could hold 150 people, the larger one 300. All three used Zyklon B and at least two could also use carbon monoxide.

After the first gas chamber became operational in the autumn of 1942, the SS began selecting the elderly, children, and mothers of young children from newly arriving transports of Jews. They often waited, sometimes for days without food or water, in the barbed-wire enclosed “Rose Garden” north of the gassing facility, before being gassed. Selections were also regularly conducted within the camp to send debilitated Jewish prisoners to the gas chambers. Some non-Jews too ill to work were probably also gassed.

The gas chambers ceased operating at Majdanek sometime in late 1943. Some scholars estimate that 50,000 victims were gassed at Majdanek, but this number may be revised. Witnesses and historians agree that the majority of Majdanek’s

gassing victims were murdered in 1943. A recently discovered British intercept of a January 11, 1943, SS radio transmission communicating a “fortnightly report” of Operation Reinhard reveals that 24,733 Jews had been “resettled” (i.e., killed) at Majdanek under Operation Reinhard in 1942, 12,761 of them in the last two weeks of December. As Majdanek may have had only two operational gas chambers at that time, it is possible that many of the Jews killed in that last month were shot rather than gassed. Nevertheless, the apparent fact that nearly 25,000 Operation Reinhard victims were murdered at Majdanek in 1942 alone suggests that Majdanek’s role in the “Final Solution” may have been larger than most historians have heretofore assumed.

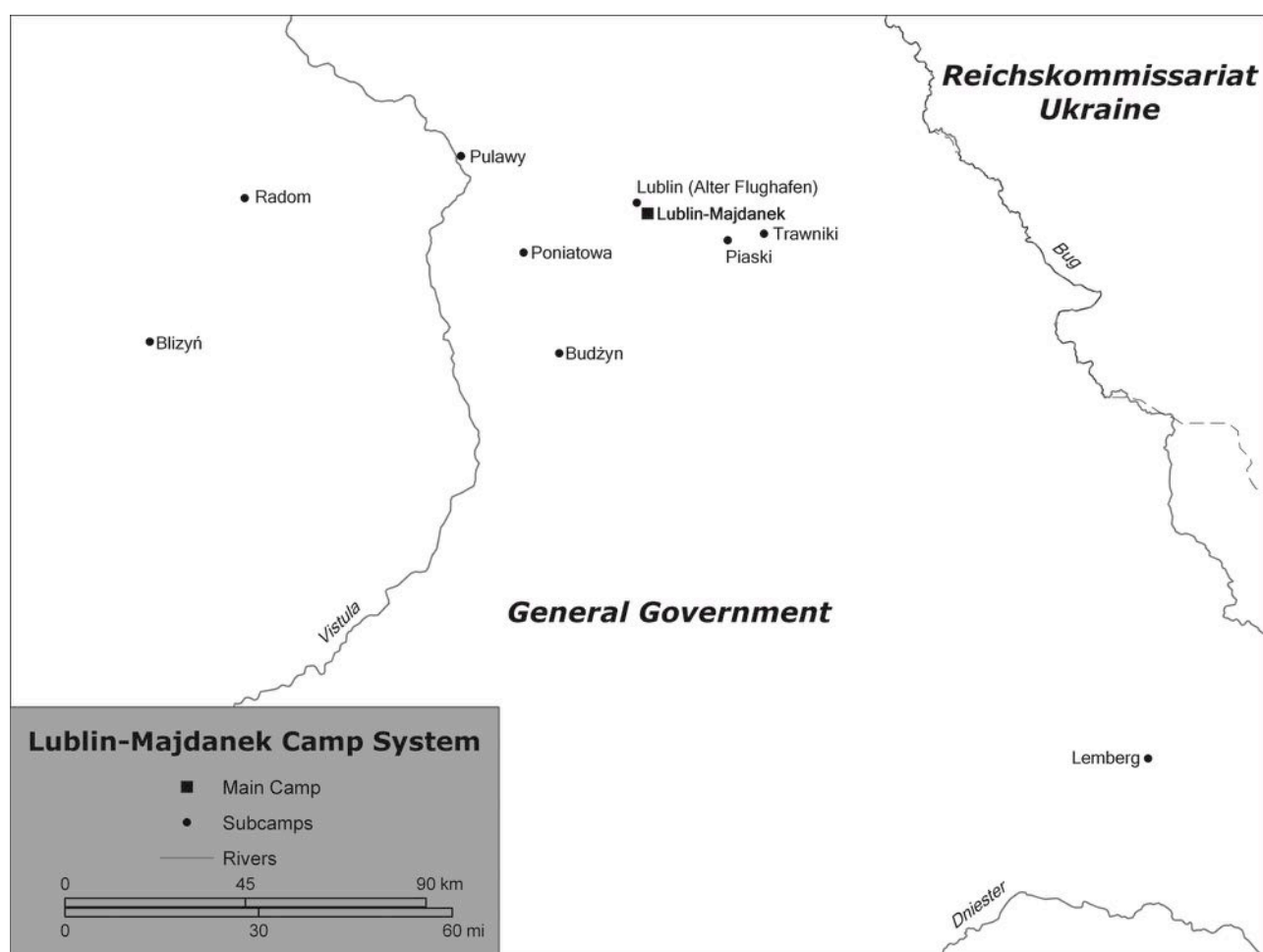
Shooting was also used to dispose of the 10,000 Polish prisoners brought to Majdanek in “death transports” from Polish prisons between December 1943 and March 1944. After the gassings ceased, the prisoners selected for death because they could no longer work were shot in the crematorium. Shootings continued into Majdanek’s last days: 1,350 inmates of Lublin’s castle prison were shot at Majdanek on July 20 and 21, 1944.

Majdanek was the first concentration camp to be liberated, in late July 1944, and newsreels and photos from the camp—particularly of the mountain of shoes found there—caused an international sensation. A handful of low-level SS camp officials and Kapos seized at the camp were tried and executed in the autumn of 1944. A number of Majdanek’s leading SS officials were also tried after the war, but few for their activities at Majdanek. All three commandants who survived the war were condemned to death, Weiss for crimes at Dachau, Koegele for Ravensbrück, Liebehenschel for Auschwitz. The only postwar trial to deal at length with crimes at Majdanek was held in Düsseldorf in the 1970s. Among the defendants convicted were Schutzhaftlagerführer Hackmann and Hermine Braunsteiner, whom the U.S. extradited.

**SOURCES** The following are some of the most informative published sources on Majdanek: Barbara Schwindt, *Das Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslager Majdanek: Funktionswandel im Kontext der “Endlösung”* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2005); Tomasz Kranz, “Eksterminacja Żydów na Majdanku i rola obozu w realizacji ‘Akcji Reinhardt,’” *ZeMa* 22 (2005): 7–55; Kranz, “Ewidencja zgonów i śmiertelność więźniów KL Lublin,” *ZeMa* 23 (2005): 7–51; Zofia Leszczyńska, “Transporty i stany liczbowe obozu,” in *Majdanek, 1941–1944*, ed. Tadeusz Mencil (Lublin: Wydawn. Lubelskie, 1991); Czesław Rajca, “Problem liczby ofiar w obozie na Majdanku,” *ZeMa* 14 (1992): 127–131.

Archival records may be found in USHMMA (including in the recently released records of the ITS); NARA; APM; IPN; APL; and the *Proceedings against Hermann Hackmann, et al.* in Düsseldorf, probably in the NWHStA-(D); and various proceedings held in the BA-L relating to the city of Lublin and Lublin District.

Elizabeth White



## BLIŻYN

Blizyn (German: Blizyn) is located about 40 kilometers (24.8 miles) southwest of Radom. The forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ) in Blizyn was officially established on March 8, 1943. At that time, it was subordinated to the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) in Radom, SS-Standartenführer Dr. Herbert Böttcher, and viewed as a subcamp of the Jewish forced labor camp in Radom. The main company employing prisoners from the Blizyn labor camp was the SS holding company Ostindustrie GmbH (Osti). The company paid the SS a rate of 3.70 zloty per day for prisoner labor. Once the prisoners were withdrawn, the armaments factory in Blizyn was sold to the Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke GmbH (German Equipment Works, DAW), and the quarry in Blizyn was sold to the Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke GmbH (German Earth and Stone Works, DESt), both at book values determined by Osti.<sup>1</sup>

Apparently the camp had been used previously to house Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), and some bodies were buried around the campsite. This contributed to the serious rat infestation in the camp, which plagued the prisoners. From the spring until the summer of 1943, various groups of Jews were transferred to the Blizyn forced labor camp, including Jews from Radom, Kielce, Częstochowa, Piotrków Trybu-

nalski, and Tomaszów Mazowiecki. In the late summer of 1943, another group of Jewish prisoners arrived from the Białystok ghetto via Majdanek. Among this group were a few doctors and also a number of Jewish women with bandaged wrists, who had tried to commit suicide when they thought that they would be gassed at Treblinka.<sup>2</sup> In late 1943 or early 1944, those children (aged 10 to 12) who had survived in the camp until then were taken away and presumably murdered.<sup>3</sup>

The camp consisted of roughly 5,000 or six 6,000 prisoners comprising both men and women. The prisoners' living compound was composed of a number barracks, with the female and male barracks strictly segregated from each other. There were also additional barrack buildings for the camp administration, a kitchen, a hospital, and also a primitive treatment center (*Ambulanz*). The camp was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence, which was lit up by searchlights at night. Within the camp, the parade ground was also surrounded by barbed wire. In an adjoining camp, separated from the prisoners by the Kamienna River, were the offices and accommodations for the camp personnel. Apart from the guards, composed of ethnic German and Ukrainian SS men, as well as German SS, there were also work supervisors, including some German civilian craftsmen.<sup>4</sup>



Every morning and evening there was a roll call during which the prisoners were counted, and new instructions were issued. The food supplied to the prisoners was completely inadequate. It consisted of only about 170 to 250 grams (6 to 9 ounces) of usually damp bread, as well as a watery vegetable soup at lunchtime, which sometimes contained a little meat. Prisoners who worked in the kitchen could acquire a little extra food and trade it. Others bribed Ukrainian guards who could even arrange for local inhabitants to throw bread across the fence. Conditions for workers in the armaments factory and especially the quarry were arduous. Others worked inside the camp in various craft sections, as tailors, cobblers, and carpenters, in 12-hour shifts.<sup>5</sup>

According to a letter of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), Staff W (Business), dated January 19, 1944, the Blizyn forced labor camp was to become a subcamp of the Majdanek concentration camp in February.<sup>6</sup> The official transfer took place on February 10, 1944.

The camp commandant from March 1943 until the subordination of the camp to Majdanek was SS-Oberscharführer Paul Nell. One survivor described him as “a terribly sadistic SS man” who terrorized the prisoners with his vicious dog Pasha. “At the command of his master this dog tore victims to pieces.”<sup>7</sup> Nell also shot prisoners during roll call on several occasions.

SS-Oberscharführer Heller replaced Nell in February 1944. He enjoyed a markedly better reputation among the surviving prisoners. Under his control as camp commandant, for example, visits by husbands to their “wives” in the female barracks were silently tolerated; he also curtailed the arbitrary shootings and beatings of prisoners that were customary in the camp. He even made efforts to improve the food rations and, in the face of a serious outbreak of typhus, obtained some medical supplies for the Jewish doctors in the camp.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, hundreds of prisoners died of typhus, exhaustion, and SS brutality during the camp’s existence. The corpses were buried in a wood close to the camp. The names of the dead were simply erased from the camp records, and only the number of fatalities was recorded by the camp administration.<sup>9</sup>

When SS-Unterscharführer Karl Artur Gosberg stood in as camp commandant for some 10 weeks due to Heller’s illness (he contracted typhus himself) from April until June 1944, the camp soon relapsed back to its former brutality. The Jewish camp elder (Lagerältester), a man named Minzberg who died after the war in the United States, was sometimes forced to carry out the whippings of prisoners (usually 25 lashes), which occasionally even resulted in death. One female prisoner was found to have an egg illegally in her possession. She was given 100 lashes on the orders of Gosberg. She died about 12 days later from the severely infected wounds.<sup>10</sup>

Apart from the change of command, the transition to a concentration camp entailed certain other changes. Those prisoners working outside the camp now received striped uniforms. In addition, the inclusion of some non-Jews (Poles) in a sepa-

rate barracks fenced in within the camp may have been related to this change of status from a Jewish forced labor camp.

Escape attempts were severely punished. For example, the Ukrainian guards hanged some attempted escapees on the camp fence. Nevertheless, several escapes were attempted, some even meeting with success. Before the camp became a concentration camp, Samuel Gerstenfeld escaped with a small group, making it successfully across the bridge to the neighboring guards’ camp facility and then fleeing. Another group escaped with the aid of a tunnel in the first half of 1944, having made contact with partisans outside the camp who were keen that a doctor should escape to join them. Once it was discovered at roll call that five prisoners were missing, all the prisoners were held on the parade ground for hours during the investigation. Prisoners from the block where the escape took place were severely beaten and placed in the underground punishment cell for several days.<sup>11</sup>

As the front began to approach the Radom area at the end of July 1944, the Blizyn subcamp was evacuated. Records of the WVHA indicate that the armaments factory that employed prisoners from the Blizyn subcamp began to transfer its equipment into the Reich by rail on July 22, 1944.<sup>12</sup> The remaining prisoners (1,614 male Jews and 715 female Jews) were transported in cattle wagons to Auschwitz, where they arrived on July 31, 1944, and were issued numbers B-1160 to B-2773 and A-15211 to A-15925, respectively.<sup>13</sup> The proportion of survivors from the Blizyn subcamp was relatively high. Survivors mainly thank the commandant, Heller, for helping to maintain their health, such that most survived the initial selection on arrival at Auschwitz.

The first commandant of the Jewish forced labor camp in Blizyn, SS-Oberscharführer Nell, was sentenced to death and executed by the Polish authorities after the war. SS-Oberscharführer Heller, who officially commanded the camp from February until its dissolution in July 1944, was captured and tried by U.S. authorities. However, after several Jewish survivors from Blizyn testified in his favor, he was acquitted and released.<sup>14</sup> SS-Unterscharführer Gosberg, who stood in as camp commandant for about 10 weeks from April to June 1944, was tried by the regional court in Wuppertal in 1961. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison on May 19, 1961.<sup>15</sup>

**SOURCES** Documentation relating to the Blizyn subcamp, including a number of testimonies by survivors, can be found in the following archives: AŽIH; BA-BL; BA-L; BA-MA; IPN; ITS; USHMMA (RG-02.042, Samuel Gerstenfeld memoir; RG-14.045M, copies of NS 3 from BA-BL); VHF; and YVA. A number of published survivor memoirs include sections dealing with their experiences in the Blizyn camp. Especially relevant for the later period, when it became subordinated to the Majdanek concentration camp, are Schraga Golani, *Brennendes Leben: Vom Pabianice und Piotrków in Polen durch die Lager Skarzysko Kamienna, Blizyn, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Odruf bis zur Befreiung in Buchenwald* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 2004); and Mira Ryczke Kimmelman, *Echoes from the Holocaust: A Memoir* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997). The verdict from the trial of Karl Gosberg in

Wuppertal, published as Lfd. Nr. 510 in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: UPA, 1979), 17:404–416, is also focused on events in 1944, following the camp's subordination to the Majdanek concentration camp. For background on Osti, see *Trials of War Criminals before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10, Nuernberg, October 1946–April 1949* [Green Series], 15 vols. (Washington, DC: U.S. GPO 1949–1953; reprint, Buffalo, NY: William S. Hein, 1997), 5:512–524.

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## NOTES

1. TWC 5 (1997): 512–524: Report by the SS-Unterscharführer Johann Sebastian Fischer on a rough audit of the books of the Osti, February 29, 1944.

2. AŻIH, 301/1812, testimony of Gołda Teich; 301/1450, testimony of Maria Cymbalist from Tomaszów Mazowiecki; 301/59, testimony of Mojsze Bojm from Radom; Ryczke Kimmelman, *Echoes from the Holocaust: A Memoir* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997), pp. 44–46; USHMMA, RG-02.042, Samuel Gerstenfeld memoir, transferred to Bliżyn from the Kielce ghetto.

3. AŻIH, 301/1812.

4. Verdict of LG Wuppertal in the case of Karl Artur Gosberg (11 Ks 1/60), May 19, 1961, Lfd. Nr. 510, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: UPA, 1979), 17:407–408.

5. AŻIH, 301/7621, testimony of Eta Brifman; and 301/1812.

6. Stab W an Chef des Amtes W IV, January 19, 1944, betr.: Umwandlung der Zwangsarbeitslager in Krakau-Plaschow, Lenberg [Lemberg], Lublin und Radom-Blisyn [Blizyn] in Konzentrationslager (NO-1036), in BA-L, B162, Versch. 299, pp. 84–87.

7. Kimmelman, *Echoes from the Holocaust*, pp. 47–48.

8. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 17: 408. According to one account, nightly visits of men to the women's barracks (and vice versa) were relatively common, as were even sexual relations between some Jewish girls and the SS guards (both German and non-German); see AŻIH, 301/1456, testimony of Pesach Bursztajn (in Yiddish).

9. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 17: 408; AŻIH, 301/1450.

10. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 17: 408–411.

11. USHMMA, RG-02.042, Samuel Gerstenfeld memoir; Schraga Golani, *Brennendes Leben: Vom Pabianice und Piotrków in Polen durch die Lager Skarzysko Kamienia, Blizyn, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Obrdruf bis zur Befreiung in Buchenwald* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre, 2004), pp. 144–150.

12. USHMMA, RG-14.045M (BA-BL, NS 3/605).

13. Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: H. Holt, 1990), p. 674; AŻIH, 301/7621; Golani, *Brennendes Leben*, pp. 170–173.

14. Kimmelman, *Echoes from the Holocaust*, p. 48.

15. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 17: 415.

## BUDZYŃ

Budzyń (German: Budzyn) is located about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) to the northwest of Kraśnik. In the mid-1930s, the Pol-

ish authorities established a military-industrial production center there. Under German occupation, most of the arms factories were taken over by the Reichswerke Hermann Göring, and in 1942, the Heinkel Company opened a factory for aircraft construction using SS prison labor as well as their own employees.

The first Heinkel (He) project employing Jewish forced workers was established in April 1942 in Mielec. Then in June 1942, a proposal was drafted to exploit Budzyń as the main center for the relocation of much of its production from Rostock, which had already been hit by Allied bombing. The Budzyn site offered 55,000 square meters (about 66,000 square yards) of factory space and adequate housing nearby.<sup>1</sup> Following the visit of Ernst Heinkel in July 1942,<sup>2</sup> the company planned to deploy some 2,100 Polish and Jewish workers in the factory to produce the Junkers 188 aircraft.<sup>3</sup> The first Jewish forced laborers started work at the Heinkel-Budzyn factory in November 1942, comprising several hundred Jews from the liquidated ghetto in Końskowola and about 150 Jewish prisoners of war (POWs) from the Lipowa 7 camp, who had been captured while serving in the Polish Army.

The Budzyn forced labor camp, which was initially subordinated to the SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in Lublin, Odilo Globocnik, was located about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) from the Heinkel factory. As described by the survivor Morris Wyszogrod, the main purpose of the camp was to supply workers for the industrial plants of the German armaments industry. The most important of these was the Heinkel factory, which repaired airplane parts. There was also the Organisation Todt (OT) that repaired tanks and other heavy equipment and other, smaller operations. The daily march to these workplaces took about 45 to 60 minutes.<sup>4</sup>

From the summer of 1942, various groups of Jews were transferred to the Budzyn camp, including 100 Jewish women from the Bełżyce ghetto and about 500 Jews from the remnant of the Krasnik ghetto.<sup>5</sup> Others groups arrived subsequently from the camps in Gościeradów, Hrubieszów, and Krychów. The Jews' living compound was composed of six barracks similar to those in Majdanek, constructed by the first prisoners, plus a kitchen barrack and a toilet barrack. It was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence and four watchtowers used by Ukrainians trained at Trawniki. Over the gate was a sign that read: "Jedem das Seine" (To Each His Own). Conditions in the camp were very bad, and the number of prisoners declined due to disease and SS brutality. In April 1943, according to a report of the Armaments Inspectorate of the Wehrmacht, there were 750 Jews in the Budzyn camp, which "due to prolonged undernourishment were becoming generally listless and would have to be replaced by Polish civilian workers."<sup>6</sup>

On May 1, 1943, 807 survivors of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising who had been sent to Majdanek were selected by the then-commandant of the Budzyn camp, SS-Oberscharführer Reinhold Feiks, from the Sudetenland. Feiks is described by most prisoners as having been especially brutal and bloodthirsty. According to most estimates, following the arrival of

the Warsaw group, the Budzyn camp had some 3,000 Jewish prisoners, including several hundred females.<sup>7</sup>

By the summer of 1943, Air Ministry priorities had changed, and production of parts for the He 219 in the Heinkel-Budzyn factory began in October 1943. In September 1943, this facility had some 1,300 Jewish forced workers in a total workforce of 3,950.

According to a letter of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), on October 22, 1943, the Budzyn forced labor camp officially became a subcamp of the Majdanek concentration camp. This transfer took place just before Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*), on November 3–4, 1943, during which more than 40,000 of the 50,000 remaining Jewish forced laborers in the Lublin district were murdered. The prisoners at Budzyn were fortunate to be spared, presumably on account of the military significance still given to the Heinkel factory.

News of the massacres soon spread via the Ukrainian guards, blackening the spirits of the prisoners, which had been raised by news of Soviet advances. Following rumors of a possible liquidation, a group of prisoners tried to escape a few weeks later. The Ukrainian guards not only shot those trying to escape; they also dragged more than 30 other prisoners from their barracks and murdered them inside the compound.<sup>8</sup>

The women were housed in a separate barracks, which the men were not permitted to visit. However, men and women were able to meet and talk for a few minutes everyday outside the barracks, and some love affairs flourished. By January 1944, the food rations were so meager that prisoners without access to extra rations wasted away. “Those who had no more strength to work were sent to the camp hospital, where they quickly died.”<sup>9</sup>

The Budzyn camp was relocated at the end of January 1944 to another newly constructed camp about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) away, known as “Barrackenbau,” now much closer to the Heinkel factory. Here the prisoners also received striped uniforms and a prisoner number. The transfer took several days. At the new location, the camp was somewhat larger and surrounded by an electrified fence.<sup>10</sup> Several hundred sick and weak prisoners, including many women, were not transferred but were murdered instead. This relocation reflected the “official” integration of the camp into the concentration camp system and was accompanied by the appointment of SS-Obersturmführer Josef Leipold as camp commandant to replace SS-Untersturmführer Fritz Tauscher. Prisoners recall that the daily rations slightly improved at the new camp, consisting now of a piece of bread with margarine and soup with even a couple of potatoes in it.<sup>11</sup>

Punishment in the form of beatings was administered in front of all the prisoners on the parade ground. Some useful prisoners received special privileges, including Morris Wyszogrod, who painted artworks for the commandant, and Jakob Eljowicz, who was the SS portrait photographer. When there was an escape in February 1944, Wyszogrod was ordered to draw a plan of the camp, marking the point of escape to accompany the official report.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the camp’s formal designation as a concentration camp, certain cultural privileges were granted by the camp’s leadership. Just prior to the move in January, the prisoners put on a humorous show, involving songs and skits.<sup>13</sup> Then at Passover in 1944, thanks to the influence of camp elder (Lagerältester) Noah Stockman, unleavened bread was baked, and a Seder ceremony was held.

After the last director of the Heinkel-Budzyn factory conceded in January 1944 that much of his workforce was not being used to their full capacity, the Armaments Inspectorate withdrew its resistance to the workforce being deployed elsewhere.<sup>14</sup> As a result, the Heinkel labor force declined by some 50 percent in February 1944. Throughout the spring and early summer of 1944, there were various selections in the camp, as weaker prisoners were designated for death and groups of workers were sent to other camps. Among the destinations of prisoners from Budzyn in this period were the Heinkel factories in Mielec and Wieliczka and also the Majdanek main camp.

The camp was finally evacuated in July 1944 in the face of the advancing Red Army, with many of the prisoners being taken initially to Wieliczka and subsequently toward Germany. The proportion of survivors from the camp was relatively high compared with other Jewish labor camps in the area.

Josef Leipold, born November 10, 1913, in Altröhlau, the camp commandant following its relocation in January 1944, was extradited to Poland by the Americans in 1947. He was tried by the district court in Lublin and sentenced to death on November 9, 1948. He was executed by shooting on March 8, 1949.

**SOURCES** There are several pages devoted to the Budzyn camp in David Silberklang’s dissertation: “The Holocaust in the Lublin District” (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University Jerusalem, 2003). This also includes a more comprehensive list of relevant sources. The article by Lutz Budrass, “Arbeitskräfte können aus der reichlich vorhandenen jüdischen Bevölkerung gewonnen werden: Das Heinkel-Werk in Budzyń 1942–1944,” *JfW* 1 (2004): 41–64, provides useful information on the decision making that led to the establishment of the Heinkel works in Budzyń. There is also a short article on the camp in Polish by B. Wróblewski, “Obóz w Budzyniu,” *ZeMa* 5 (1971): 179–189.

A number of accounts by survivors from the Budzyn subcamp can be found in the following archives: AŽIH (copies at USHMM); VHF; and YVA. Relevant German documentation can be found in BA-MA and DMM. Some published testimony is available in *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann: Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*, 9 vols. (Jerusalem: State of Israel Ministry of Justice, 1992). A number of published survivor memoirs include sections dealing with their experiences in the Budzyn camp. Especially relevant for the later period, when it became subordinated to the Majdanek concentration camp are Henry Orenstein, *I Shall Live* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Morris Wyszogrod, *A Brush with Death: An Artist in the Death Camps* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999); and Joshua Laks, *I Was There, Zaklikow* (Tel Aviv: Y. Laks, 2005).

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## NOTES

1. DMM, Sondersammlungen, Dokumentation, HeA Korr. Milch, letter of Heinkel to Milch, June 18, 1942.

2. BA-MA, RL 3/1105, pp. 74–82, Visit to the Polish factories in Budzyń and Baranów, July 22, 1942, appendix to letter of Heinkel to Belter (RLM), July 28, 1942.

3. DMM, HeA Berliner Büro 2, Notes of a meeting, September 24, 1942.

4. Morris Wyszogrod, *A Brush with Death: An Artist in the Death Camps* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999, p. 136. This volume also includes sketches drawn by the author of scenes in the camp prior to its relocation in January 1944.

5. AŻIH, 301/647, testimony of Genia Ajdelman from Bełżyce; 301/2221, testimony of Nuchim Rozenel from Kraśnik.

6. BA-MA, RW 23/1, Rüstungsinspektion im Generalgouvernement, Review of Third Quarter, 1942.

7. *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann: Record of Proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem*, 9 vols. (Jerusalem: State of Israel Ministry of Justice, 1992), 2:1232–1233, testimony of David Wdowinski; AŻIH, 301/1086.

8. Henry Orenstein, *I Shall Live* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 152–155, dates this incident in November; Wyszogrod, *A Brush with Death*, pp. 172–173, dates it in January 1944. Other sources date the incident in February.

9. Orenstein, *I Shall Live*, p. 158.

10. Wyszogrod, *A Brush with Death*, pp. 173–174; *The Trial of Adolf Eichmann*, 2:1235; AŻIH, 301/1514, testimony of Róża Mitelman.

11. Orenstein, *I Shall Live*, p. 164; Wyszogrod, *A Brush with Death*, pp. 173–175.

12. Wyszogrod, *A Brush with Death*, pp. 175–178.

13. Orenstein, *I Shall Live*, pp. 162–163.

14. BA-MA, RW 23/4, p. 16, KTB Rüstungsinspektion Generalgouvernement 1/44.

## LEMBERG [AKA LEMBERG (WEST-STRASSE), LEMBERG (JANOWSKA)]

The Lemberg subcamp (best known as Lemberg-Janowska) of the Lublin-Majdanek concentration camp in Galician Lemberg (Lwów, Lvov, Lviv) existed for only a few months, from January to July 1944. It was located at 132–134 Janowska Strasse, Lemberg. During the Third Reich, the street, which headed from the northwest of the city in the direction of Janów, was called Weststrasse.

A forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ) was located at Lemberg between the end of 1941 and the autumn of 1943. It held at least 50,000, but probably between 100,000 and 120,000 people, mostly Polish and Soviet Jews. They were all murdered. Some of them fell victim to the brutal living and working conditions in this camp, which was under the control of the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) Galizien, Fritz Katzmann; many more were murdered at the execution site, adjacent to the camp, called Der Sand (also, Todestal).

The camp was located on the site of an old camp and factory. In the camp were Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke GmbH

(German Equipment Works, DAW) workshops, administration buildings, and prisoner barracks. In March 1943, the ZALfJ reached its maximum capacity with 15,000 prisoners. During the course of 1943, the camp was allocated to Ostindustrie GmbH (Osti), a company jointly owned by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) and SSPF. It lasted for only a short time. During the course of the year, the camp was gradually decreased in size and its inmates murdered. The last inmates of the ZALfJ were murdered or deported on November 3–4, 1943, as part of Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*).

A Sonderkommando 1005, consisting of between 120 and 250 prisoners from the Lemberg camp, was busy from the summer of 1943 in removing the traces of the mass killings from the camp and its surroundings. The squad was named after the file name given to the action by the Gestapo chief Heinrich Müller. The Sonderkommando “unearthed” tens of thousands of corpses and was present at mass executions, where it cremated the victims. It was commanded by low-ranking officers under the Commander of the Security Police and the SD (KdS), headed by SS-Untersturmführer Walter Schallock. Although officially the Kommando was top secret, the smoke and odors from the cremations were sometimes so strong that its activities could not remain hidden. In one case, the Lublin fire brigade was called out. On November 19, 1943, members of the Sonderkommando rebelled, attacking the guards and breaking through a barbed-wire fence; 12 men managed to escape, while the others were all shot. After that, a new, smaller Sonderkommando was established, but it never operated. Members of this Kommando were shot in January 1944.

From January 1944, Lemberg was still operating as a work and internment site primarily for non-Jewish criminals, including several hundred Poles, Ukrainians, and ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche). This is the period in which the WVHA ordered by letter dated January 13, 1944, that the camp become part of the Lublin-Majdanek concentration camp. In the following months, there were a few Jews, around 100, in the camp. As a rule, they were Jews who had succeeded in escaping and hiding among the Polish population but had been discovered and arrested. Other Jews, exhausted from months or years living underground, had voluntarily surrendered themselves to the camp. Here they worked mostly as tailors, cobblers, leather dyers, electricians, gardeners, and launderers. It was probably around this time that plans were implemented to put the DAW workshops back in operation. The number of prisoners in the camp probably did not exceed 2,000 in 1944. Honigsman states that in the spring of 1944 there were less than 1,000 prisoners in the camp.

During a bombardment of the camp by the Soviet Air Force on April 20–21, 1944, quite a few prisoners, including 15 Jews, managed to escape. The camp was finally evacuated in the summer of 1944 with the approach of the Red Army. The International Tracing Service (ITS) puts the evacuation in June, but historian Thomas Sandkühler puts the date as July 19, 1944. The evacuated prisoners—there were less than 100

Jews—were deported to the west. There they worked at first in building fortifications for the SS Construction Staff Venus I and in an SSPF Galizien holding camp in Neusandez/Grybów. They were transferred then to the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp. From there they were evacuated via Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen to Gusen, a Mauthausen subcamp—an odyssey that only few Janowska prisoners survived.

**SOURCES** The camp is briefly referred to in a few monographs including Philip Friedman, “The Destruction of the Jews of Lwów,” in *Roads to Extinction: Essays on the Holocaust*, ed. Ada June Friedman (New York: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980), pp. 244–321; and Eliiakh Iones, *Evrei L’vova v gody vtoroi mirovoi voiny i katastrofy evropeiskogo evreistva 1939–1944*, ed. Svetlana Shenbrunn (Moscow: Rossiiskaia biblioteka Kholokosta, 1999). Thomas Sandkühler, in “Endlösung in Galizien”: *Der Judenmord in Ostpolen und die Rettungsinitiativen von Berthold Beitz 1941–1944* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1996), provides rich detail on the history of the Sonderkommando 1005 and the camp after October–November 1943 but states that the plan to convert the Lemberg camp into a concentration camp had been abandoned in 1943. J. Honigsman describes Lemberg in *Janower Lager (Janower Zwangsarbeitslager für Juden in Lemberg): Kurzer historischer Essay*, ed. Lwower Gesellschaft für jüdische Kultur (Lemberg, 1996), dealing also with the removal of the evidence of the mass killings. Essential reading for the events and camps in Ukraine is the source material in Towiah Friedman, ed., *Die verantwortliche SS, Gestapo und Schutzpolizei bei der Ermordung der Juden Ost-Galiziens, 1941–1944: Dokumenten-Sammlung* (Haifa: T. Friedmann, 1996). Józef Marszałek in *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum Na Majdanku, 1998), pp. 107–109, describes the camp. The subcamp is also described in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1:168; and in “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1820.

Due to the camp’s short period of existence, there are as a rule no eyewitness reports. Survivors’ statements are based on time in the forced labor camp and did not take notice of the transfer by the WVHA into the new administration. Investigations into the Lemberg ZALfJ, SK 1005, and Lemberg concentration camp were led by the Sta. Ludwigsburg under file EL 48/2 I, Bü 395. The files hold an extensive collection of survivors’ statements/records of interviews. The history of the fire brigade being called out because of the heavy smoke caused by the Sonderkommando 1005 activities is based on a report by the fire brigade and held in DALO, R 58/1/66. Bl. 100. It is cited by Sandkühler, “Endlösung in Galizien,” at pp. 271–280, who also cites other witness and survivor reports from the early period of the Lemberg camp on Janowska Strasse. General information on the history of the different camps in Lemberg can be obtained from the following archival collections: AAN: Records of the Lwów mayor’s office under German occupation (Collection 540), and other records of Lwów and the Government General; AGK: Records of war crimes trials in postwar Poland; BA-MA: detailed rec-

ords of Oberfeldkommandantur 365 in Lemberg, 1941–1944 (Collection RH 53-23), and documents of the Rüstungskommando Lemberg (Collection RW 23); AŽIH: materials from the Lwów Judenrat, and Yiddish underground periodicals; as well as ZdL at BA-L: records of war crimes trials in postwar Germany. For Lwów, see especially files with the prefix 208 AR. At USHMM, the following collections are of interest: RG-15.066M (Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin records, 1939–1944); RG-15.043M (KdS in Lublin records, 1939–1945); and RG-15.065M (Kommandeur der Orpo Lublin records, 1940–1944); 1995.A.1086 and 31.003M (copies of materials found in DALO); and RG 22.002M (records of the war crimes trials conducted by the Soviet Extraordinary Commission in postwar Lwów).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## LUBLIN (ALTER FLUGHAFEN) (MEN)

The Lublin (Alter Flughafen) camp was named after its location, on the airfield of the former aircraft manufacturer T. Plage/T. Laskiewicz near Lublin, near Fabryczna Street, 1 to 2 kilometers (0.6 to 1.2 miles) to the north of Majdanek. It was part of a complex system of camps and warehouses at the site, which included the Nachbaulager Russland-Süd (for the Wehrmacht’s southern front) and the main supply camp (*Hauptnachtschublager*) for the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Russland-Süd und Kaukasien.

The use of Jewish labor at Lublin (Alter Flughafen) began in July–August 1940 with the establishment of a forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ). No later than the summer of 1942, the camp was significantly expanded and became part of the close economic cooperation between the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), headed by Oswald Pohl, and the local SS and Police Leader (SSPF), Odilo Globocnik. Both parties were interested in cooperating with one another: Globocnik, in intensifying the exploitation of Jewish forced labor in the Lublin region and in the profitable recycling of the property of deported and murdered Jews. Pohl was interested in increasing the efficiency of the SS economic enterprises. This resulted in 1942–1943 not only in increased concentration and exploitation of the Jews in the Lublin region under the control of the WVHA but in the formation of the Ostindustrie GmbH (Osti), a company jointly owned by the WVHA and SSPF. In this joint venture, Pohl secured authority over the Jewish forced labor, and Globocnik secured functional control of the camp, particularly because he appointed his confidants to key positions in it. The Lublin (Alter Flughafen) camp was one of the camps where this cooperation was practiced.

On the camp itself, there is little published information. In 1942–1943, the Lublin (Alter Flughafen) camp was comprehensively expanded in connection with its task of being a sorting and recycling site for the property of Jews deported from the General Government and murdered. The property dealt with in the Lublin (Alter Flughafen) camp came from



the Majdanek, Bełżec, and Sobibór camps but also from other dissolved ghettos and camps. The camp had a railway connection, useful for dispatching the Jewish property after it was cleaned, repaired, sorted, and packed. It is unknown when the first inmates were put into this camp. According to historian David Silberklang, it was no later than the summer of 1943, for there is a record at the time of 5,000 male prisoners who were separated in their own camp from the female prisoners. While in 1942, there were about 300 women in the camp, in 1943 there were already 5,000 to 6,000. While the women were mostly used to sort and recycle clothing, the men were used primarily to sort, recycle, and recast unusable household appliances and furniture. One source states that, starting in November 1942, about 4,000 women had to do hard physical labor, including paving runways. Trials conducted after the war shed light on the living and work conditions in the women's camp: there was no running water and no sewerage, and electricity was only available at the job sites. Many of the female overseers had come from Lublin-Majdanek, among them Charlotte Mayer.

Little is known about the origin of the prisoners. In 1942, most of the prisoners in camp were from the Majdan Tatarski ghetto, which was located not far from the camp. The ghetto was liquidated in November 1942, and most of the prisoners then came from liquidated camps and ghettos from a wider area, with some even coming from Germany and Austria. The Lublin (Alter Flughafen) camp can be seen as an important location for Jewish forced labor in Lublin; according to Silberklang, it probably was the most important one. Former Jewish property was sold here to German offices and citizens in Lublin and also sent to Germany. Some perpetrators operated businesses large and small with stolen Jewish property.

On October 22, 1943, the camp became a subcamp of the Lublin-Majdanek concentration camp complex. Two weeks later, the prisoners, as part of the Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*), were sent to Majdanek and murdered. The new administrative subordination to the WVHA scarcely had any practical effect.

The murder of the prisoners began on November 3 at 7:30 A.M. That morning, about 5,000 to 6,000 women, accompanied by female guards on bicycles, were taken to Majdanek, where they were shot. The men of the subcamp were murdered on location. According to Silberklang, members of the SS-Division "Wiking" and the police were involved in it. Based on the statements of participants, historian Christopher Browning proves that men of the Reserve-Polizei-Bataillon 101 formed the sentries, who brought the prisoners to their graves. The shooting was done by men of the SD. Music roared from loudspeakers, drowning out the machine-gun salvos and the prisoners' screams. Nevertheless, the prisoners' murders did not go unnoticed; especially during breaks in the music, the sounds could be heard in nearby Lublin. According to witness statements quoted by Silberklang, Lublin inhabitants climbed on the roofs of their houses to watch the "spectacle." Some 300 men as well as 300 women were spared. Their task was to exhumate the corpses, clean the camp, and

remove traces of the killing. The fate of these prisoners is unknown.

Historian Helge Grabitz stated that at the beginning of 1944 Jews from Warsaw were taken to Lublin (Alter Flughafen) as part of the evacuation of the Jewish ghetto. The sex of these prisoners and the nature of their work are unknown. According to witness statements, the camp was liberated by the Red Army on July 24, 1944.

**SOURCES** There is little information on the Lublin (Alter Flughafen) camp. One of the richest sources is David Silberklang, "The Holocaust in the Lublin District" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2003). The camp is described here following p. 316, with the economic prehistory of the camp at pp. 312–315. Dieter Pohl refers to the camp in "Die 'Aktion Reinhard' im Licht der Historiographie," in *"Aktion Reinhardt": Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement 1941–1944*, ed. Bogdan Musiał (Osnabrück: fibre-Verlag, 2004), pp. 15–48, at p. 26; as does Helge Grabitz in Wolfgang Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren: Ghetto Warschau, SS-Arbeitslager Trawniki, Aktion Erntefest; Fotos und Dokumente über Opfer des Endlösungswahns im Spiegel der historischen Ereignisse* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1993), p. 323. The entry "Lublin," s.v., in *Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities in Poland*, vol. 7, *Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, n.d.), pp. 13–38, refers to the camp Lublin (Alter Flughafen) several times but without reference to the Aktion Erntefest in November 1943. Christopher Browning in *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998), p. 138, describes the participation of Reserve-Polizei-Bataillon 101 in the murder of the camp's Jews. Biographical information regarding the female guard Charlotte Mayer (or Perełka [Little Pearl], as the prisoners referred to her), employed in Ravensbrück, Majdanek, Lublin, and Auschwitz, can be found in Ingrid Müller-Münch, *Die Frauen von Majdanek. Vom zerstörten Leben der Opfer und der Mörderinnen* (Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1982), pp. 107–111. According to survivor statements, Mayer treated the inmates decently; she provided drinking water for them, sometimes allowed them to smuggle potatoes, and allowed conversations between male and female inmates. Mayer did not bear a whip and refused to beat inmates or to report them for beating. In the Düsseldorf Majdanek trial in 1981, Mayer was acquitted; but in general, events at the Lublin (Alter Flughafen) subcamp only played a very minor role during this trial.

The subcamp is listed in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1:168; and in "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1822.

Background information on the Lublin region during World War II is contained in the following collections at USHMM: RG-15.066M (Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin records, 1939–1944); RG-15.043M (KdS in Lublin records, 1939–1945); and RG-15.065M (Kommandeur der Orpo Lublin records, 1940–1944). Statements on the murder of the inmates at the Lublin (Alter Flughafen) camp and the reaction of the Lublin population are held in YVA under Collection

TR.10/815, pp. 127–128. See also statements by Wolf Antoni, JM/3536b, Friedrich Ruppert, NO-1903, and the record of interrogation by Gortthardt Schubert, TR.10/1146Z, vol. 15, pp. 3094–3097; and Georg Werk, TR.10/1291, vol. 28, pp. 4885–4887. Statements by members of the Reserve-Polizei-Bataillon 101, which operated in Poland from June 1942 and participated in the murder of the Jews in the Lublin (Alter Flughafen) subcamp in Majdanek, are held in the investigation files of the Hamburg Sta. (today in ZdL at BA-L) under record groups 141 Js 1957/62 (Interview Hoffmann, Wohlauf and others) and 141 Js 128/65 (Investigations into G. and others).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

### **LUBLIN (ALTER FLUGHAFEN) (WOMEN)**

The Lublin (Alter Flughafen) subcamp first came into existence in July–August 1940 as a forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ). It was located at the airfield of the former aircraft manufacturer T. Plage/T. Laskiewicz near Lublin, on Fabryczna Street, 1 to 2 kilometers (0.6 to 1.2 miles) north of Majdanek.

The reasons for the camp's massive growth from 1942 are economic and political and are connected to the intrigue of two protagonists, Oswald Pohl, of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), and Odilo Globocnik, the local SS and Police Leader (SSPF). Globocnik, who was in charge of the exploitation of Jewish forced labor in the Lublin area, was interested in the most profitable recycling of the property of Jews who had been deported and murdered. Pohl, on the other hand, who consolidated his control over the SS economic enterprises in the first half of 1942 and who coordinated the various economic enterprises in the SS domain, wanted the SS enterprises to function profitably and, as with Globocnik, to consolidate his position. As a result of negotiations between Pohl and Globocnik, a process began in 1942–1943 to increase the concentration of Jews in the Lublin area under the control of the WVHA. At the same time, a joint WVHA and SSPF economic enterprise was established, Ostindustrie GmbH (Osti). Pohl secured for himself control over the Jewish forced labor, including the sorting, packing, and distributing of Jewish property. On the other hand, Globocnik held the functional control over the camp, above all because his personally chosen confidants were placed in key positions. German firms that already profited from the exploitation of Jewish forced labor were enmeshed in this power distribution.

One of the camps that was established on this basis was the sorting camp for Jewish property (*Sortierlager für jüdisches Eigentum*) at the former airport Lublin (Alter Flughafen). Historian David Silberklang states that this camp, for which there is little reliable information, was the main Jewish site for forced labor in Lublin. Jewish property was handled here en masse and sold to local interested Germans. It was also sent back to Germany. Large storage halls were erected in the

former airport's hangar for this purpose. It was mostly Jewish women who were used to sort, clean and disinfect, repair, fold, and pack the clothing, which originated from the concentration and extermination camps of Majdanek, Bełżec, and Sobibór and also from the dissolved ghettos and camps. In 1942, there were 300 women, and in 1943 between 5,000 and 6,000 women, in the camp. There was also a camp for male prisoners.

The women who worked in Lublin (Alter Flughafen) initially came from the ghetto at Majdan Tatarski, which existed from April 20 to November 9, 1942. Later they were also to come from other liquidated ghettos and camps in Germany, Austria, and other countries. The women worked in the SS-owned clothing factories in the Fabrik Plage-Laskewicz, which was under the control of the WVHA Amt B II/2. The close cooperation between the various enterprises shows that the subcamp was an integral part of a complex system at the airport, which was also the site of the Nachbaulager Russland-Süd (for the Wehrmacht's southern front) and the main supply depot for the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Russland-Süd und Kaukasien. This would also explain why the female prisoners not only reprocessed Jewish property but also worked in Wehrmacht-owned supply establishments and why from 1942 around 4,000 women from Majdanek were engaged in heavy physical labor such as laying asphalt on the runways.

Conditions in the camp were difficult: there was no running water, there was no sewerage system, and only the workshops had light. The female guards in the Lublin-Majdanek camp, including Charlotte Mayer, one of the accused in the Düsseldorf Majdanek Trial, guarded the prisoners.

A letter from the WVHA dated October 22, 1943, ordered the transfer of the Lublin (Alter Flughafen) camp to the Lublin-Majdanek concentration camp system. This change could not have had any significance, as the prisoners in Lublin (Alter Flughafen) had been murdered during the Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*). Between 5,000 and 6,000 women in the camp were brought to nearby Majdanek, accompanied by the female guards on bicycles, where they were shot on the morning of November 3 from 7:30 A.M. According to historian Christopher Browning, the Reserve-Polizei-Bataillon 101 formed the sentries, while the SD did the shooting. Silberklang states that the SS-Division "Wiking" took part in the massacre. Music roaring from loudspeakers masked the salvos from the machine guns and the prisoners' screams. However, the murders did not go unnoticed: Silberklang, relying on witness statements, reported that people from nearby Lublin climbed onto the roofs of their houses to watch the "theater." The murder of the Jews in Lublin (Alter Flughafen)—and simultaneously in Lublin-Majdanek, Poniatowa, Lemberg-Janowska, and other camps—marked the end of Osti.

About 300 women from the camp as well as 300 men were spared from this massacre. They had to clean the camp and remove the traces of the murder. The fate of these prisoners is unknown.

Helge Grabitz stated that at the beginning of 1943, when the Warsaw ghetto was evacuated, Jews were brought from Warsaw to Lublin (Alter Flughafen). It is not known what they had to do there. Witnesses stated that the camp was liberated on July 24, 1944.

**SOURCES** There is little information on the Lublin (Alter Flughafen) camp. One of the richest sources is David Silberklang, "The Holocaust in the Lublin District" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2003). The camp is described here following p. 316, with the economic prehistory of the camp at pp. 312–315. Dieter Pohl refers to the camp in "Die 'Aktion Reinhardt' im Licht der Historiographie," in *"Aktion Reinhardt": Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement 1941–1944*, ed. Bogdan Musial (Osnabrück: fibre-Verlag, 2004), pp. 15–48, at p. 26; as does Helge Grabitz in Wolfgang Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren: Ghetto Warschau, SS-Arbeitslager Travniki, Aktion Erntefest; Fotos und Dokumente über Opfer des Endlösungswahns im Spiegel der historischen Ereignisse* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1993), p. 323. The entry "Lublin," s.v., in *Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities in Poland*, vol. 7, *Poland* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, n.d.), pp. 13–38, refers to the camp Lublin (Alter Flughafen) several times but without reference to Aktion Erntefest in November 1943. Christopher Browning in *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998), p. 138, describes the participation of Reserve-Polizei-Bataillon 101 in the murder of the camp's Jews. Biographical information on Charlotte Mayer, wardress in Ravensbrück, Lublin, and Auschwitz, nicknamed by the prisoners as "Perefka" ("Little Pearl"), is to be found in Ingrid Müller-Münch, *Die Frauen von Majdanek: Vom zerstörten Leben der Opfer und der Mörderinnen* (Reinbek: Rowohlt Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1982), pp. 107–111. According to survivors, Mayer treated the prisoners decently, gave them drinking water, and now and then allowed the smuggling of potato pieces and conversations between the male and female prisoners. Mayer did not carry a whip and refused to administer corporal punishment. Mayer was acquitted by the court in the Düsseldorf Majdanek Trial between 1975 and 1981. Her role in the Lublin (Alter Flughafen) subcamp played only a minor role in the trial. The subcamp is listed in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1:168; and in "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1822.

Background information on the Lublin region during World War II is contained in the following collections at USHMM: RG-15.066M (Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin records, 1939–1944); RG-15.043M (KdS in Lublin records, 1939–1945); and RG-15.065M (Kommandeur der Orpo Lublin records, 1940–1944). Statements on the murder of the inmates at the Lublin-Alter Flughafen camp and the reaction of the Lublin population are held in VA under signature TR.10/815, pp. 127–128. See also statements by Wolf Antoni, JM/3536b, Friedrich Ruppert, NO-1903, and the record of interrogation by Gortthardt Schubert, TR.10/1146Z, vol. 15, pp. 3094–3097; and Georg Werk, TR.10/1291, vol. 28, pp. 4885–4887. State-

ments by members of the Reserve-Polizei-Bataillon 101, which operated in Poland from June 1942 and participated in the murder of the Jews in the Lublin-Alter Flughafen subcamp in Majdanek, are held in the investigation files of the Hamburg Sta. (today in the ZdL at BA-L) under record groups 141 Js 1957/62 (Interview Hoffmann, Wohlauf and others) and 141 Js 128/65 (Investigations into G. and others).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## PONIATOWA

Poniatowa was located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) to the west of Lublin.

At the end of the 1930s, shortly before the outbreak of war, the Polish government had planned a telephone and telegraph center in Poniatowa, which was never completed. In July 1942, Amon Göth inspected Poniatowa and recommended it as a site to hold Jewish labor, a suggestion that was followed by Heinrich Himmler when, on October 9, 1942, he issued an order to concentrate all Jewish labor working in the armaments sector in camps under SS administration in the Warsaw-Lublin area. Poniatowa was one of the chosen locations because it was deeply hidden in the forest and had buildings already available and a light railway connection to Nałęczów, a station on the Warsaw-Lublin line. The Schmidt-Munstermann company in Warsaw and the Deutsche Elektro-Unternehmen company in Lublin received the contracts to expand the site. The Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) who were at this time in the camp at the site (Stalag 359) were executed in the following weeks. The number executed was probably around 24,000. On October 15, 1942, 600 Jews from the Opole Lubelskie ghetto were brought to Poniatowa. Their numbers were increased with Jews from the Staszów and Bełżyce ghettos (the latter included Jews from Saxony, Thuringia, and Stettin), so that by the beginning of 1943 there were around 1,500 prisoners in the Poniatowa forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ).

On January 9, 1943, Himmler directed the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of the General Government, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, to transfer the Jews and businesses from the Warsaw ghetto to the Lublin area. Himmler was exasperated about the enormous profit that individual employers such as Bremen coffee wholesaler Walter Caspar Toebeans were making from the exploitation of more than 20,000 Jews in the Warsaw ghetto. Toebeans was directed to immediately transfer his labor force to Poniatowa and to transfer direct supervision to the SS. At the end of January 1943, Toebeans concluded a contract with the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) Lublin, Odilo Globocnik, under which the SS assured him the supply of at least 10,000 Jewish laborers.

At the end of February 1943, the first group of Toebeans Jews was sent from the Warsaw ghetto to Poniatowa; another 1,200 followed on March 12; and 450 in April. The last transport from Warsaw arrived in Poniatowa on May 8, 1943. All the prisoners arrived at the Nałęczów railway station, where they were put on light railway trains that took them to Po-





A view of the Poniatowa subcamp of Lublin-Majdanek, shortly before its liquidation by mass shooting of prisoners in Operation "Harvest Festival," November 1943.

USHMM WS #61542, COURTESY OF THE STA. LG HAMBURG

niatowa. A labor detachment was based in Nałęczów to load and unload the trains.

The arrival of the Warsaw Jews, some of whom traveled as family units, gave the camp its own unique structure: men and women mostly slept in the same barracks, and contact between them was largely allowed. Around 700 children lived in the Poniatowa camp. They had their own barracks and kitchen. The Poniatowa inmates did not have their prisoner numbers tattooed on them, and they did not wear either the Star of David or concentration camp prisoner clothing. However, in the autumn of 1943, their shoes were replaced with the usual wooden concentration camp shoes.

The workshops and accommodation barracks were fenced in with barbed wire. The prisoners slept in around 35 barracks, each about 35 meters (115 feet) long and 12 meters (39 feet) wide. More than 2,000 prisoners slept in the 80-meter-long (262-feet-long), 40-meter-wide (131-feet-wide), and 10-meter-tall (33-feet-tall) workshop number 3, in four-tiered bunk beds. A 2-kilometer-long (1.2-mile-long) road led from the camp grounds to a settlement (which was referred to by the inmates under the Polish name for settlement, *osiedle*). Here the non-Jewish prisoners, foremen, and those Jews who worked in administration were held. The road was fenced and controlled by machine-gun posts in guard towers. The camp was guarded by 10 German and 50 Ukrainian SS men, the so-called Trawniki men.

The first camp commandant until the end of April 1943 was SS-Oberscharführer Birmes-Schulten; his successor was SS-Oberscharführer Otto Hantke, who in the summer of 1943 was replaced by SS-Hauptsturmführer Gottlieb Hering, the former commandant of Bełżec. The civilian camp commander was Heinrich Gley. Survivors report that all of them brutally mistreated the prisoners.

The number of prisoners in Poniatowa was probably between 14,000 and 25,000. One source states that there were 40,000 inmates in Poniatowa, but this number is probably exaggerated. Poniatowa was the largest Jewish labor camp in

the General Government. Around 10,000 to 12,000 of the prisoners worked for the Toebebens company; the others, under much less brutal conditions, worked for the SS, building roads and sewers.

The prisoners were from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Austria, and the Soviet Union. In the summer of 1943, Jews were brought to Poniatowa from the dissolved ghettos in Demblin, Doruchza, and Smolensk. Between May and October 1943, the camp functioned as a transit camp for Jews, who were required by the SS in other locations.

Until the summer of 1943, enclosure of the settlement, the camp security, and prisoners' working conditions were relatively bearable: during the period of the camp's construction, the labor capacity was set at only 60 percent. Prisoners repeatedly were able to escape, and those who had contact with the outside world were able to smuggle food into the camp. It was only with Odilo Globocnik's visit in June 1943 that the camp was sealed and the exploitation of prisoners intensified.

There are several reported cases of resistance: for example, the Jews from Opole attempted to poison the camp commandant, Hering. All of the members of the kitchen detachment who were involved, including six women, were hanged once the assassination attempt was discovered. The Warsaw Jews had their own resistance movement, which was based on organizational structures and contacts from their ghetto time, aimed to free the inmates at the time the camp was liquidated.

The prisoners' day began with a roll call at 6:00 A.M. Between 7:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. most of the prisoners manufactured products for the Wehrmacht. A note written by Globocnik in the summer of 1943 reports that each week the Poniatowa SS labor camp produced 38,000 blouses and coats, 18,000 shirts and items of underwear, 6,000 caps, 7,200 pairs of socks, 4,200 haversacks, and 2,400 army kit belts. The prisoners also worked at a sorting station, sorting the clothes of executed Jews for dispatch to the Ethnic German Liaison Office (VOMI). In September–October 1943, hundreds of prisoners were deported to work at the airfields at Zamość and Biała Podlaska. In the summer of 1943, Toebebens had made contact with the Armaments Ministry in Berlin, requesting new work orders. As a result, in September 1943, the prisoners who lived in workstation 3 were moved out, and the building was prepared for metal processing machines. At the same time, there began massive construction work for a planned, but eventually unrealized, relocation of part of the Litzmannstadt (Łódź) ghetto production facilities to Poniatow: 48 accommodation barracks and 28 barracks for foremen were to be built as part of the relocation. However, administrative changes, including the transfer of the SSPF-Lublin Globocnik to Trieste and the appointment of his replacement, Jakob Sporrenberg, meant that the plans did not come to fruition. During September–October 1943, the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) took over the labor camp; Poniatowa was now regarded as a Majdanek subcamp. However, this did not have a large practical effect, as on November 4, 1943, all the inmates of the Poniatowa camp

were murdered as part of the Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*).

The directive to murder the prisoners came from Heinrich Himmler to the HSSPF Krakau, Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, who directed the command to Sporrenberg. The order probably must be seen in connection with the increasing resistance by prisoners in 1943, including the Warsaw Uprising, the Treblinka rebellion, and the escape from Sobibór. Since the SSF in their areas of responsibility had the supreme command in ghetto evacuations and larger Final Solution measures (*Endlösungsmassnahmen*), it was only consistent to charge Sporrenberg with that order. Sporrenberg ordered the Commander of the Security Police and SD (KdS) in Lublin, SS-Obersturmbannführer Dr. Karl Pütz, as well as the head of the Ordnungspolizei (Orpo) and the Waffen-SS to participate in the action. The relevant units came from the Lublin area as well as from the Radom, Kraków, and Warsaw districts. Based upon witness statements by participants, historian Christopher Browning states that the Reserve-Polizei-Bataillon 101 formed the sentries around the camp and the barracks and that the executions were done by SD units.

On the morning of November 4, a double security cordon was put around the camp, and the telephone lines were cut. Loudspeakers were set up to broadcast music, in order to drown out the shots and the victims' screams. According to Lea Chanesman, one of only three survivors of the massacre, on the morning of November 4 the prisoners had to assemble for roll call, then assemble in a large building. From here, in groups of 50, naked and with raised hands, they were led to an area where trenches had been dug in the days before, trenches that now served as mass graves. Here the prisoners had to lie down and were shot.

Around 100 prisoners from one block tried to escape the massacre and set several storage and supply buildings on fire. The SS had to call the fire brigade from Opole Lubelskie to put out the fire. The firefighters were witness to the SS's driving the prisoners back into the flames. Members of the labor detachments in Nałęczów and Kazimierz were also murdered after strong resistance. Altogether, around 14,500 prisoners fell victim to the massacre within a few hours.

The Poniatowa camp continued to exist with 100 prisoners who had been brought from Majdanek, and were under Ukrainian and German SS guard, until the spring of 1944. These prisoners had to search the corpses for gold, silver, jewels, and gold teeth. They then had to pull down and burn the workshops and accommodation barracks. Finally, they were murdered, too.

Sporrenberg, as the leader of the Aktion Erntefest, was tried by a Polish court after the war and hanged. Pütz committed suicide after the war, as did Globocnik in June 1945 in Austria. Toebebs was arrested after the war but was able to escape in 1946. In 1949, the Bremen denazification court sentenced him in absentia to 10 years' imprisonment. Hantke was convicted in 1960 in Hamburg and released in 1967. He was arrested again in 1974 and sentenced to life imprisonment. In 1967, six Ukrainian guards who were involved in the

massacre on November 4, 1943, were sentenced to death in Dnepropetrowsk (USSR).

**SOURCES** Sam Hoffenberg, a former camp inmate and historian, has written the most comprehensive work on the Poniatowa camp, with Patrick Girard, in *Le camp de Poniatowa: La liquidation des derniers Juifs de Varsovie* (Paris: Bibliophane, 1988), which is available in English (translated into English by Sofia Skipwith and Madeleine Steinberg) as *The Camp of Poniatowa: The Liquidation of the Last Jews of Warsaw* (S.I.: S. Hoffenberg, ca. 1988). Hoffenberg, a Jew from the Warsaw ghetto and Toebebs laborer, left the camp at the request of the Toebebs firm, shortly before the camp's liquidation. Another camp inmate, Ber Baskind, who was in the camp from April to May 1943 and was able to escape, wrote his work on Poniatowa in 1945, *La Grande Epouvante* (Paris: Calmann Levy-Verlag, 1945).

There are only a few academic works on Poniatowa. Worthy of mention are Józef Kermisz, "The Labor Camp at Poniatowa" (Hebrew), *YalMor* 13 (June 1971): 17–27; Józef Marszałek, *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1998), p. 113; Ryszard Gicewicz, "Obóz pracy w Poniatowej (1941–1943)," *ZM* 10 (1980): 88–104; as well as Thomas Reck and Irmina Stefańczyk, *Masowe egzekucje żydów 3 listopada 1943 roku: Majdanek, Poniatowa, Trawniki; wspomnienia*, ed. Edward Dziadosz (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1988), also published in German as *Judenmassenexekutionen 3. November 1943: Majdanek, Poniatowa, Trawniki: Erinnerungen* (Berlin, 1990). Literature on the Aktion Reinhardt, which was the conclusion of Aktion Reinhardt and in which within the space of two days, November 3 and 4, 1943, around 40,000 prisoners in Majdanek, Trawniki, and Poniatowa fell victim, has only appeared in the last few years, such as Bogdan Musiał, ed., "Aktion Reinhardt": *Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement 1941–1944* (Osnabrück: fibre-Verlag, 2004). The work includes a number of interesting essays including Dieter Pohl, "Die 'Aktion Reinhardt' im Licht der Historiographie," pp. 15–48; Pohl, "Die Stellung des Distriktes Lublin in der 'Endlösung der Judenfrage,'" pp. 87–110; as well as Peter Black, "Die Trawniki-Männer und die 'Aktion Reinhardt,'" pp. 309–352. What also should be mentioned are Helge Grabitz and Wolfgang Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren: Fotos und Dokumente über Opfer des Endlösungswahns im Spiegel der historischen ereignisse; Ghetto Warschau—SS-Arbeitslager Trawniki—Aktion Erntefest* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1993). Background information on the Lublin district during the Third Reich is to be found in Bogdan Musiał, *Deutsche Zivilverwaltung und Judenverfolgung im Generalgouvernement: eine Fallstudie zum Distrikt Lublin 1939–1944* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1999). On the basis of statements by participants of Reserve Police Bataillon 101, Christopher Browning has described the massacre as part of the Aktion Erntefest in *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1998), pp. 139–142. This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1:169; and in "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1833.



The fate of the Poniatowa prisoners for a long time was overshadowed by the Warsaw ghetto. Three prisoners survived the massacre on November 4, 1943. Two of them, Esther Rubinstein and Lea Chanesman/Ludwika Fiszer, who were given refuge by a female Polish farmer, have provided witness statements. Both statements are reproduced by Hofenberg with Girard in *Le camp de Poniatowa/The Camp of Poniatowa*. Rubinstein's statement was first published in Józef Kermisz, ed., *DiM*, vol. 1, *Obozy* (Warsaw: ŻIH, 1946), p. 260. There are no details about the life of the third survivor of the camp's liquidation—her name was Roza. Nachmann Blumenthal, ed., *My Life Is Still Before Me . . .* (Yiddish) (Tel Aviv: I. L. Peretz Verlag and YV, 1962) contains the poignant exchange of letters between Polish medical doctor Lejb Fiszmann, a prisoner of war in Germany, and his daughters Irina and Anna. Both women were murdered during Aktion Erntefest. A similar exchange of letters is held in YVA, Collection O.48.B/19-1: Feliks (Efraim) Rzeczyński, also a Polish officer held prisoner of war in Germany who between August 1942 and February 1945 attempted to correspond with his family held in Poniatowa and later, unsuccessfully, tried to establish their fate. The YVA holds statements on the Poniatowa camp in Collection O.3/3440, which includes a statement by Jerzy Rosenbaum (Ros). The original contract between Walter Caspar Toebebens and Odilo Globocnik dated January 1, 1943, is held in the CDJC, Signature CXC VIII-9. The contract has numerous details including the names of the new companies ("Firma Toebebens Werke Poniatowa GmbH im SS-Arbeitslager") and the daily rates that Toebebens had to pay for the prisoners: 5 zlotys per day for male prisoners and 4 zlotys for female prisoners. Several statements from witnesses and survivors of the camp are part of court files: Jerzy Rosenbaum, who was held at the beginning of 1943 in Poniatowa, made a statement before the Central Jewish Historical Commission, Łódź, as witness no. 107; his statement is to be found in *DiM*, 1: 260–261. Georg Michaelsen describes the camp in his statement of March 4, 1964, to the Sta. Hamburg, Az. 141 Js 573/60 and 161 Js 192/60. The witness statements by Lea Chanesman/Ludwika Fiszer dated November 28, 1966, are to be found in the files of the Sta. Hamburg, Az. 141 Js 573/60, p. 12656. Statements by members of the Reserve-Polizei-Bataillon 101, which operated in Poland from June 1942 and participated in the murder of the Jews in the Poniatowa subcamp, are held in the investigation files (*Ermittlungsakten*) Sta. Hamburg (today in ZdL at BA-L) under Signatures 141 Js 1957/62 (Verhör Hoffmann, Wohlauf und andere) and 141 Js 128/65 (Ermittlungen gegen G. und andere). The collections of the USHMMA that deal with the Lublin region during World War II are RG-15.066M (Gouverneur des Distrikts Lublin records, 1939–1944); RG-15.043M (KdS in Lublin records, 1939–1945); and RG-15.065M (Kommandeur der Orpo Lublin records, 1940–1944).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## PULAWY [AKA PULAWY STADT]

Pulawy (Polish: Puławy, also Pulav, Pulawy) lies in the Lublin district, 45 kilometers (28 miles) west-northwest of Lublin. A ghetto existed in the city from October or November 1939 to

December 1939, after which all 4,000 Jewish inhabitants were deported to Opole Lubelskie. From June 1940 on, there was a Jewish camp (*Judenlager*) in the city, with 100 to 200 prisoners.

In the summer of 1943, Oberscharführer Otto Hantke, who had been in charge of the forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ)/concentration camp in Budzyń until the beginning of December 1942 and afterward in charge of the ZALfJ/concentration camp in Poniatowa, was sent to Pulawy in order to establish a subcamp of Majdanek in the local sawmill. According to historian David Silberklang, more than 400 Jewish forced laborers were employed in the camp; according to historian Józef Marszałek, however, there were only about 50. Although the sawmill operated profitably, thanks to the exploitation of the prisoners' work, the prisoners there—as in other camps of the Majdanek complex—were shot on November 3, 1943, as part of Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*). The murder of the prisoners from Pulawy supports the assumption that blame for the massacre of more than 40,000 Jews within two days during Aktion Erntefest lies primarily with Heinrich Himmler's fear that the series of Jewish revolts and rebellions—Warsaw in April 1943, Treblinka and Białystok in August, Sobibór in October—would continue. Economic principles—the maximal exploitation of Jewish labor—thus fell victim to the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question."

In Pulawy, only a small portion of the prisoners survived the mass execution. The camp operated further on a significantly smaller basis until the retreat of the Germans in July 1944. On July 22, 1944, it was closed, according to an SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) document dated September 30.

**SOURCES** Sources on the Pulawy subcamp are rare. By far the largest part of the literature that has come down to us deals with the ghetto in the city and with the fate of the local Jews during World War II in general. In "The Holocaust in the Lublin District" (Ph.D. diss., Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2003), pp. 336, 345, David Silberklang conveys a number of details that are based upon statements by survivors and interrogations of German guard personnel. Further information can be gleaned from the article by Eugeniusz Kosik, "Martyrologia i zagłada Żydów w Opolu Lubelskim," *BŻIH* 150 (1989). Józef Marszałek, *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 1998), p. 110, also mentions the Pulawy camp. Yizkor books exist about Pulawy that are based upon the statements of survivors, such as the *Yizker bukh Pulav* (New York, 1964); and the entry on Pulawy in *Pinkas Hakehillot Polin—Mabozot Lublin—Kielce*, vol. 7, *Lublin, Kielce District* (Jerusalem: YV, n.d.), pp. 380–382. Michał Strzemiński, *Nasze Puławy. Kolekcja Wspomnień* (Lublin, 1986), provides an overview of the history of Jewish life in Pulawy. This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1:169; and in "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und

ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1834.

Statements of survivors from Pulawy exist above all in the AŽIH and in YVA. Contemporary German documentation can be found in the APL, where the collection “Governor of the Lublin District” (see also USHMMA, RG-15.066M) holds some information about Jews in the Pulawy region. Other material about the situation of Jews in the area, but also mostly concerning the period after the liquidation of the ghetto, can be found in IPN. (At YVA the following collections are of relevance: TR. 10/813 (Michalsen/Hantke indictment); TR. 10/1291, Hantke interrogations, Hamburg, April 7, 9, and 13, 1964); and TR. 10/770, pp. 106–1098.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Geoffrey Megargee

### **RADOM [AKA RADOM (SZKOLNA STREET)]**

Radom lies about 95 kilometers (59 miles) south of Warsaw. The first mention of a Majdanek subcamp there is in an official report of January 17, 1944, although the camp existed since 1942 as a forced labor camp for Jews (ZALfJ). At that time the (formerly Austrian) armaments firm Steyr-Daimler-Puch (SDP) employed Jews from the Radom ghetto at its work site on Szkolna Street.

According to statements by survivors, the work was hard, and the Austrian foremen and masters were guilty of causing the death of many workers, as in the execution of 13 workers in the summer of 1942 and another 13 in the spring of 1943. For the most part, the forced laborers for SDP were excluded from the repeated selections at the Radom ghetto.

After the liquidation of the Radom ghetto in August 1942, the surviving Jews were distributed among two labor camps: one on the Szwarcikowska Street and one on the Szkolna Street. The camp on the Szwarcikowska Street, which was also called the “small ghetto,” held about 3,000 prisoners (of which about 700 to 900 were women) who worked at various work sites and facilities in Radom. Again and again, the workers went through selections, as on January 13, 1943, when 1,600 Jews were taken to Treblinka and murdered. On this occasion, the company management of SDP, which was on good terms with the SS, chose 100 of the strongest workers from the 1,500 Jews remaining in the camp.

On November 8, 1943, all the remaining inhabitants of the camp on Szwarcikowska Street were driven, in a two-hour march, to the SDP camp on Szkolna Street, where there were already about 2,000 prisoners. One of the responsible SS officers, SS-Sturmbannführer Blum, allowed women and children to occupy one of the freestanding barracks in the camp after their arrival, due to the cold and their exhaustion. Immediately after that, the barracks was surrounded by Ukrainian guards. Despite protests and attempts at rescue, more than 100 women and children were loaded into trucks the next day and shot on Biała Street. Some dozens of men considered incapable of work were also shot.

In the middle of January 1944, the forced labor camp was taken over as a concentration camp. A group of SS came from Lublin, and the prisoners were clothed in typical camp attire and had to paint the letters *KL* (for *Konzentrationslager*, concentration camp) on the backs of each other’s jackets with red paint. Instead of names, the prisoners now had numbers, which were sewn onto their jackets. Nonetheless, as *The Book of Radom* reports, many Jews considered themselves lucky that the concentration camp came to them, in effect, and that they were not deported to another concentration camp, because they greatly feared such transports.

The camp was encircled with double barbed wire, and there were guard posts with machine guns on watchtowers. Men and women slept separately in 20 wooden barracks on three-tiered wooden bunks that were outfitted with straw sacks.

The day began with reveille at five o’clock in the morning, followed by the morning roll call. The majority of prisoners worked for SDP; others worked in furniture and tailor shops in the camp.

An SS officer named Hecker or Haker was reportedly the camp leader (Lagerführer), while the camp commandant (Lagerkommandant) was SS-Hauptsturmführer Sigmann. Chil (also Yechiel) Friedmann was the Jewish camp elder (Lagerältester), and he was assisted by Kapos and other helpers.

In March 1944, there was a selection of several hundred prisoners judged unable to work, who were brought to the Majdanek main camp; only a few of them survived.

There were many escape attempts from the camp. As a rule, these failed. Escaped prisoners usually had to join with the Polish partisans, but these tended to be mostly antisemitic, and they either murdered fleeing Jews or forced them to return to the concentration camp.

In April 1944, a bunker was discovered in the camp through an unfortunate accident. This bunker had held four men and a woman since January, when the camp had been transformed into a concentration camp. As *The Book of Radom* reported, the bunker had been planned as a hideout for an emergency; there was also supposed to be a tunnel out from the bunker to freedom. According to witnesses, the bunker even had secret electric and water hook-ups, and relatives of the five people in it had given them food. However, the tunnelers’ inexperience became their undoing: after their venture had progressed outside the camp grounds, they dug the tunnel too close to the surface under a well-traveled road. The wheels of an SS truck sank into it, which led to the discovery of the tunnel and the bunker. The five prisoners were not hanged, however, but only punished with public beatings. Three of the prisoners, Mania Zuckerman-Gelber, her brother Meyer Zuckerman, and Ben Wercheiser, survived the Holocaust; the two others, the Bonk brothers, were shot during another escape attempt.

With the approach of the front in the early summer of 1944, several prisoners were able to flee in the course of the general confusion by going through the wastewater canals of the production hall. For the rest, the situation became notice-

ably worse, since the camp guards were reinforced by soldiers from scattered army units. On July 26, 1944, around 2,450 male camp prisoners were evacuated in the direction of Łódź and presumably further to Auschwitz. SS personnel destroyed the machines and facilities in the camp in order to keep them from falling into enemy hands.

**SOURCES** There are only a few mentions of the Radom Szkolna Street camp. One important source is *The Book of Radom: The Story of a Jewish Community in Poland Destroyed by the Nazis*, ed. and comp. Alfred Lipson (New York: United Radomer Relief for U.S. and Canada, [ca. 1963]), which reports on the selection of Jews for SDP. The *Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities in Poland*, vol. 7, *Poland* (Jerusalem: YV, 1999) likewise mentions Radom on pp. 530–543 but concentrates mostly on the camp on Szwarkowska Street and does not mention the simultaneous existence of the camp on Szkolna Street. Also, it gives the erroneous date of June 26 for the evacuation. Several monographs and articles concern themselves with the fate of the Jews in the Radom region, among others, Adam Rutkowski, “Martyrologia, walka i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie radomskim podczas okupacji hitlerowskiej,” *BŻIH* 15–16 (1955): 75–182; and “Żydzi dystryktu radomskiego w okresie II wojny światowej. Materiały z sesji popularno-naukowej odbytej w Radomiu 27 września 1997,” *BKRTN* 3–4 (1997): 1–95. This subcamp is listed in the ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1: 170; and in the “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1834.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Geoffrey Megargee

## TRAWNIKI

In the three years of its existence, the SS camp at Trawniki in the Lublin District of the General Government underwent four permutations, each of which involved different functions and purposes. From July until September 1941, it served as a holding pen for persons of interest to Nazi Germany. From September 1941 until July 1944, it was a training facility for police auxiliaries who were deployed in Operation Reinhard. From June 1942 until September 1943, it served as a forced labor camp for Jews. Between September 1943 and May 1944, it was a subcamp of Lublin-Majdanek. [Because of the complexity of this history, it is being treated here in one entry.—Ed.]

Less than two weeks after Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union, German SS and police authorities in the Lublin District, acting on the orders of the SS and Police Leader (SSPF) Lublin, SS-Brigadeführer Odilo Globocnik, established a detention facility on the grounds of an abandoned sugar refinery outside of Trawniki, a small town located just south of the Lublin-Chełm road, 32 kilometers (20 miles) east-southeast of Lublin and about the same distance due east

of Chełm. Managed by an officer on Globocnik's staff, SS-Hauptsturmführer Hermann Höfle, the Trawniki camp originally was a holding center for refugees and Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), selected by the Security Police and SD either as potential collaborators or as dangerous persons. On July 9, 1941, 676 inmates were incarcerated there.<sup>1</sup>

In September 1941, pursuant to his July 17, 1941, appointment as Commissioner for the Establishment of SS and Police Bases (SS- und Polizeistützpunkte) in the New Eastern Territory, Globocnik transformed the facility into a training camp for auxiliary police personnel to maintain security in support of German rule over the “wild East.” Globocnik's staff recruited captured Soviet POWs who, after being processed in Trawniki, entered the Guard Forces (Wachmannschaften) of the SSPF in the Lublin District.<sup>2</sup> The basis to recruit these “Trawniki men” lay in high-level SS instructions to the Security Police and SD teams screening the POWs to identify from among the captured Soviet soldiers “persons who appear especially reliable and are therefore suitable for deployment in the reconstruction of the occupied territories.” Noting on August 5, 1941, that the establishment of SS and police bases before the winter was “an urgent task,” SS-Obergruppenführer Kurt Daluge, the chief of the German Order Police, ordered Globocnik and other senior SS and police leaders to give high priority to recruiting indigenous defense units. One month later, the first recruits from the POW camps arrived at Trawniki. On October 27, 1941, Globocnik appointed SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Streibel to command the newly christened Trawniki Training Camp, a position Streibel held until the evacuation of the camp in July 1944.<sup>3</sup>

The first 2,500 auxiliary police guards (Wachmänner) were inducted, processed, and trained between September 1941 and September 1942. Virtually all of them were Soviet POWs. As German military reverses and the murderous treatment of the Soviet POWs dried up the supply of suitable Soviet soldiers in the autumn of 1942, Streibel's men conscripted civilians, primarily young Ukrainians, residing in Galicia, Wolhynia, Podolia, and the Lublin District. When Globocnik left Lublin in September 1943, he reported that 3,700 Wachmänner were serving in the Trawniki system; in fact, more than 4,750 identification numbers had been issued by this time. Approximately 5,082 men were trained at Trawniki between 1941 and 1944.<sup>4</sup> They were organized into two battalions under the command of SS-Untersturmführer Willi Franz and SS-Obersturmführer Johann Schwarzenbacher.

Deployment in the operations of the so-called Final Solution of the Jewish Question became a key function of the Trawniki-trained guards. They provided the guard units for the Operation Reinhard killing centers at Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka II and served for a time as part of the guard detachments at the concentration camps Lublin-Majdanek and Auschwitz. They also provided the guard units for various other forced labor camps for Jews. In addition, German SS and police authorities deployed the Trawniki trainees in the deportations from both large and small ghettos in





SS officers review Ukrainian recruits at Trawniki, a training facility for auxiliary camp guards and a subcamp of Lublin-Majdanek, 1942–1943.

USHMM WS #61493, COURTESY OF STA. LG HAMBURG

occupied Poland and as escorts for the transport trains from ghetto to killing center. That the Trawniki trainees implemented their hideous tasks to the satisfaction of their leaders was expressed in Globocnik's recommendation for Streibel's promotion: Streibel had commanded the Trawniki Training Camp "with the greatest discretion and understanding for the special leadership needs of this unit. These units have proved themselves in the best way in many anti-partisan missions, but especially in the framework of the resettlement of the Jews."<sup>5</sup>

In 1942, Trawniki served as a transit camp for local Jews. After an early April "selection" of those incapable of work in the ghetto town Piaski, located about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) away, Wachmänner escorted several hundred Polish, German, and Austrian Jews from Piaski to Trawniki. Scheduled for deportation to Bełżec the following day, many of the victims were locked up in a large barnlike structure overnight. Between 200 and 500 died from suffocation; their bodies were tossed the next morning into the freight cars destined for Bełżec.<sup>6</sup> During 1942, SS and police instructors also utilized the local Jewish population for "training purposes"; the new recruits received their first practical training in roundups and escort duty. Some zealous instructors reportedly ordered recruits individually to shoot a Jew.<sup>7</sup>

During the summer of 1942, Trawniki also began to serve as a forced labor camp for Jews (*Zwangsarbeitslager für Juden, ZALfJ*). Under the auspices of Operation Reinhard, the SS and police constructed the labor camp adjacent to the training camp, separated only by the original stone wall that surrounded the abandoned sugar factory.<sup>8</sup> The appearance of a Jewish workforce at Trawniki coincided with the establishment of procedures for disposing of the property of the Jews murdered in Operation Reinhard. Globocnik selected Trawniki to be a storage depot for clothing flowing in from the killing centers; the so-called Clothing Depot (*Beklei-*

*dungslager*) was located just outside the fence of the training camp. In June 1942, three freight cars stocked with baggage taken from Viennese Jews bound for Sobibór were diverted to Trawniki; that same month a Jewish labor detachment of 20 to 40 women was assigned to sort, wash, and repair the clothing.<sup>9</sup>

As his SS and police murdered the last of those Jews in the General Government considered "incapable of work," Heinrich Himmler grew increasingly fearful of resistance, yet was hopeful that the SS could better integrate the surviving Jewish forced laborers into armaments production. On October 9, 1942, he ordered the transfer of all privately owned factories producing armaments and related goods, along with their Jewish forced laborers, from ghettos in the General Government to camps, including Trawniki, where the Jews could be more easily guarded.<sup>10</sup> In the late autumn of 1942, SS authorities moved a brush factory and its laborers from the Międzyrzec-Podlaski ghetto, which had just been liquidated, to Trawniki. On February 8, 1943, Globocnik signed a contract with Fritz Emil Schultz of F.W. Schultz and Co., which produced mattresses and furs and repaired boots and uniforms. The contract provided that the Schultz fur production plant with its 4,000 Jewish workers and a brush-making plant with 1,500 more workers be transferred with all movable equipment and civilian personnel from the Warsaw ghetto to Trawniki. It named Streibel commander of the Trawniki labor camp, with responsibility for distribution of labor, collection of fees for the forced laborers (5 zlotys a day for men and 4 zlotys a day for women), and security. Day-to-day management of the camp, however, was the duty of SS-Hauptscharführer Franz Bartetzko and his deputy SS-Scharführer Josef Napieralla.<sup>11</sup> To manage the provision of forced laborers to the Schultz firm and to other firms located at other labor camps, the SS leadership founded the *Ostindustrie GmbH* (Eastern Industries, Ltd., *Osti*) holding company on March 12, 1943.

Initially, the SS encouraged Schultz workers to voluntarily relocate; and on February 16, transports began to leave Warsaw for Trawniki. Despite threats to shoot those who ignored SS incentives, Schultz could only persuade 448 out of 1,500 workers scheduled for transfer by April 14 actually to board the trains.<sup>12</sup> Losing patience, the SS decided to liquidate the Warsaw ghetto. At 3:00 A.M. on the morning of April 19, 1943, SS and police units, including a battalion of 350 Wachmänner, sealed off the ghetto, sparking the famous Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.<sup>13</sup> Between February 15 and April 30, 1943, 2,848 men, 2,397 women, and 388 children were removed from Warsaw to Trawniki in 17 transports via truck and train. By May 1, at least 5,633 Jews, mostly Polish Jews but including German, Austrian, and Slovak Jews, resided in the Trawniki labor camp.<sup>14</sup> Between May 27 and July 24, eight new barracks were constructed to accommodate the influx of prisoners; barracks construction continued until September 1943. The number of prisoners who worked for the Schultz concern at Trawniki hovered around 6,000 from May 1943 until the liquidation of the camp in November. Small detachments of

prisoners worked directly for the SS in barracks construction and camp upkeep. Two transports of Jewish workers arrived in Trawniki from the Minsk ghetto after its liquidation in September 1943.<sup>15</sup>

In the interests of heightened production, Bartetzko initially maintained relatively decent conditions in Trawniki. He reportedly tolerated illicit trade in food and alcohol, permitted Jewish prisoners to form their own musical band, and even offered opportunities to play soccer. After August 1943, however, conditions deteriorated. Medical care after August was nonexistent, and fear of sickness was endemic. Though the weather became cold in October, the workers received no winter clothing. Violations of camp regulations, such as theft or an attempt to escape, brought swift and brutal retribution. One day in May or June 1943, Bartetzko shot a prisoner for attempting to escape. As a deterrent, the body was left where it fell for 24 hours. When three Jews were caught stealing equipment, Bartetzko assembled all available guards, prisoners, and Schultz executives to watch each of the three prisoners receive 25 lashes with a bullwhip. Frequent violators risked transfer to a subcamp located at Dorohucza, about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) north of Trawniki. Under command of SS-Unterscharführer Robert Jühls, Dorohucza's "industry" was digging peat—dangerous and difficult work for approximately 100 ill-clothed, ill-fed, and ill-equipped prisoners.<sup>16</sup>

For a variety of reasons, including Globocnik's quarrels with the civilian District Governor in Lublin and Osti's failure to secure Wehrmacht contracts, the SS leadership transferred the Trawniki complex to the jurisdiction of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) in September 1943; Trawniki thus became a subcamp of Lublin-Majdanek.<sup>17</sup> In the following months, 1,000 Trawniki-trained guards were transferred to concentration camps in the Reich, while 150 members of the WVHA's SS-Death's Head Units arrived in Trawniki.<sup>18</sup>

In late October 1943, stunned by the Sobibór prisoner uprising, Himmler ordered the murder of the remaining Polish Jews in the Lublin District. As part of the cynically christened Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*), SS and police units shot at least 6,000 Jewish inmates of Trawniki and Dorohucza on November 3, 1943, virtually eliminating the entire workforce.

After the massacre, the Trawniki SS and police staff imported a small detachment of Jewish laborers from Milejów to burn the corpses on massive grills made from rail track, then to disperse the ashes and bone fragments into trenches, which they covered with dirt. After completing this dreadful work, the Jewish laborers were shot and their bodies burned. For weeks after the massacre, Trawniki trained guards searched the camp grounds for hidden Jews. Those who were found within the first few weeks were shot. Zina Czapnik and her niece, Raja Mileczina, were able to hide for nearly two months before the Wachmänner discovered them. To Czapnik's astonishment, both women were permitted to live. They joined a detachment of approximately 40 Jewish women of Austrian and Dutch origin who had been brought to Trawniki after the

massacre to perform domestic tasks inside the camp complex, such as laundry and cleaning the barracks for the SS staff and the Wachmänner. They also sorted and recycled Operation Reinhard booty and the clothing of the recently murdered Trawniki inmates. In May 1944, the SS transferred this small detachment to Lublin-Majdanek, and the Trawniki labor camp was dissolved.<sup>19</sup>

Most of the key officials at Trawniki either failed to survive the war or were later brought to trial. Globocnik committed suicide upon capture by the British in Carinthia on May 31, 1945. The Allies extradited his successor, Jakob Sporrenberg, to Poland, where he was convicted and executed in 1950. Christian Wirth was ostensibly killed by partisans near Trieste on May 26, 1944; Höfle was arrested by Austrian authorities in 1961 and committed suicide in his cell on August 21, 1962. Neither Trawniki battalion commander survived the war: SS-Untersturmführer Willi Franz went missing on July 31, 1944; while SS-Obersturmführer Schwarzenbacher was killed by partisans near Trieste on June 2, 1944. Although Bartetzko was killed at the front in January 1945, Trawniki camp commandant Karl Streibel, Bartetzko's deputy, Josef Napierella, and four Trawniki company commanders were indicted by a West German court in Hamburg in 1970. Since the prosecution could not prove that they had played a role in deciding upon and implementing Operation Harvest Festival at Trawniki or that they had foreknowledge of or control over the murderous field assignments on which the men that they trained were deployed, all six defendants were acquitted in 1976. Hundreds of, possibly as many as a thousand, Trawniki trainees were tried either by Soviet military tribunals or Soviet civilian courts after the war: virtually all were convicted, and some were executed. A handful of Trawniki-trained guards were tried in the West. Franz Swidersky, a Treblinka labor camp guard, was sentenced to life imprisonment by a Düsseldorf court in 1971. The United States initiated denaturalization proceedings against 16 former Trawniki guards, including 3 who served at killing centers, several who were deployed in 1943 deportation operations in Warsaw and Białystok, and virtually all of whom guarded Jewish prisoners at Trawniki itself. Most of these proceedings ended in denaturalization—a handful of proceedings are still pending. In August 2006, two Canadian courts recommended denaturalization after proceedings against two former Wachmänner who found refuge in Canada after the war.

**SOURCES** Little has been written about the Trawniki camp or the police auxiliaries trained there. On the camp itself, the major work is Helge Grabitz and Wolfgang Scheffler, *Letzte Spuren: Getto Warschau—SS-Arbeitslager Trawniki—Aktion Erntefest. Fotos und Dokumente über Opfer des Endlösungswahns im Spiegel der historischen Ereignisse* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1993). On the Trawniki-trained guards, there is Peter Black, "Die Trawniki-Männer und die 'Aktion Reinhard'" in *"Aktion Reinhard": Der Völkermord an den Juden im Generalgouvernement, 1941–1944*, ed. Bogdan Musial (Osnabrück: fibre Verlag, 2004), pp. 309–352; and Maria Wardzyńska, *Formacja*



*Wachmannschaften des SS- und Polizeiführers im Distrikt Lublin* (Warsaw: IPN, 1992).

Records relevant to Trawniki are located at the CAFSSRF in RGs K-779 and "20869 Guards." The former contains the internal administrative correspondence of the Trawniki training camp from January 1943 until July 1944 (unfortunately, the records for 1941 and 1942 appear to have been destroyed during the war). The latter contains approximately 800 personnel files of Trawniki-trained guards along with postwar investigative material related to Soviet efforts to identify and locate former Trawniki men. Neither of these record groups is open to scholars at the time of writing, but the USHMMA has secured agreement to receive copies of most of this material and will be able to make it public for the first time. Of equal significance, but not centrally located, are the records of trials of hundreds of former Trawniki trainees at locations throughout the Russian Federation, Ukraine, and other former Soviet Republics. The files remain in the custody of the security organs of the respective regimes, for example, the FSB in Russia and the SBU in Ukraine. The most important of these trials include: Proceedings against V.N. Litvinenko, et al., 158/57252, GASBU-L; Proceedings against E.G. Shul'ts et al., 66437/14, GASBU (available in the USHMMA, RG 301.018M); Proceedings against A.A. Zuev et al., 44/32132, GASBU-D; and Proceedings against N.G. Matvienko et al., 4/100366, GASBU-Dn. Additional groups of Trawniki personnel files found their way into TsDAVO (Fond 3676, Opis 4, Dela 327, 328, 329, and 331); A-W-W (Fond 1173, ap. 4, b. 51); and LVVA (Fund 129, s. 1390). Perhaps the most important source on the Trawniki labor camp is the record of the proceedings against Karl Streibel et al., File 147 Js 43/69, located in the StA-HH. Some published documents on Trawniki are available in *DiM* (Łódź, 1946), vol. 1, *Obozy*; and vol. 2, *"Akcie" i "Wysiedlenia."*

Peter Black

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# MAUTHAUSEN



Mauthausen entrance gate.  
USHMM WS #74451, COURTESY OF COL. P. ROBERT SEIBEL

## MAUTHAUSEN MAIN CAMP

In May 1938, Theodor Eicke, Oswald Pohl, and a technical staff chose a site on a high plateau near the small town of Mauthausen, about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) from Linz, Austria, for a new concentration camp. The Mauthausen location was chosen because of the proximity to stone quarries and the need for a facility to hold political detainees in occupied Austria. A detail of several hundred prisoners from Dachau began construction there, and by the end of September, they had completed barracks for prisoners and the SS-guards. On February 17, 1939, SS-Obersturmbannführer Franz Ziereis took over as commandant, a position he held until the end of the war.<sup>1</sup>

Granite walls, built by the prisoners and topped with barbed wire charged with a high-power electric charge, enclosed the “protective custody” camp, a rectangular area 85×210 meters (279×689 feet). The street leading into the camp passed through two massive stone towers at the southeastern corner and led to the roll-call square. To the right of the entrance were the wash barracks, kitchen, confinement bunker, crematorium, and infirmary. To the left prisoners had constructed 24 barracks, each 45 to 50 meters (148 to 164 feet) long. Block One housed the camp clerk and, beginning in 1943, a brothel. Prominent prisoners were assigned to Block Two. Most of the construction at Mauthausen had been completed by late 1941, but a year later work began on a cluster of barracks for prisoners of war (POWs) outside of the stone walls. At night and on Sundays, prisoners remained in the protective custody camp, and guards staffed the towers along the stone wall. On the other days, shortly after the morning roll call and as the prisoner work details left the protective custody camp, the sentry chain of guards moved outward and was set up around the entire complex. Most of the prisoners worked in the quarry, northwest of the protective custody camp, and by May 1942, their number reached 3,844. Each

day they marched down the 186 steps under SS guard into the quarry. Prisoners carried large blocks of stone up the steps: excruciating work in conditions of unimaginable difficulty, because of the inadequate food and clothing and the brutality of the guards and Kapos.

The transfer of large numbers of prisoners from Dachau began in the fall of 1938, and by November, Mauthausen held more than 1,000 inmates. Transports continued to arrive over the next year, and by late September 1939, the number of prisoners reached 2,995; almost all of them came from Germany or Austria. The first large group of foreign prisoners, 448 Polish political detainees, arrived on March 9, 1940. During 1940, when more than 11,000 new prisoners were registered, transports came from Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald and included many “Red Spaniards,” prisoners who had fought in the Spanish Civil War on the Republican side. In 1941, an additional 18,000 prisoners arrived at Mauthausen, and in 1942, that number rose to 21,000.<sup>2</sup>

Mauthausen held large numbers of Soviet POWs, beginning in the fall of 1941. Separated from the other prisoners, they lived in extremely poor conditions, with minimal or no shelter and little food. One of the first transports of POWs, some 2,000, arrived on October 21, 1941. An additional 5,000 more Russian POWs came to Mauthausen by the spring of 1942. The fatality rate among them remained very high, and by March 1942 only 80 remained alive. According to the official record of the number of POW deaths (maintained in a separate death book beginning on October 21, 1941), 4,588 POWs had died by December 1942. A large number had starved to death or were executed. Many others died of typhus, which swept through the camp in late 1941 and early 1942. The number of POW fatalities at Mauthausen remained low for the remaining years of the war, largely because most had been killed already, with only 15 POW deaths in 1943, 246 in 1944, and 225 in 1945.<sup>3</sup>

In the fall of 1941, a large number of Czech Jews arrived at Mauthausen. Although not separated from the other Czech prisoners, the Jews were targeted for especially brutal treatment. Beatings, starvation, inhuman work conditions, or electrocution on the barbed-wire fences greatly reduced their number. Throughout the war, Jews continued to be sent to Mauthausen. For example, about 8,000 Hungarian Jews came from Auschwitz in May and June 1944. An additional 4,600 Polish Jews arrived in August. Because at this stage of the war the need for manpower in war-related work was so great, all those Jews who survived the initial selection were sent to subcamps.

In January 1945, as Auschwitz was being liquidated, more than 9,000 of its prisoners, mostly Jews, were shipped to Mauthausen. Many died of malnutrition or exposure before reaching the camp, and others perished during the selection process when, regardless of the weather, they stood along the stone walls for most of the day and night. The last large transport of prisoners to Mauthausen was a group of Hungarian Jews who



Post-liberation view of the Mauthausen roll-call plaza and interior of the entrance gate.

USHMM WS #74452, COURTESY OF P. ROBERT SEIBEL





Prisoners drag earth-laden carts for the erection of the "Russian camp" at Mauthausen, April-May 1942.

USHMM WS #12352, COURTESY OF NARA

arrived in March 1945. Because the camp was already filled beyond capacity with prisoners evacuated from other concentration camps, a tent compound was erected, and by April 9, it held more than 8,500 prisoners; an estimated 3,000 died there. In March, two more large transports arrived, the first with 2,055 prisoners from Gross-Rosen, of whom 2,047 were Jews, and another transport of 1,799 female prisoners from Ravensbrück.

Daily life at Mauthausen and its subcamps was characterized by continuous brutality at the hands of the SS guards and the Kapos and the deliberate lack of the most fundamental elements of human existence. Palatable food and rudimentary sanitary facilities were lacking, and disease ran rampant. The brutalization of the inmates began upon their arrival at Mauthausen and continued throughout their imprisonment. The first stop was the Political Section, where beatings and killings were routine. Once in the camp, daily life was characterized by deprivation and mistreatment. Each morning and evening the prisoners had to stand, sometimes for hours and regardless of the weather, on the roll-call square and be counted. From there, they were assigned at the start of the day to work details, many of which took them outside the camp. Because of the nature of work at the quarry, where the weakened and malnourished prisoners did strenuous

manual labor and hauled heavy rock, a large number of prisoners died or were killed there. Such treatment was in line with Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) chief Reinhard Heydrich's January 2, 1941, decree classifying the concentration camps into three levels, grading them by the severity of conditions. Only Mauthausen was in level three, and it was reserved "for the heavily burdened, especially those with a criminal record, and asocials, that is, those who have hardly any chance for rehabilitation."<sup>4</sup>

Death books recorded the fatalities at Mauthausen and its subcamps (except Gusen, which maintained its own death books), listing in detail the causes of death (with date and time of day) and biographical information on the victims. These provide information on the patterns of deaths, even though some prisoners were killed before ever being registered at the concentration camp and therefore were not recorded.<sup>5</sup> The victims of the Mauthausen system came from virtually all of the nations of Europe. According to the death books, 30 prisoners died in 1938, with the number increasing to 445 during 1939. Following the outbreak of war, fatalities rose sharply, with 2,312 registered in 1940; 1,494 in 1941; 4,392 in 1942; 3,209 in 1943; 7,076 in 1944; and 15,630 for the first four months of 1945.<sup>6</sup> The bodies of those who died were taken to a crematorium in the city of Steyr until May 1940, when the camp's own crematorium began operations.

The patterns of death reflect the changing policies and Nazi conquests. Between May and October 1941, for example, most of those who died at Mauthausen were Jews, the first time large numbers were represented there, and the patterns of death indicate a deliberate policy of annihilation. In May and June 1941, almost every recorded death was that of a Jew, and from June to October, most were Dutch Jews, recent arrivals at Mauthausen. In the last two months of 1941, there was once again a marked shift in deaths; now mostly political detainees from Spain, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia were killed. Numerous executions also took place in late 1941 at Mauthausen.

During 1942, most recorded deaths were of political detainees, many of whom were Czechs. Most had died of natural causes, but the incidence of those killed during an escape attempt or by execution rose. A mass execution took place on October 24, 1942, when 263 Czech prisoners were shot. According to the record of the execution in the death book, the killing began at 8:30 A.M. and ran through 5:42 P.M., a victim every two minutes. In November, more than 30 prisoners were shot during escape attempts; most were Dutch Jews.

In 1941, an installation for shooting prisoners with a small-caliber pistol was set up in a building just off the roll-call square. Prisoners accused of specific offenses were hanged or executed by firing squad. Those prisoners unable to work were killed by lethal injection of benzine or phenol to the heart. Prisoners were killed by poisonous gas in the gas chamber constructed in the crematorium building in late 1941, in the gas vans that carried victims to and from the Gusen subcamp, or at Hartheim, a "euthanasia" center. Invalids, the chronically ill, and prisoners unable to work were selected by

a team of physicians at Mauthausen and Gusen beginning in August 1941, part of the so-called *Aktion 14f13*. An additional killing program, *Aktion K* (*K* meaning *Kugel*, or bullet), included POWs who had attempted to escape and officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) who were unable to work. They were to be sent to Mauthausen and executed shortly after their arrival.<sup>7</sup>

In late 1942 and 1943, work in the quarries slackened as war-related industrial production grew in importance. At the same time, there was a massive increase in the number of prisoners sent to Mauthausen. For example, in March 1943, Mauthausen and Gusen held about 14,800 inmates. By December, that figure had risen to 26,000, and by the spring of 1945, it had reached 45,000. The increase in 1943 resulted in large measure from mass arrests in Poland, France, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union. Additional prisoners came from Greece and Belgium. In 1943 alone, more than 21,000 new prisoners arrived at Mauthausen. In 1944, more than 58,000 new prisoners were registered at Mauthausen, mostly individuals evacuated from concentration camps in the Balkans and Poland.

The final year of the war was catastrophic for the prisoners held at Mauthausen. Because of the camp's location well behind the advancing front lines, large numbers of prisoners were evacuated from other concentration camps and sent to Mauthausen. Between July and December 1944, the number of inmates rose by more than a third, and the gain continued into March 1945. Most of those arriving were in desperate condition, having hiked for several days or even weeks or having been transported in open railway cars.

Even though many of these prisoners were dispatched directly to the subcamps, conditions at Mauthausen remained seriously overcrowded. In 1944, a tent camp of 14 military and circuslike tents was set up outside of the main camp. Here, the prisoners slept directly on the ground, and sanitary facilities were virtually nonexistent; disease and death were



New arrivals stand at the "wailing wall" (*Klagemauer*) after a weeklong trip in open railway cars, 1943–1944.

USHMM WS #76317, COURTESY OF NARA



The Mauthausen prisoner orchestra, with conductor Karl Maierhofer in the lead, accompany recaptured prisoner Hans Bonarewitz (shown elevated above the performers with head down) to his execution, July 30, 1942.

USHMM WS #18371, COURTESY OF AG-M

rampant. Many of these prisoners, especially those who died shortly after arrival, were never recorded in the death books. Of the 6,000 prisoners who survived the trek from Sachsenhausen to Mauthausen in January, only several hundred made it through the first couple of days. Upon arrival the prisoners had been forced to strip and remain outside of the main camp for several days, exposed to the elements and beatings from the SS.

On May 3, 1945, members of the SS guard units fled, and a police unit from Vienna and a military unit from the Vienna fire department took over as guards. On May 5, 1945, units of the U.S. Army arrived at Mauthausen and Gusen, liberating about 21,000 prisoners. Former commandant Ziereis fled but was captured later in May by American troops. He died of gunshot wounds inflicted during the capture. Investigations into the crimes committed in Mauthausen began almost immediately after liberation and culminated in a series of U.S. Army trials held in 1947–1948 at Dachau. Beginning in the 1960s, West German prosecutors initiated dozens of investigations into crimes committed at Mauthausen, and several major cases went to court.

**SOURCES** There are numerous secondary and primary sources related to Mauthausen. The newest secondary account is Florian Freund and Bertrand Perz, "Mauthausen—Stammlager," in *Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, vol. 4, ed. Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2006), pp. 293–346. See also Hans Maršálek's comprehensive account, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995). Gisela Rabitsch, "Das KL Mauthausen," in *Studien zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1970), pp. 50–92, provides a good overview; as does the collection of documents in the DÖW's *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Oberösterreich 1934–1945: Eine*

*Dokumentation*, 2 vols. (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1982), 2:540–592. Florian Freund's articles—"Mauthausen: Zu Strukturen von Haupt- und Aussenlagern," *DaHe* 15 (November 1999): 254–272; and "Der Mauthausen-Prozess: Zum amerikanischen Militärgerichtsverfahren in Dachau im Frühjahr 1946," *DaHe* 13 (December 1997): 99–118—provide excellent surveys of the Mauthausen system and the postwar Mauthausen trials, particularly the parent case against Hans Altfuldisch.

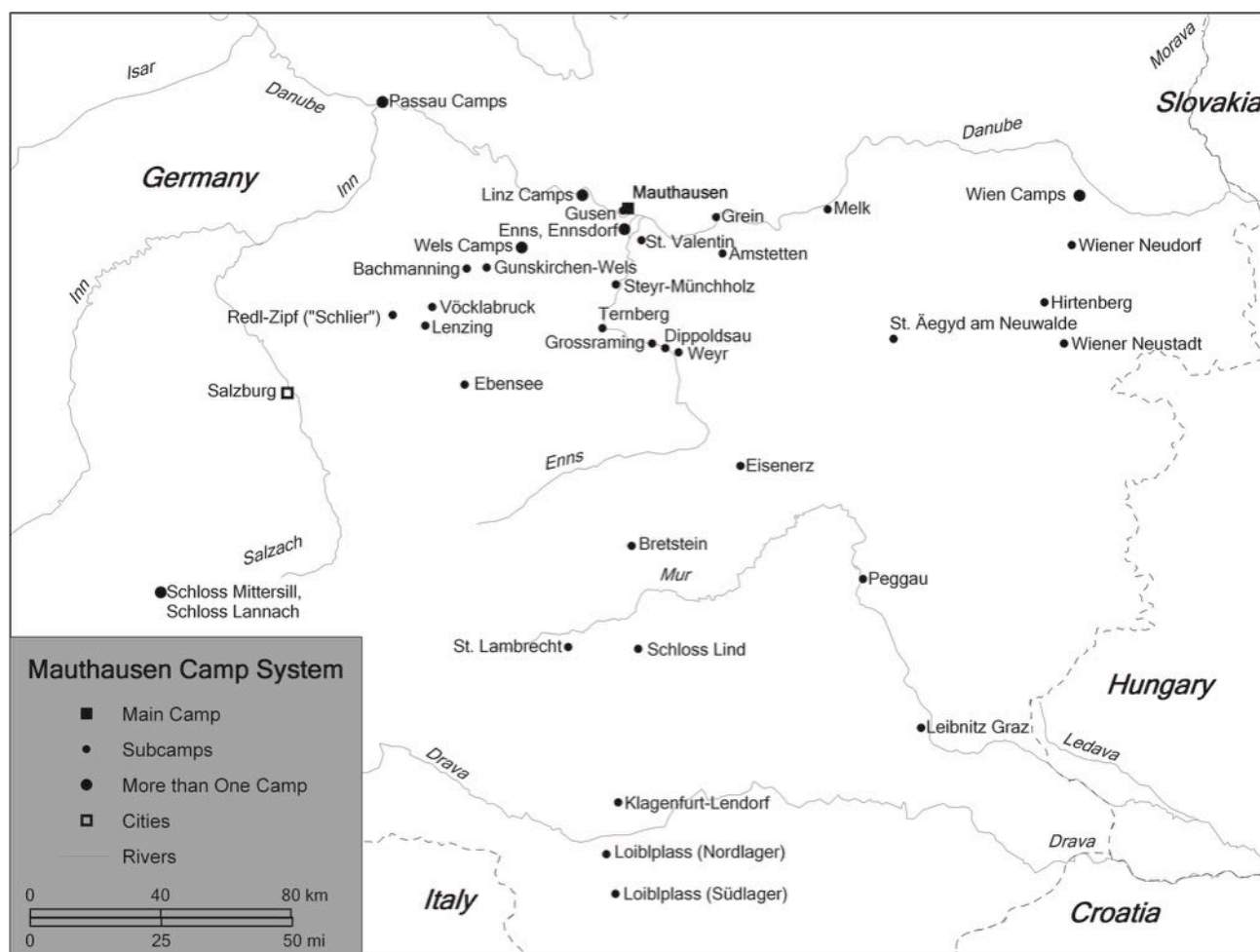
Several dozen of the U.S. Army trials held at Dachau involved crimes committed at Mauthausen and its subcamps, and these records are available at the NARA, RG 338, Files 000-50-5-Mauthausen through 000-50-5-51. On June 17, 1945, U.S. Army Major Eugene Cohen submitted a report on the crimes committed at Mauthausen, and this report, composed largely of survivor accounts and wartime documents, is an important source (NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg document PS-1176). Other documents captured at the end of the war, such as the Personnel Cards of Inmates (eight microfilm rolls) and Numerical Register (two microfilm rolls, NARA, RG 242, Arolsen, and in 000-50-Mauthausen), the Death Books, Prisoner of War Death Book, and Unnatural Death Book (NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg document 493-A-G-PS, which is available on microfilm, T-490), provide details on individual prisoners. The records of the West German cases, especially the case against Karl Schulze and Anton Streitwieser in LG Köln, include hundreds of survivor statements that begin to reveal the horror of daily life at Mauthausen and the treatment of prisoners by the guards. Commandant Ziereis fled and hid from the liberating American forces that captured him. Wounded, Ziereis dictated a statement (Nuremberg document PS-1515) and was handed over to former prisoners. He died on May 24, 1945, his body stripped and hung on the barbed-wire fence.

Robert G. Waite

## NOTES

1. BDCPF, "Franz Ziereis" file, NARA, RG 242.
2. "C.C. Mauthausen Num. Entry Register" and "Häftlinge Personal Karte," Film Nos. 1–8, NARA, RG 242, Arolsen microfilm.
3. "Totenbuch Kgf," National Archives, Nuremberg document, 495-PS, records the deaths of POWs from October 21, 1941, to March 31, 1945, a total of 5,588 persons.
4. Der Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD, Berlin, January 2, 1941, "Betr.: Einstufung der Konzentrationslager," NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg document 1063-A-PS.
5. The seven volumes cover the period from January 7, 1939, to April 1945. There are, in addition, separate volumes for prisoners of war and those who died "unnatural deaths," NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg document 493-A-G-PS. "Unat. Todesfälle," NARA, Nuremberg document P-22, identifies those who died at Mauthausen and the subcamps through accidents, suicides, execution, or escape attempts, from October 1, 1942, to April 6, 1945; they numbered 1,023 individuals.
6. These figures come from the seven volumes of death books. The overall number of fatalities at Mauthausen and its subcamps are compiled in Nuremberg document 499-PS. Hans Maršálek estimated that an additional 16,000 unregistered prisoners died in the Mauthausen system in 1945 (*Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* [Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995], p. 158); and Gisela Rabitsch puts the number of those who perished at Mauthausen, including POWs, at 85,259 ("Das KL Mauthausen," in *Studien zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager* [Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1970], p. 89).
7. Gestapo—Staatspolizeistelle Köln, "Betr.: Massnahmen gegen wiedergriffene flüchtige Kriegsgefangene Offiziere und nichtarbeitende Unteroffiziere mit Ausnahme britischer und amerikanischer Kriegsgefangener," March 4, 1944, NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg document 1650-PS.







## MAUTHAUSEN SUBCAMP SYSTEM

A few days after the *Anschluss* of Austria with the German Reich, Gauleiter August Eigruber announced that a concentration camp would be established in the Gau Oberdonau.

The choice of the site was dictated largely by the existing granite quarries in Mauthausen and Gusen and their close proximity to the “Führerstadt” Linz. The Granitwerke Mauthausen, (Mauthausen Granite Works) owned by the German Earth and Stone Works (DESt) was established in St. Georgen an der Gusen. Its purpose was to exploit the quarries.<sup>1</sup> Even before the Mauthausen concentration camp was opened on August 8, 1938, the DESt had leased the quarries at Mauthausen and Gusen. It would later assume complete ownership.<sup>2</sup>

The first commandant of the Mauthausen concentration camp was SS-Sturmbannführer Albert Sauer. He was commandant until February 1939. He was followed by Franz Ziereis, who held the position until the camp was liberated on May 5, 1945. He reached the rank of SS-Standartenführer. From March 1940, Georg Bachmayer was the first Schutzhaftlagerführer. He reached the rank of SS-Hauptsturmführer. Until the end of 1941, the guards were mostly German SS members, but later their number was increased by ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche). Members of Wehrmacht units were based in several subcamps to guard the prisoners, as were members of the Schutzpolizei (municipal police) and Ukrainian volunteers.

For several years the prisoner-functionaries were mostly German and Austrian BV (career criminal, or *Berufsverbrecher*) prisoners. From 1944, political prisoners took over the critical functions in the camp and began to develop a secret resistance committee.

The expansion of Mauthausen from a single camp into a system of camps was certain when in May 1938 it acquired the right to quarry in Gusen. In December 1939, expansion of the Gusen camp began. The Gusen subcamp was officially opened on May 25, 1940.<sup>3</sup> Until January 1944, the camps operated as two camps with two relatively independent administrations. Toward the end of the war, Gusen grew into the largest camp in the Mauthausen subcamp system.

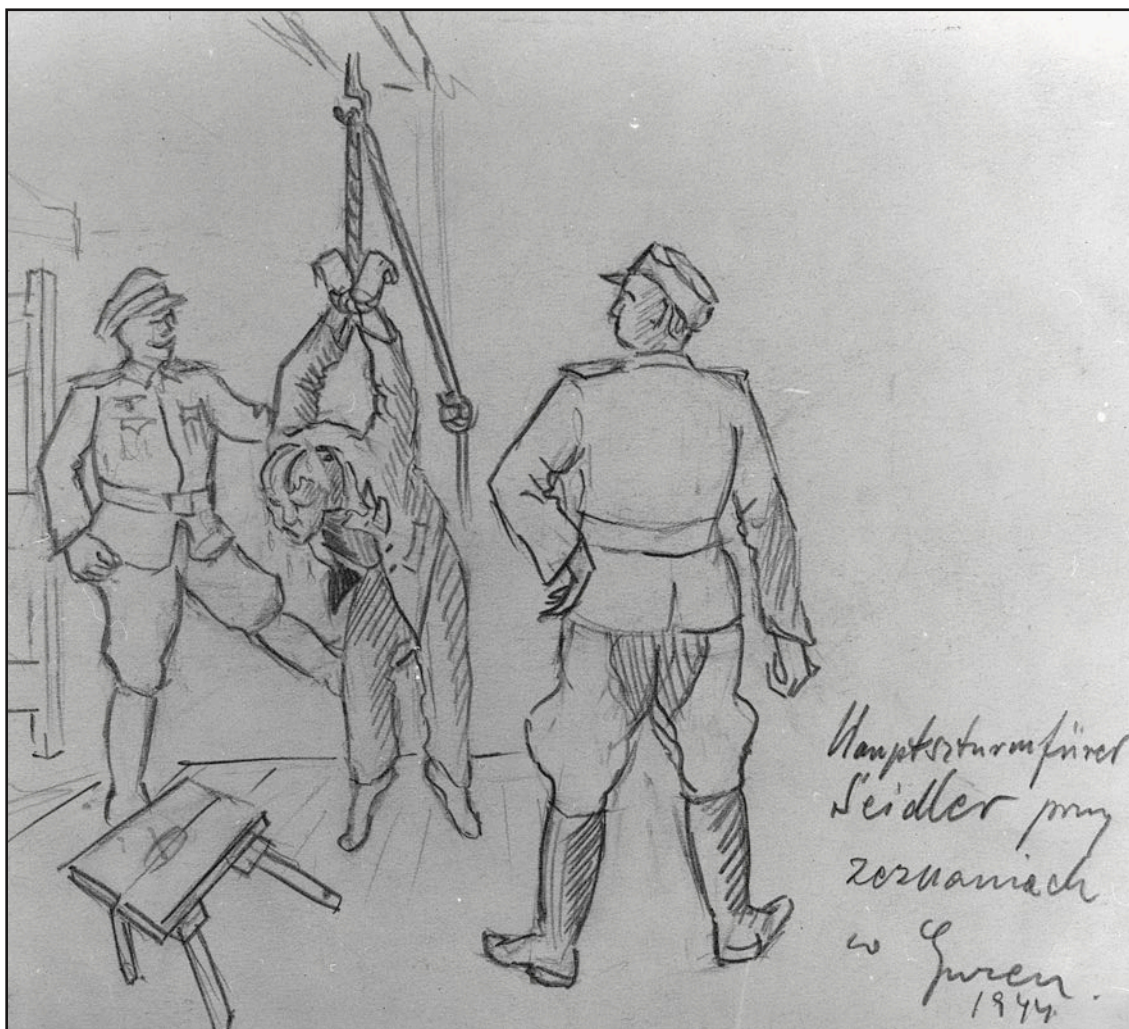
In 1940, the Chief of the Sipo and the SD declared the two camps Mauthausen and Gusen to be Category III camps, which in effect turned them into “camps for murder.”<sup>4</sup> Prisoners from other concentration camps were sent for punishment to Mauthausen and Gusen, where they served out their imprisonment under more severe conditions. At least 3,500 prisoners were murdered between 1942 and 1945 in the Mauthausen gas chambers. A minimum of approximately 1,000 prisoners were gassed in the subcamp Gusen as well as in the so-called gas van (*Gaswagen*). About 5,000 prisoners who were incapable of work were murdered in the gas chambers of the

former “Euthanasia Institute” in Schloss Hartheim near Linz. The death rate among prisoners in Mauthausen/Gusen was until the end of 1942 the highest of all National Socialist concentration camps.

A labor shortage meant that from 1941 there was a gradual change in the camps’ function. Prisoners increasingly worked on construction projects and for the armaments industry, which resulted in a slight and gradual improvement of conditions and a decrease in the death rate. At the same time, the Mauthausen concentration camp developed into the organizational center of a camp complex of more than 40 camps. During a period of seven years more than 200,000 prisoners were held in the camps and used as forced laborers. Mauthausen also became the death camp for those prisoners in the subcamps who were sick or physically weakened.

In 1942, there were 5 Mauthausen subcamps; in 1943, 10 more were established; and in 1944, another 21 became part of the system. The number of prisoners in the Mauthausen camp system increased steadily until 1942, decreased slightly due to the high death rate, and then began to climb again toward the end of the year. From 1944 on, the number of prisoners in Mauthausen and its subcamps dramatically increased. In December 1944, there were 72,825 prisoners registered in Mauthausen, of whom more than 62,000 were in its subcamps. In March 1945, the high-water mark was reached with 84,472 prisoners.<sup>5</sup> Poles and Soviets were the two largest national groups in the camps (among the Soviet prisoners, there were, until the beginning—middle of 1943, 15,000 prisoners of war [POWs] who were both administratively and physically separated from the other prisoners).<sup>6</sup> Particularly in 1940 to 1941, Spanish Republicans as well as political prisoners from occupied countries such as France, Yugoslavia, and Italy were brought to Mauthausen. From the middle of 1944, tens of thousands of Jewish prisoners, mostly from Poland and Hungary, were brought to Mauthausen to work as forced laborers in the underground armaments factories or as part of the evacuation transports.

The majority of the subcamps established until the middle of 1943 were used for construction purposes—be it road construction such as in Vöcklabruck, building tunnels such as Loiblpass, or power stations in Grossraming, Ternberg, Dippoldsau, and Passau. The construction of power plants was connected with the planned expansion of the central region of Upper Austria to a center of the German armaments industry. The systematic establishment of armaments firms in the greater areas of Linz and Vienna meant the establishment of subcamps in the same locations. The prisoners were initially used to construct the production facilities and later were used in the production process. The first Mauthausen subcamp



Polish prisoner "BIM" produced this sketch as part of a three-drawing cycle, "Report Leader Kellermann and Camp Führer during an Interrogation in Gusen," 1944. The caption reads: "Hauptsturmführer (sic) Seidler during an interrogation at Gusen, 1944."

USHMM WS #27663, COURTESY OF AG-M

established for the armaments industry was Steyr-Münichholz in March 1942. Other subcamps for the armaments industry were established in the Vienna region (Wien-Schwechat, Wien-Floridsdorf, Wiener Neudorf, Wiener Neustadt, Hirtenberg, Wien *Saurerwerke*) and in the Upper Austrian central area (Linz III, armaments production in the Gusen subcamp, Gunskirchen-Wels, St. Valentin).

From the middle of 1943, strategically important armaments industries began to be relocated underground as a result of the increase in air raids. The SS and armaments industry agreed that concentration camp prisoners would be used to excavate the underground caverns. Underground facilities with associated subcamps were established in Melk, St. Georgen, Redl-Zipf, Ebensee, Leibnitz, Peggau, and Wien-Hinterbrühl. Jewish prisoners from Auschwitz were transferred to Mauthausen to do this physically demanding work. The death rate in such camps was correspondingly high.

Toward the end of the war, prisoners in Amstetten and in Attnang-Puchheim were used to clean up after air raids. Subcamps were also established that, in the main, were used to accommodate evacuated Jewish prisoners. The conditions in the camps deteriorated dramatically with the dissolution of most of the subcamps, the evacuation marches, and the death marches from camps further to the east. Between January and May 1945, close to 50,000 Mauthausen prisoners died. It is estimated that in Mauthausen overall more than 100,000 prisoners died.<sup>7</sup>

SS units left the Mauthausen and Gusen camps before the arrival of troops of the U.S. Third Army. Security had been left to the Viennese Fire Protection Police (*Feuerschutzpolizei*). On May 5, 1945, U.S. soldiers liberated the camps in Mauthausen, Gusen, Linz, Gunskirchen, Lenzing, and Steyr. The next day the Ebensee subcamp was liberated.

The camp commandant, Franz Ziereis, was shot while trying to escape and died shortly thereafter in U.S. military

custody. The first Schutzhaftlagerführer Georg Bachmayer killed his family toward the end of the war and then committed suicide. There were more than 70 trials involving Mauthausen subcamp staff before a U.S. military court in Dachau. More than 300 members of the SS and other guards' units as well as several prisoner-functionaries were tried. The main trial against 61 of the accused occurred between March 29 and May 13, 1946, in Dachau and ended with 58 death sentences and 3 sentences of life imprisonment. After the appeal process had ended, 48 prisoners were hanged at the end of May 1947. In addition to the U.S. military trials, there were several civilian trials against perpetrators from the Mauthausen concentration camp. After 1955, there were several criminal trials outside Austria.

**SOURCES** Many of the Mauthausen subcamps, as well as the main camp, are covered in *Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, vol. 4, ed. Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2006). The earlier standard work on Mauthausen is by former camp clerk Hans Maršálek: *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995). The first dissertation on the camp was by Gisela Rabitsch, *Konzentrationslager in Österreich (1938–1945): Überblick und Geschehen* (Vienna, 1967). In the 1970s, there appeared in English the book by Evelyn Le Chêne, *Mauthausen: The History of a Death Camp* (London, 1971). Another complete history was published by Michel Fabreguét, *Mauthausen: Camp de concentration national-socialiste en Autriche rattachée (1938–1945)* (Paris, 1999). All of these works deal with the subcamps as part of the Mauthausen camp system. The relationship between the main and subcamps stands in the center of the essays by Florian Freund, "Mauthausen: Zu Strukturen von Haupt- und Aussenlagern," *DaHe* 15 (1999): 254–272; and Bertrand Perz, "Der Arbeits-einsatz im KZ Mauthausen," in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen, 1998), 2:533–557. Freund, Perz, and Karl Stuhlpfarrer have published a bibliography on the history of the Mauthausen concentration camp and its subcamps: *Bibliographie zur Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen* (Vienna, 1998). The research on the various subcamps varies. The

most researched subcamps are those involved with the rocket industry and the SDP; particularly the Ebensee, Melk, and Wiener Neustadt studies by Freund and Perz cover certain subcamps: Freund, *Arbeitslager Zement: Das Konzentrationslager Ebensee und die Raketenrüstung* (Vienna, 1989); Freund and Perz, *Das KZ in der Serbenhalle: Zur Kriegsindustrie in Wiener Neustadt* (Vienna, 1987); Perz, *Projekt Quarz: Steyr-Daimler-Puch und das Konzentrationslager Melk* (Vienna, 1991). The Gusen, Linz, Loiblpass, Redl-Zipf, Steyr, and Wiener Neudorf subcamps have also been relatively well researched. The remainder of the camps have, in part, been researched in unpublished academic works or in part in unpublished, local historical works.

The principal primary source collections for documenting Mauthausen subcamps are held at AG-M. The BA-B holds the business records of DESt. The numerous U.S. Army war crimes trial records for Mauthausen subcamp staff may be found in NARA, RG 338, cases 000-50-5-Mauthausen to 000-50-5-51.

Ralf Lechner and Christian Dürr  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. For sources on DESt (Bilanzen, Geschäftsberichte, Prüfberichte, etc.), see Best. NS 3, BA-B.
2. For the lease of the Mauthausen quarries, see ASt-Wien, MD 1849/38 and MD 921/39; for the Gusen quarries, Prüfbericht der DESt 1938–1940 (NS 3-756, pp. 14–17); as well as Bilanzunterlagen 1938/39 (NS 3-756, p. 29).
3. Liste der "Stammbelegschaft" des K.L. Gusen vom 25. Mai 1945, AG-M, B/12/9.
4. Einstufung der Konzentrationslager, THStA-W, NS 4 Bu31, p. 1r, AG-M, A/7/1 und A/7/2.
5. There are a number of sources on the prisoner numbers in the AG-M, E/6/1 bis E/16/17. Also there are various Häftlingszugangsbücher that have survived: AG-M, Y/36, Y/43, Y/44.
6. Totenbuch Sowjetischer Kriegsgefangener, AG-M, Y/31.
7. Totenbuch des Standortarztes Mauthausen, AG-M, Y/46; "Operationsbuch Gusen" (Totenbuch des Krankenreviers Gusen), AG-M, Y/47.



## AMSTETTEN [AKA BAHNBAU I] (MEN)

The Amstetten subcamp was located in present-day Niederösterreich (Lower Austria), about 114 kilometers (71 miles) west of Vienna and 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) southeast of Mauthausen. Until 1945 it was part of the Reichsgau Niederdonau. Although the camp held its own camp police—members of which were sent back to the main camp early in April 1945—Florian Freund argues that Amstetten perhaps was not a real subcamp with its own administrative structure but a work detachment only. However, the camp was established on March 19, 1945 (according to the International Tracing Service [ITS], April 1, 1945), with the arrival of a large transport of male inmates. On March 23, another 1,500 inmates arrived in the camp. The maximum number of inmates in the camp was 2,966, among them 715 Jews.

Prior to the establishment of the Amstetten subcamp, trains had brought prisoners daily from Mauthausen to Amstetten, where they were used by various companies in the Amstetten district. Among other tasks, prisoners helped construct air-raid trenches and clean up the railway station; they were also used by the Flotte und Hopferweiser company, a local sawmill.

The subcamp was located on Grillparzer Strasse in the suburb of Allersdorf. According to Gerhard Zeilinger, the prisoners were accommodated in the lodgings of the Military Camp II (Militärlager II). Leopold Redlinger, a former inmate of the subcamp, reports that the inmates were accommodated in a former industrial building; perhaps these were also garages.

The inmates were mostly used to clean up and repair the bombed-out Amstetten railway station, which was an important stop on the line between Vienna and Linz. The Amstetten railway station had been attacked by Allied bombers repeatedly, as on March 16 and 20, 1945.

Polish prisoner Rudolf Starowie, who was in Amstetten, said the following: “We were given one meal (.75 liters [1.6 pints] of watery broth without any fat and about two hundred grams [seven ounces] of bread) during our twenty-hour shifts. We had one break of forty-five minutes. We were told in Amstetten that we would be fed in Mauthausen and in Mauthausen we were told that we would be fed in Amstetten. We could only sleep during our trip—we were not allowed to enter our block and sleep during the day. People were dying everywhere. The lack of food, the inhuman work conditions, sleeplessness, [and] overtiredness were the main reasons for the deaths of the prisoners.”<sup>1</sup>

Many prisoners were killed on March 20, 1945, when there was an air raid on Amstetten. Since they were not allowed to enter the air-raid bunkers for the civilian population, the prisoners fled into the forest between Eisenreichdornach and Preinsbach as the aircraft approached. It was here, however, that the U.S. planes dropped their first bombs. In the chronicles of the Parish of St. Stephan, Amstetten, there is a report on the recovery of the bodies that followed: “While we were rescuing the victims . . . in a touching procession full of disturbed, exhausted, and un-

hinged people, men and women, captured Poles, Greeks, interned foreign workers who were not allowed during the bombardment to go into the air raid shelters but were forced into the forests to the east . . . we saw trucks on which there were the corpses—layered between straw hung their hands, feet and heads.”<sup>2</sup>

On April 3, 38 inmates were returned to the Mauthausen main camp; 20 more followed soon thereafter. They had formed the camp police of the Amstetten subcamp, and the majority of them were criminal and “asocial” inmates. On April 6, 1945, the general transfer of inmates back to the main camp began; it concluded on April 18, with the removal of the last 1,496 prisoners. Via the Steyr subcamp, they were taken to the camps in Mauthausen, Gusen, and Ebensee.

**SOURCES** Hans Maršálek describes the Amstetten men’s camp in *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen. Dokumentation, Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen* (Vienna, 1995), p. 71; as does Gerhard Zeilinger, ed., *Amstetten 1938 bis 1945: Dokumentation und Kritik* (Amstetten, 1996), pp. 65–66. See also the book by Leopold Redlinger, *Erlebtes—Erdachtes. So war es—so ist es* (Vienna: Selbstverlag, 1998). On the Web site of the Ebensee memorial, there is also a report on Redlinger’s time at the Amstetten subcamp: <http://bob.swe.uni-linz.ac.at/Ebensee/Betrifft/46/redlinger46.php>. The “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, 1787, and the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 172, refer to the Amstetten subcamp (male). Florian Freund describes the Amstetten subcamp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, (eds.), *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 347–349.

In AG-M are the following file collections that relate to the history of the Amstetten subcamp: B/2/1, B/60/11, e/6/7, and Mikrofilm Auschwitz. The interview with Rudolf Starowie is held in KA-SG-Amst.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Recording of a former prisoner in Mauthausen and Amstetten, Rudolf Starowie (original in KA-SG-Amst), cited by Gerhard Zeilinger, ed., *Amstetten 1938 bis 1945: Dokumentation und Kritik* (Amstetten, 1996), p. 66.

2. Cited by Zeilinger, *Amstetten 1938 bis 1945*, p. 66.

## AMSTETTEN II [AKA BAHNBAU II] (WOMEN)

The Amstetten subcamp was located in present-day Niederösterreich (until 1945: Reichsgau Niederdonau), about 114 kilometers (71 miles) west-southwest of Vienna.

The women’s camp was established on March 20, 1945, the day after the opening of the men’s camp in Amstetten. As with the men’s camp, it lasted until April 18, 1945. There were around 500 women held in the camp who were used to clean up after bombing raids in the vicinity of the destroyed



Amstetten railway station. The railway station had been destroyed in a heavy bombing raid on March 19, 1945.

Andreas Baumgartner has verified the nationalities of 495 of the women held prisoner as follows: 110 French, 107 Soviets, 91 Hungarians, 77 Belgians, 41 Poles, 34 Germans, 7 Italians, 7 Dutch, 7 Czechs, 5 Slovaks, 3 Yugoslavs, 1 Briton, 1 Latvian, 1 Norwegian, 1 Romanian, 1 Spaniard, and 1 American. Some 374 women were political prisoners; 69 were Jews; 34 were Sinti and Roma (Gypsies); 13 were “asocials”; 2 were Jehovah’s Witnesses; 1 was a “Red Spaniard”; and 1 woman was under “security arrest” (*Sicherheitsverwahrung*).

As with the male prisoners, women died during a renewed and devastating bombing raid on Amstetten on March 20, 1945. They died because they were not permitted to enter the air-raid shelters, which were reserved for Germans. Baumgartner stated that 34 women died directly from the bombing raid, and 10 died in the following days on the return transport to Mauthausen.

Hans Maršálek, a survivor of the Mauthausen camp, states that following the raid the women were transferred back to Mauthausen, where they collectively refused to return to Amstetten on March 23, 1945. Several representatives of the women, including French women and the British woman, were arrested but released on the same day from the prison’s jail. Baumgartner states that the women were only released from the bunker after several days. Maršálek describes this incident “as the first open and successful refusal by prisoners to work in KLM [Konzentrationslager Mauthausen], which did not result in any adverse consequences.”<sup>1</sup> The women stated that they were prepared to resume work after they were told that the Amstetten subcamp would be reopened and that if they did not return, other women would be taken to Amstetten. Most likely, the women returned on March 23 to the Amstetten subcamp.

As with the men’s camp in Amstetten, the women’s camp was dissolved on April 18, 1945. The women were evacuated to Mauthausen.

**SOURCES** Andreas Baumgartner in *Die vergessenen Frauen von Mauthausen: Die weiblichen Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen und ihre Geschichte* (Vienna, 1997), pp. 174–178, has provided the most detailed description of the subcamp. On the nationalities of the inmates, see p. 225 of Baumgartner’s book. For further information on the Amstetten women’s subcamp, see Christian Hawle, Gerhard Kriechbaum, and Margret Lehner, *Täter und Opfer: Nationalsozialistische Gewalt und Widerstand im Bezirk Vöcklabruck 1938–1945; Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995). Other essays are to be found in Gerhard Zeilinger, ed., *Amstetten 1938 bis 1945: Dokumentation und Kritik* (Amstetten, 1996), p. 65; and Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995), pp. 71, 319. “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1787, refers to the subcamp. The ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:172, also refers to the Amstetten subcamp.

The collections in AG-M contain the following files on the Amstetten women’s subcamp: K/4a/1 (Liste der nach Amstetten überstellten Häftlinge) and V3/64 (Witness statements by former prisoners Georgette W. and Simone D.).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995), p. 319.

## BACHMANNING

At the end of 1941, the Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG) suggested a joint venture to the SS in the establishment of the Holzverarbeitungsbetrieb (woodworking factory) Mauthausen. With the investment of 1,542,000 Reichsmark (RM), the enterprise was to have a yearly turnover of 2 million RM by producing window frames and spindles. The RWHG offered to finance the project completely, provide the technical equipment, and procure delivery of raw materials, machines, and management. According to calculations by the RWHG, 60 skilled workers and around 300 concentration camp prisoners were required. According to estimates by Kurt May, head of Amt W IV (Holzbearbeitungsbetriebe) in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) and manager of the SS-owned Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke GmbH (German Equipment Works, DAW), at least 500 were required.<sup>1</sup>

Probably because Oswald Pohl wanted the enterprise to be completely under the control of DAW, the venture between the RWHG and the SS did not take place. There was also no final determination of whether Mauthausen could supply the required number of prisoners.

The failure of the joint venture must be seen in connection with the acquisition of the Forst- und Sägewerk GmbH Bachmanning by the DAW (two-thirds) and the Deutsche Erdmöbel AG in Butschowitz, owned by Kurt May (one-third).<sup>2</sup> May was arrested in the summer of 1942, and the DAW merged with the Forst- und Sägewerksbetrieb GmbH, Bachmanning so that by 1943 the operation was a solely owned DAW factory. The Sägewerk production was then undertaken almost exclusively by the DAW-Werk Dachau.

In 1942, an average of 20 prisoners from the Dachau concentration camp were used in the Bachmanning factory. The prisoners of the Dachau subcamp at Bad Ischl had to cut timber for the sawmill until the end of the year.

There are scarcely any documents on the Mauthausen camp at Bachmanning. The camp administration documents refer only once to Bachmanning, on September 14, 1943, when it is mentioned as an independent subcamp. On the following day the camp is referred to as a work detachment of the Grossraming subcamp. Further confirmation on the status of Bachmanning as a Grossraming work detachment is provided by the fact that on September 15, 1943, the number

of prisoners in Grossraming increased from 918 to 937.<sup>3</sup> The Bachmanning work detachment was apparently closed simultaneously with the Grossraming work detachment at the end of August 1944.<sup>4</sup>

The only surviving change report (*Veränderungsmeldung*) stated that on September 13, 1943, 20 prisoners were transferred to Bachmanning, of whom 18 were Spanish Republicans and 2 were of Polish nationality.<sup>5</sup> There was 1 other named prisoner—a Yugoslav political prisoner.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** Gisela Rabitsch compiled the first information on the Bachmanning camp in “Konzentrationslager in Österreich (1938–1945): Überblick und Geschehen” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Wien, 1967). Details of the attempted joint venture between the SS and the Reichswerke are to be found in Walter Naasner’s *Neue Machtzentren in der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft 1942–1945: Die Wirtschaftsorganisation der SS, das Amt des Generalbevollmächtigten für den Arbeitseinsatz und das Reichsministerium für Bewaffnung und Munition/reichsministerium für Rüstung und Kriegsproduktion im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem* (Boppard am Rhein, 1994); and Bertrand Perz, “KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter der Reichswerke ‘Hermann Göring’ in Linz,” in *NS-Zwangsarbeit: Der Standort Linz der Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin, 1938–1945*, ed. Oliver Rathkolb (Vienna, 2001), vol. 1, *Zwangsarbeit—Sklavenarbeit: Politik-, sozial- und wirtschaftshistorische Studien*, pp. 449–590; and Perz, “Der Arbeitseinsatz im KZ Mauthausen,” in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen, 1998), 2:533–557. Hermann Kaienburg has evaluated the documents in the BA-B on the Sägewerk Bachmanning in *Die Wirtschaft der SS* (Berlin, 2003). Details on the use of Dachau concentration camp prisoners in Bachmanning are taken from Albert Knoll, “Bad Ischl (Sägewerk Bachmanning),” in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors. Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, vol. 2, *Frühe Lager, Dachau und Emslandlager* (Munich, 2005), p. 292. The listing of Bachmanning as a Grossraming work detachment can be found in ITS, *Vorläufigen Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1:146.

Business reports and documents from the Forst- und Sägewerksbetriebe GmbH Bachmanning are located in BA-B, Best. NS 3 (SS-WVHA). Copies of the documents on the Mauthausen prisoners are to be found in AG-M.

Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Aktenvermerk Hans Hohberg, December 12, 1941, Nuremberg Document NID-12324.
2. Geschäftsbericht der Forst- und Sägewerksbetriebe GmbH Bachmanning 1942, BA-B, NS 3/887, fol. 52.
3. Arbeitsbericht des Arbeitsdienstführers, Schutzhaftlager Mauthausen, September 14, 1943, AG-M, F/2/15.
4. This is supported by entries in the Häftlingspersonalkarten (prisoner file cards) of two Polish prisoners. These

support the use of their concentration camp labor from September 13, 1943, to August 25 or 28, 1944, from “Bachmanning,” AG-M.

5. Veränderungsmeldung für den 13 September 1943, AG-M, Y/49.

6. Häftlingszugangsbuch der Politischen Abteilung, AG-M, Y/36.

## BRETSTEIN

The Mauthausen subcamp at Bretstein was situated in the community of Bretstein in the Niedere Tauern in the Steiermark (until 1945: Reichsgau Steiermark), in a side valley of the Pöls river about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) northwest of the present-day district city of Judenburg.

The camp was established on August 1, 1941, and was part of the SS economic enterprise Deutsche Versuchsanstalt für Ernährung und Verpflegung GmbH (German Experimental Institute for Nutrition and Provisions, Ltd.). This company in 1939 and 1940 acquired three alpine farms—Krahberger, Koini, and Hauserbauer—in Bretsteingraben and created an experimental farm for the breeding of sheep and horses. Experience gained here was to be put to use in the future Wehrbauernhöfe (fortified farms) der SS in the conquered territories, mainly in the East. Also, according to Bertrand Perz, the SS experimented with a biological-dynamic way of farming (*biologisch-dynamische Landwirtschaft*). During the war, the products harvested there served to supply the SS with agricultural products.

The male prisoners in the Bretsteingraben subcamp were mostly Spanish Republicans who had been arrested after their escape to France. There were also some Germans, the majority of them so-called Bibelforscher (Jehovah’s Witnesses). The maximum number of prisoners was around 170. After the first prisoners had arrived in June 1941, smaller transports followed in the months thereafter. The camp consisted of four barracks for the inmates, surrounded by a fence and watchtowers, and two barracks for the SS. The camp was guarded by about 50 members of the 2nd Company of the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann Mauthausen (Death’s Head Battalion Mauthausen). The first Kommandoführer was an SS member named Schneider, followed in November 1941 by SS-Untersturmführer Karl Schöpplerle. Schöpplerle was succeeded in August 1942 by Fritz Miroff.

The prisoners were used for a multitude of tasks: they looked after a poultry farm, bred sheep, and worked in the market garden and on an experimental weaving mill. Their main task, however, was to build a road for goods traffic through Beitsteingraben. Hans Maršálek refers to several unsuccessful escape attempts by the prisoners: on June 30, 1942, two prisoners were shot while trying to escape (the euphemistic expression could also refer to the willful murder of these prisoners); on August 5, 1941, a group of five Spanish Republicans were recaptured and murdered after attempting to escape. In total, seven prisoners were murdered in the camp.

On December 10, 1942, the camp was evacuated, mainly because of the climatic conditions in this alpine valley. The inmates were taken to the Steyr-Münichholz camp. Probably because of the priority of the employment of concentration camp inmates in armament production, no new inmates were taken to Bretstein in the spring of 1943. Only on June 5, 1943, 10 inmates—6 Jehovah's Witnesses and 4 Spanish Republicans—were taken to Bretstein. Their task was to dissolve the camp. On June 25, these inmates were transferred back to Mauthausen. The empty grounds of the subcamp were handed over to the Agrarbezirksbehörde (local agricultural authorities) Leoben, and on August 30, 1943, the camp ceased to exist.

**SOURCES** Hans Maršálek describes the camp in his book *Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen. Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995), pp. 73, 230, and 260. The latter pages refer to the escape attempts. A short description of the camp is found on the Web site of the Verein KZ-Nebenlager Bretstein, [www.gedenkstaette-bretstein.at](http://www.gedenkstaette-bretstein.at). Additional information can be gleaned from the academic work by Thomas Mayer, *Wirken und Handeln der SS im oberen Pölstal, dargestellt am Beispiel des Mauthausen-Nebenlagers Bretstein* (Judenburg, 2001). Bertrand Perz wrote a detailed study on the subcamp, *Das KZ Bretstein und die Deutsche Versuchsanstalt für Ernährung und Verpflegung. Landwirtschaft im Dienste der nationalsozialistischen Eroberungspolitik* (Graz, 2006). He is also the author of the essay on Bretstein in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 351–353. The “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1794, refers to the camp; as does the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:172.

The existence of the Bretstein camp is confirmed by AG-M, file Signatur E/13/2.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## DIPPOLDSAU

Set up by a work Kommando from Grossraming, Dippoldsau was located 20 to 30 kilometers (12.4 to 18.6 miles) farther up the Enns River. Established on a steep slope above the road between Grossraming and Weyr in the summer of 1943, it held prisoners who worked on the road flooded by the dam being constructed downriver. During the first several months of its existence, prisoners worked on the site and constructed five barracks that housed about 120 German and Spanish prisoners. The entire site was enclosed by a barbed-wire fence with two or three guard towers. Approximately 15 ethnic German guards were assigned there, and they resided in a barrack outside the camp. A number of civilian workers were also employed at Dippoldsau. In addition to road maintenance, a detail of an estimated 45 prisoners, led by a detachment leader and 4 guards, worked in a nearby quarry.

**SOURCES** There are no separate sources on Dippoldsau. Readers should refer to the source section for Grossraming.

Robert G. Waite

## EBENSEE

In mid-September 1943, representatives from the SS, the Armaments Ministry, and the War Office selected a wooded area about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) from the village of Ebensee in southeastern Austria for a new concentration camp that would be tied to armaments production. Construction of the Cement Labor Camp (SS-Arbeitslager Zement) began in November. Situated in a dense forest and close to a rock formation where tunnels could be dug, the camp was well sheltered from Allied air attacks, and here Nazi authorities expected to test the newly designed A9 rockets. Prisoners excavated and constructed the tunnels under the direction of civilian workers from a handful of firms. The extent of the network of underground tunnels was second only to those at the Dora (Mittelbau main camp) concentration camp, and plans called for 12 factories in the 428-meter-long (1,404-foot-long) tunnels.

The first sizable transport of concentration camp prisoners came from Mauthausen on November 19, 1943. Almost half were political detainees from Poland, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union. The prisoners immediately began construction of barracks, and they started digging the tunnels, working 12 hours a day in snow and rain. The camp was laid out so that only a minimum of trees was destroyed, with the barracks scattered among the trees. The layout of the “protective custody” camp was rectangular, and it was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence with guard towers. Just inside the main gate were the roll-call area and the barracks holding the clerk's office.

Many of the prisoners working in the tunnels did so under the direction of civilian construction firms and under the supervision of civilian workers and Kapos. The plan was to employ large numbers of prisoners and to get the project done quickly. By the end of 1943, the number of prisoners at Ebensee had climbed to 511. With the completion of additional barracks in early January 1944, more prisoners were sent from Mauthausen, and the number quickly reached about 1,000. For these early transports to the new site, the SS carefully selected prisoners who had technical skills, had been in Mauthausen for a long time, and had already obtained some position of authority among the other prisoners. Most of the following transports to Ebensee held prisoners who had only recently been sent to Mauthausen, most from Poland, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. In the spring of 1944, large numbers of French and Italian prisoners, and in June about 1,500 Hungarian Jews from Auschwitz, arrived. They were followed in July by a large number of Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) and in the fall by Polish prisoners from Auschwitz. The prisoner population rose to more than 6,000. A massive increase in the number of prisoners came in January 1945, as large numbers of prisoners arrived from concentration camps evacuated in the east. Later in the spring, as





Aerial photograph of the Ebensee subcamp of Mauthausen, nd.  
USHMM WS #04164, COURTESY OF NARA

subcamps of Mauthausen were emptied, thousands more came to Ebensee, and the number of prisoners held there reached 18,500 housed in 32 barracks. During its brief existence, an estimated 27,000 prisoners were incarcerated in Ebensee.

Living conditions for the prisoners were severe, with the essentials for personnel hygiene lacking, the food inadequate, and the prisoners working long hours at exhausting and dangerous jobs, mostly excavating tunnels, for a number of privately run construction firms. Conditions worsened during the last six months of the war, when the number of prisoners soared. Those unable to work perished through disease or starvation in the camp's infirmary or were sent back to Mauthausen. The death rate was high, and more than 8,200 prisoners died there. Of this figure, about 38 percent were Jews, 32 percent political detainees, and 14 percent Soviet POWs, the next largest group. Until the end of July 1944, when the crematorium at Ebensee began operation, the bodies of those who died there were transported back to Mauthausen. Discipline within the camp was harsh and brutal. Those prisoners who attempted to escape from Ebensee were brought back to the protective custody camp and hanged during the evening roll call.

The first commandant, SS-Hauptsturmführer Georg Bachmayer, played a critical role in the construction of the Ebensee subcamp, but he remained there only a few weeks. The next two successors, Anton Bentele and Otto Riemer, did not serve long there either before Obersturmführer Anton Ganz took over in late May 1944. Ganz served as commandant until the abandonment of the camp a year later. Prisoners remember him as a brutal commandant whose sole concern was the excavation of the tunnels.

Faced with a shortage of guards at Ebensee, the SS-9th Guard Company assigned there from Mauthausen used a barbed-wire corridor leading from the barracks to one of the tunnels, with guards posted at sizable distances from each other, to control the prisoners and to direct them to the work sites. Guards were stationed in the 22 guard towers and in the outer sentry chain, which was posted during the day around the entire work site. As the number of prisoners rose sharply, two other guard companies were assigned to Ebensee. They were replaced in the summer of 1944 by members of the Wehrmacht.

The last roll call took place on May 5, 1945, and the commandant ordered the prisoners into the tunnels where, it





A view of the Ebensee subcamp of Mauthausen, May 1945.  
USHMM WS #06133, COURTESY OF AGNES W. STRUBEL

was rumored, the Nazi guards had set up explosives to destroy them and the prisoners. The prisoners refused to leave the roll-call area. That night the approximately 600 guards fled from the camp, and the next day American forces arrived. The U.S. military identified, arrested, and prosecuted several former guards in 1947, and West German authorities prosecuted and convicted former commandant Anton Ganz.

**SOURCES** Florian Freund's *Arbeitslager Zement: Das Konzentrationslager Ebensee und die Raketenrüstung* (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1989) is a comprehensive history of Ebensee that places its development within the German effort to produce rockets.

Former prisoner Jean Biondi provides an overview in his statement "The Camp of Ebensee" (NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg Document PS-2176). West German prosecutors initiated several criminal investigations. The most extensive court records come from the prosecution of former commandant Anton Ganz in Munich; he received a sentence of life in prison. Several U.S. Army trials prosecuted former guards,



"Liberation in Ebensee," a sketch by Ebensee survivor Leo Haas from the cycle, "From the Concentration Camps," 1947.  
USHMM WS #60862

including *USA vs. Geiger* (NARA, RG 238, Case No. 000-50-5-6) and *USA vs. Horst Goennemann* (Case No. 000-50-5-34). The report of war crimes in the Mauthausen system prepared by Major Eugene Cohen contains prisoner statements on Ebensee (NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg Document PS-2176). YVA has a box of cards recording the deaths of prisoners in the camp infirmary from February to April 1945 (YVA 041-19), and each card has the prisoner's name, date of birth, date of death, and cause of death. A list of 193 guards is held in YVA (M-9/E-12-8). A copy of the Lagerstandbuch is in the AG-M, BMdI, Vienna (B5/35).

Robert G. Waite

## EBENSEE/WELS II [AKA WELS]

The Wels II subcamp was located approximately 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) southwest of Linz, in the village of Wels, whose railway tracks and station had been destroyed by Allied air raids.

About 1,000 male inmates arrived at Wels from Mauthausen on March 24, 1945. The majority of them were metalworkers by profession—which could indicate that they were meant to be employed with the Flugzeug- und Metallbauwerke Wels (Aircraft and Metal Construction Company, Wels). The next day, 1,000 more inmates arrived from the Ebensee subcamp. All the inmates worked in 12-hour shifts, cleaning the railway station of Wels. They were accommodated in a big factory hall, which was not fenced and had no kitchen and no sanitary installations. The inmates were guarded by SS and Home Guard (Volkssturm). On April 6, 400 inmates unable to work were sent to the Ebensee camp and replaced by 400 new inmates—an indication of the exhausting conditions under which the inmates worked and lived.

In 1979, the International Tracing Service (ITS) stated that the prisoners were also used to construct emergency accommodations. The ITS also reported that the companies Dyckerhoff and Widmann as well as the Reichsstatthalter im Reichsgau Oberdonau used the prisoners for labor.

According to an official report, the camp was closed on April 13, 1945, when the prisoners were evacuated to Ebensee, where they arrived on April 14. Within two days of these evacuation marches, according to a report by the Ebensee camp doctor, at least 54 inmates died.

**SOURCES** Florian Freund describes the Wels II subcamp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 444–445. The Wels II subcamp is mentioned in Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), p. 78, who includes it as the continuation of a part of Wels I. Jean Majerus, a former inmate of the camp, wrote down his memoirs in "Von Rad ins KZ," in *Letzeburger zu Mauthausen*, ed. Maicale de Mauthausen (Luxembourg, 1970). Investigations regarding the Wels II subcamp were conducted in the following court cases: *US vs. Geiger et al.* (NARA, RG 338) and *US vs. Gogl et al.* (NARA, RG 338). But there was never a trial dealing with

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events at this subcamp. The camp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:173; and “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBL*. (1977), Teil 1, p. 1848.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## EISENERZ

The Eisenerz subcamp was located in Reichsgau Steiermark, part of the present-day district city of Leoben, about 85 kilometers (53 miles) northwest of Graz.

Before the Anschluss with Austria, the Österreichische Alpine Montan-Gesellschaft (ÖMAG) had exploited the iron from the local Erzberg. In 1938, with the Anschluss, the Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG) took over the ÖMAG, including its iron and steelworks, and the Erzberg became part of the Reichswerke AG Alpine Montanbetriebe “Hermann Göring.” Since Germany worried that Sweden could stop the delivery of iron ore (as actually happened in 1944), production was increased significantly. While in 1936, 1,638 people had been employed at the Erzberg, in 1938, 4,707 were working there and approximately 6,000 in 1941. Beginning in 1941, foreign forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) were also employed there.

Following negotiations between Paul Pleiger, the head of the supervisory board of the RWHG, Wilhelm Schilken, the head of the Linz branch of the RWHG, Franz Ziereis, the Mauthausen commander, and the leaders of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), the Eisenerz subcamp was opened on June 15, 1943. The camp was probably located in the “Gsollgraben” and remained rather small—the number of inmates never exceeded 500. The majority of prisoners were probably of Polish nationality. In early September 1943, about 400 prisoners were in the camp; the number dropped to about 300 in February 1944 and reached 469 in July 1944, after the arrival of a transport with 172 prisoners. But sick inmates incapable of work were very often sent back to the main camp, which clearly indicates the exhausting work and living conditions in the camp. Florian Freund states that between February 1944 and the dissolution of the camp in mid-March 1945, 12 inmates died in Eisenerz—but since most sick inmates were sent back to Mauthausen, the number of inmates who fell victim to the conditions at Eisenerz no doubt was much higher. Hans Maršálek also lists the numerous killings of prisoners and suicides by the inmates. Polish prisoners were “shot trying to escape,” respectively, on the dates of July 8, 1943; July 13, 1943; July 29, 1943; September 10, 1943; January 3, 1944; January 11, 1944; and April 11, 1944. On November 4, 1943, a Polish prisoner committed suicide by hanging himself.

The camp existed until March 14, 1945. On March 2, 230 prisoners were transferred to the Peggau subcamp and from there to Mauthausen. Of the remaining 10 inmates, 9 were taken to Peggau on March 14 and the last one the following

day directly to Mauthausen. However, the files of the Mauthausen concentration camp refer to the continued existence of the Eisenerz subcamp until April 29, 1945—with 1 prisoner only.

**SOURCES** Hans Maršálek describes the Eisenerz camp in his monograph *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995), p. 73. Florian Freund is the author of an article on the Eisenerz subcamp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 360–362. Information on ÖMAG and the RWHG can be found in the following publications: Helmut Fiederer, *Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” in Österreich (1938–1945)* (Vienna: Geyer, 1983); Oliver Rathkolb, ed., *NS-Zwangsarbeit: Der Standort Linz der “Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin” 1938–1945*, vol. 1, *Zwangsarbeit—Sklavenarbeit: Politik, sozial- und wirtschaftshistorische Studien* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2001). See here especially the articles by Bertrand Perz, “KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter der Reichswerke ‘Hermann Göring,’” pp. 449–590; and by Oliver Rathkolb, “Am Beispiel Paul Pleigers und seiner Manager in Linz—Eliten zwischen Wirtschaftsräumen, NS-Eroberungs und Rüstungspolitik, Zwangsarbeit und Nachkriegsjustiz,” pp. 287–322. For further information, see also Andrea M. Lauritsch, *Mauthausen-Süd: Die Aussenlager des KZ Mauthausen in Kärnten und der Steiermark mit Berücksichtigung der Todesmärsche ungarischer Juden durch die Steier Vorläufigen Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:174; as well as “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBL*. (1977), Teil 1, p. 1801.

Documents on the Eisenerz subcamp are located in AG-M under call numbers B/6/2, B/6/3 and E/6/11. In USHMPA, there are two photographs showing the transport of Jewish prisoners through Eisenerz (photographs N04948 and 96438).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## ENNS, ENNSDORF

As far as the history of Mauthausen subcamps in Enns and/or Ennsdorf is concerned, not many details are known. Enns and Ennsdorf are located in close proximity to each other on the banks of the Enns river. It is not known if camps existed in both places or if all references refer to one camp only. In fact, it is not clear if a subcamp existed at all in Enns/Ennsdorf or just a work detachment.

Enns and Ennsdorf are located in the present-day district of Linz in Oberösterreich (until 1945: Reichsgau Oberdonau). According to Hans Maršálek, a subcamp existed here for only 10 days between April 10, 1945 (the date it is first mentioned), and April 19. About 2,000 male prisoners were held in the camp and were most probably used by the Gauleiter and Reichsverteidigungskommissar (Reich Defense Commissar) August Eigruber in constructing bunkers to strengthen the





Prisoners at the Enns subcamp of Mauthausen erect a power station, nd.  
USHMM WS #78547, COURTESY OF DÖW

last lines of defense against the advancing Allied troops. In the official records of the Mauthausen main camp, two escape attempts are reported: 9 inmates tried to escape on April 14, another on April 20.

**SOURCES** The Enns/Ennsdorf subcamp is described by Hans Maršálek in his *Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995), p. 80. ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:174, mentions the subcamp. The “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1801, refers to the camp. There is also an article on Enns/Ennsdorf in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), p. 363.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## GREIN

The community of Grein in Reichsgau Oberdonau is in the present-day district city of Perg in Oberösterreich. A Mauthausen subcamp was located in Grein between February 2 and February 20, 1945. The camp was probably the continuation of an earlier camp in this location, which is mentioned for the first time in the Mauthausen concentration camp documents on March 22, 1944, and was closed on November 29, 1944.

A maximum of 120 men were used by the construction company Koller, which had a contract from the company Voigt & Haeffner AG, Werk Linz, to convert the cellars of the castle to machine halls, to construct living quarters, and to assemble prefabricated barracks. These installations were to be used by Voigt & Haeffner (under their code name Fa.

Leopold Freundlich AG) for the production of electronic installations for air armament, including parts for the V-1. The majority of the inmates were skilled laborers; most of them came from the Soviet Union and Italy.

The camp was dissolved on February 20, 1945, and the prisoners transferred to Mauthausen.

**SOURCES** Bertrand Perz delivers some information on the subcamp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 363–365. Hans Maršálek refers to the Grein subcamp in his monograph *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995), p. 73. There is not much further information on the subcamp available, but a research project on Grein in the era of National Socialism is forthcoming; see Karl Hohensinner and Stefan Mandlmayer, “Das zeitgeschichtliche Forschungsprojekt über Grein im Nationalsozialismus,” *JdÖW* (2000), pp. 87–115. Information on the Voigt & Haeffner Company (aka Fa. Leopold Freundlich AG) can be found in Helmyt Lackner and Gerhard A. Stadler, *Fabriken in der Stadt. Eine Industriegeschichte der Stadt Linz* (Linz: Archiv der Stadt Linz, 1990). Both the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:175, and the “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1807, refer to the Grein subcamp.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## GROSSRAMING [AKA ASCHAU]

In September 1942, SS-Untersturmführer Karl Schöpferle and a detachment from the 5th SS-Totenkopfsturmbann (5th Death's Head Battalion) Mauthausen concentration camp took a group of prisoners to a site near the town of Grossraming, about 50 kilometers (31 miles) southeast of Mauthausen above the banks of the Enns River on the road from Steyr, and established a small labor camp. During the fall of 1942, the prisoners began constructing the barracks for a concentration camp, sometimes referred to as Aschau after a nearby quarry, on a flat piece of land above the road. Prisoners also built an access road to the site. They completed 6 barracks by early 1943, and the number eventually grew to 14, with a capacity of 1,000 prisoners. Nearby, they constructed barracks for civilian workers employed by the firm of Kunz and Rell. The prisoners worked on a dam and power plant on the Enns River for the Ennskraftwerke AG and in a quarry, taking out stone for road use.

By early 1943, a double barbed-wire fence with a guard tower in each corner enclosed the rectangular site. Spotlights in the guard towers illuminated the barracks and roll-call area by night. The main entrance opened from the Grossraming road onto the camp street, which ran inside the fence.<sup>1</sup> SS guards monitored the traffic in and out of the site, especially the work details, from the office building (*Fourhaus*) at

this gate. Inside the fence, to the right of the camp street, were the prisoner barracks. At the far corner of the concentration camp was the roll-call area, where three times a day, morning, noon, and evening, the prisoners were assembled, stood at attention, and were counted. The barrack closest to the entrance housed the camp clerk, camp elder, and other functionaries. Behind this barrack was the prisoners' infirmary. Prisoners built the headquarters' buildings and three barracks for the SS guards opposite the camp, across the main road. The commandant lived in a house some 100 meters (328 feet) from the camp.

Schöpperle directed the initial growth of the camp and the assignment of the prisoner work details to the construction of a hydroelectric plant and roads. In August 1943, SS-Untersturmführer Julius Ludolph replaced him, and in May 1944, SS-Untersturmführer Hans Altfuldisch took over command from Ludolph. The Schutzhaftlagerführer was SS-Scharführer Franz Kofler, and, later Hans Riegler. The 5th Company of the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann Mauthausen continued to guard Grossraming, supplemented by at least three dog handlers.<sup>2</sup>

The Grossraming concentration camp expanded rapidly in early 1943, as more prisoners and 136 "East workers" (*Ostarbeiter*) arrived there. Many of the prisoners came after several weeks in the quarantine barracks at Mauthausen. Grossraming held individuals from most of the European nations, as the transfer lists and status reports document, with very few Jews among them. The largest contingent at Grossraming was Yugoslav nationals, most of whom had been arrested for political reasons. There were also Germans, Poles, Russians, Czechs, Spaniards, and "Gypsies" (Sinti and Roma) incarcerated there.<sup>3</sup>

As work in this region intensified, the SS set up three subsidiary Kommandos, Weyr, Dippoldsau, and Bachmanning, each within 20 to 30 kilometers (12.4 to 18.6 miles) of Grossraming, each one working on one or two projects. The Kommandos at Weyr and Dippoldsau developed into subcamps, with barbed-wire fences and barracks for the prisoners and guards. At nearby Bachmanning, a detachment of 20 prisoners worked in a sawmill that belonged to the German Equipment Works (DAW). A detail rebuilt a road damaged by high water, while others, called "Wahler Strasse," "Aschau," and "Wahler Brücke", worked on road improvement or construction projects.

Throughout Grossraming's existence, arbitrary beatings and punishments compounded the hardships and lessened the prisoners' chance of survival. Penalties included reprimands, punitive labor, or calisthenics during nonwork hours, forfeiture of meals, or standing at the parade grounds for hours, regardless of the weather conditions, sometimes for a day or two. Hunger was a constant problem for the prisoners, who barely survived on potatoes. Prisoners attempted to organize or steal potatoes from the kitchen, and those caught received 20 to 25 lashes.

Although the beating of prisoners was officially not permitted, the punching and slapping of prisoners were common

at Grossraming. Usually such blows accompanied orders to work harder or walk faster, and they were administered by guards and Kapos. A former prisoner-functionary recalled only three to four escape attempts. Those who escaped and were recaptured came back wearing signs announcing their return, and most were executed.

Grossraming maintained separate registers of prisoner deaths, and the reports of deaths were forwarded to the Political Department at Mauthausen. Because of the fragmented nature of these records, they offer only partial insight into the patterns of death. The existing records identify the shooting death of a number of prisoners and the death of additional prisoners on the electric fence surrounding the Grossraming camp. Accounts of prisoner deaths resulting from beatings and/or shootings can be found in postwar trials of former Grossraming guards. Many prisoners, too ill to work, were sent back to the main camp at Mauthausen, sometimes as many as 13 to 17 per week. A list of deaths registered at the nearby Reichraming registry office for the months of January to June 1943 identifies 63 individuals who died, all but 5 from natural causes. On January 30, a prisoner hanged himself, and in May and June 1943, 4 prisoners were shot while trying to escape. The so-called "Unnatural Death Book" from Mauthausen identifies an additional 19 deaths—11 shot while trying to escape, 2 by suicide, 3 on the electric fence, 2 in accidents, and 1 by hanging. Most of these prisoners were Yugoslav political prisoners. The Mauthausen death books list 164 additional individuals who perished at Grossraming, of whom 117 were Yugoslavs.<sup>4</sup> The Grossraming concentration camp was evacuated on August 29, 1944, when the SS guards took the remaining prisoners back to Mauthausen. The commandants of Grossraming and several guards were prosecuted in the postwar U.S. military trials at Dachau during the fall of 1947.

**SOURCES** Some published information on Grossraming may be found in DÖW, ed., *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Oberösterreich, 1934–1945: Eine Dokumentation*, 2 vols. (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1982).

The records of the trials of the staff of the Grossraming concentration camp, now held in NARA, RG 153, include a number of witness statements on Grossraming. The cases include *USA v. Altfuldisch, et al.*, case 000-50-5; *USA v. Hans Bergerhoff, et al.*, case 000-50-5-1; *USA v. Kaspar Goetz et al.*, case 000-50-5-4; *USA v. Johann Haider, et al.*, case 000-50-5-13; *USA v. Friedrich Kurbel, et al.*, case 000-50-5-37; and *USA v. Fabian Richter, et al.*, case 000-50-5-40. A sketch of the site is in the records of case 000-Mauthausen-15 (NARA, RG 338). The guard roster of the 5th Company, the SS unit posted to Grossraming, dated July 26, 1944, was attached to the "Report of Investigation of Alleged War Crimes, prepared by US Major Eugen Cohen," Nuremberg document 2176-PS, and it contains 126 names. The BDC (now at BA-BL and NARA, RG 242) has files on each of the commandants and many of the guards listed on this roster. The Zentrale Stelle in North-Rhine Westphalia developed a case against Josef Hilger (24Js21/69 Z), and these records, held in the NWHStA-(D) (Rep18/1529), contain a large number of statements from for-



mer prisoners, guards, civilian workers, and local residents. In May 1965 the Office for Vital Statistics in Reichraming prepared a list of 63 individuals whose deaths in Grossraming were recorded there. The IPN has a number of change-of-status reports and death reports from the summer and fall of 1943.

Robert G. Waite

## NOTES

1. "Map of the concentration camp, 'Arbeitslager Grossraming,'" NARA, RG 338 000-Mauthausen-15.

2. "Namenliste," 5./SS Totenkopfsturmbann, K.L.M., Grossraming, July 26, 1944, NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg document PS-2176.

3. Konzentrationslager Mauthausen, Lagerschreibstube, "Veränderungsmeldung für den 15 Juli 1943," July 16, 1943, IPN; "Aus: Chronik des Gendarmeriepostens Reichraming, O.D.," in *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Oberösterreich, 1934–1945: Eine Dokumentation*, ed. DÖW (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1982), 2: 548.

4. "Totenbuch Mauthausen vom 27.3.42 - 8.XI.43," NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg document PS-493.

## **GUNSKIRCHEN-WELS I [AKA WALDWERKE, WELS, NOTBEHELFSHEIMBAU, SS-ARBEITSLAGER GUNSKIRCHEN]**

Wels is located in the community of Edt, approximately 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) southwest of Linz, in Upper Austria (Oberösterreich; until 1945: Reichsgau Oberdonau), and Gunskirchen is a part of the community of Wels. The history of the Gunskirchen-Wels camp is especially complex, and research on it is complicated by the fact that the camp was referred to under a multitude of names. Hans Maršálek, one of the early experts on Mauthausen, states that the camp was opened in the Noitzmühle mill on Traunaustrasse on December 27, 1944. Under the code name Waldwerke (forest factory), prisoners—whose number reached its peak at 397—were to construct a gigantic supply depot, probably for the Flugzeug- und Metallwerke Wels. The mentioning of this company indicates that there could be a mix-up with another camp located in Wels, the Wels II subcamp, which was established only in late March 1945.

Florian Freund, on the other hand, states that the Mauthausen inmates who arrived in Wels in December 1944 were placed in the former school of the Gunskirchen. Here they were employed under the control of the Organisation Todt (OT) in cutting trees and transporting them to the nearby sawmill Hochhuber. With the boards and planks produced there, the prisoners had to erect temporary homes. But very soon the camp had to change its purpose: While it is unclear if it ever was planned to be a real production site, it was quickly transformed into an assembly camp to accommodate the always increasing numbers of concentration camp inmates evacuated from the East. This interpretation is also confirmed

by Wiebke van Ijken, who states that preparations for the later assembly camp for evacuated prisoners had already been made in December 1944 when around 400 Polish and Soviet prisoners were transferred to Gunskirchen-Wels to erect 10 barracks. Due to military developments in the last months of the war and the overwhelming prisoner evacuations, the original plans had to be changed quickly: Gunskirchen-Wels became a much larger camp than expected.

Already from fall 1944 on, more and more prisoner transports had arrived in Mauthausen, and the situation worsened early in 1945 with the evacuation of Hungarian Jews who had been exploited in erecting the so-called Südostwall (Southeast Wall) against the advancing Red Army. Since the Mauthausen main camp was already completely overcrowded, arriving inmates were forced to move on to Gunskirchen after that camp had been converted into a temporary camp (*Notbehelfslager*) in the first half of March 1945, on orders of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA). Transports of inmates left Mauthausen for Gunskirchen on April 16, 18, and 24, 1945; other transports probably arrived directly from southeast Europe, from Auschwitz, and from other camps without passing through the Mauthausen main camp. On April 28, 1945, for example, 2,808 male Hungarian Jewish men and 300 Jewish women were taken to Gunskirchen-Wels. The capacity of the camp was established at between 12,000 and 15,000 prisoners. While the camp mostly held Jewish prisoners of both sexes, there were also increasing numbers of smaller groups of political prisoners from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia taken to Gunskirchen-Wels.

The Gunskirchen-Wels camp was located in a forest area in Edt near Lambach, a small village to the south of Gunskirchen. It was hidden deep in a young pine forest, invisible from the nearby Wels Autobahn, and almost invisible from the air. The camp was opened on March 12, 1945, under the command of SS-Oberscharführer Heger (later SS-Untersturmführer Werner). Florian Freund states that there is not much known about the guards at Gunskirchen and that probably a certain SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Schulz was the commander of the camp. It was surrounded by a 2.5-meter-high (8.2-foot-high) barbed-wire fence; the guard towers were equipped with machine guns and manned by the SS and Wehrmacht. Of the 10 planned barracks, only 6 were finished. The floors in the barracks were compressed earth. Originally planned to hold 300 prisoners each, the barracks soon held between 2,500 and 3,000 prisoners each. At the end of April, there were between 15,000 and 17,000 prisoners in the camp. They had only the minimum of sanitary facilities: the toilets had seats for only 12 men and 16 women, and they could only be used six hours each day. This was an unbearable torture for many of the prisoners who suffered from dysentery. A water tank delivered around 1,500 liters (396 gallons) of water each day.

The character of the assembly camp meant that the prisoners were not used for labor. They remained in their barracks each day, other than for roll call, which took place three



Survivors of the Gunskirchen subcamp of Mauthausen shortly after liberation, May 6–15, 1945.  
USHMM WS #12768, COURTESY OF THOMAS SWEENEY

times a day. The daily rations consisted of a piece of black bread and a little soup. Often no food was handed out. The malnourished prisoners suffered from diarrhea, lice, typhus, and dysentery. Some 200 to 300 prisoners died on average each day. Morris Stark, one of the survivors of Gunskirchen-Wels, said after the war: “They took us on a forty-kilometer [25-mile] march to Gunskirchen, where pictures and books were not made or written that could describe the horror of the brutalities that were going on. Hefflingener [*Häftlinge*, inmates] survivors were hurting each other; they got tremendously sick. Maybe that was the purpose of Gunskirchen, seeing human flesh being cut out and sold as food stock, a horrible scene.”<sup>1</sup>

The countless dead were buried first in mass graves outside the camp. Later on, corpses were buried inside the camp. During the last weeks of the existence of the camp, they were not buried at all. David Ichelson, one of the first U.S. soldiers to enter the camp, described the scenes that confronted him:

By the late morning we entered the woods around the camp and saw dead, emaciated, partly clothed

bodies, as far as the eye could see. Between the bodies were huge piles of feces. A strong fecal stench permeated the cool, damp air of the woods. Inside the dim barracks, lying on straw, were the dead, alongside the dying, who could not muster the strength to walk away when the SS guards had deserted three days previously. The skin of the dead was loose and wrinkled, their cheeks hollow, the skin shrunken from their open, hollow, sightless eyes. Their teeth were rotten snags, protruding from their open mouths. Their limbs were extremely thin and the bones appeared to almost poke through the joints that were bent into weird contortions that conveyed the horror of the agony of death. Their clothing was ragged patches held together by filth. Many had part of their clothing missing, probably taken by their living, suffering comrades. Even the lice seemed to have abandoned the dead.<sup>2</sup>

Soldiers of the 71st Infantry Division, Third U.S. Army, reached the camp on May 5, 1945. The SS had left the camp on May 4, and employees of the Red Cross had arrived to hand out food supplies. A few days before this date, food supplies to the camp had ceased, as is revealed in a U.S. Army report dated May 6, 1945:

After living for many months on a slice of bread and a bowl of soup per day, this was a death sentence imposed on many, over 200 dying of starvation and disease in 2 days. The only doctors available were inmates themselves, forced to live under the same conditions as the others; with no medicine they were powerless to help, in fact when they would go any further they would lay themselves on the ground and resign themselves to death. . . . Human beings lay side by side with not enough room to turn over; those too weak to move defecated where they lay. Lice crawled from one to another. Outside, the people were pleading in pitifully broken English for water, food, cigarettes, and chewing gum.<sup>3</sup>

Major Cameron Coffman, Public Relations Officer (PRO), 71st Infantry Division, reported at the same time to one of his commanders:

Row upon row of living skeletons, jammed so closely together that it was impossible for some to turn over, even if they could have generated enough strength to do so. . . . A pair of feet, black in death, protruded from underneath a tattered blanket, just six inches from a haggard old Jew who was resting on his elbow and feebly attempting to wave to us. A little girl, doubled with the growing pains of starvation, cried pitifully for help. A dead man was rotting beside her. . . . Few of those remaining in the building could stand on their feet. The earth was

[illegible] and a chilled wind . . . [carried] the smell of death and filth [*sic*]. Small fires of straw added to the revolting odors that filled the air. One man crawled over several prostate bodies and patted the toe of my muddy combat boot in child-like manner.<sup>4</sup>

Some 3,000 prisoners who could still walk left the camp when the American troops arrived. The U.S. Army registered and cared for 5,419 survivors. Estimates of the number of dead in the camp vary between several hundred and several thousand. Florian Freund states that probably 15,000 prisoners survived the camp, while more than 3,000 died. In the following months, at least 1,000 prisoners, who were looked after in civilian and military hospitals in Wels and surroundings, were to die from the deprivations they suffered in the camp.<sup>5</sup> After the war, mass graves with 1,227 corpses were found in the camp's vicinity. The archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, list 877 survivors of the camp.

**SOURCES** Details on the Gunskirchen-Wels subcamp are to be found in Sinai Adler, *Your Rod and Your Staff: A Young Man's Chronicle of Survival* (Jerusalem, 1996); Peter Kammerstätter, *Der Todesmarsch ungarischer Juden vom KZ Mauthausen nach Gunskirchen, April 1945* (Linz, 1971); Eleonore Lappin, "Todesmärsche durch den Gau Oberdonau," in *Oberösterreichische Gedenkstätten für KZ-Opfer*, ed. Siegfried Haider and Gerhard Marckhgott (Linz, 2001), pp. 77–92; Lappin, "Die Todesmärsche ungarischer Juden durch Österreich im Frühjahr 1945," [www.gedenken.org/german/archive\\_text\\_hg2.htm](http://www.gedenken.org/german/archive_text_hg2.htm); Lappin, "The Death Marches of Hungarian Jews through Austria in the Spring of 1945," *YVS* 28 (2000): 203–242; and Lappin, "Das Schicksal der ungarisch-jüdischen Zwangsarbeiter in Österreich 1944/45," in *Studien zur Geschichte der Juden in Österreich*, ed. Martha Keil and Eleonore Lappin (Bodenheim: Philo-Verlag, 1996). Florian Freund describes the camp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol.4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 368–370. Doris Fath-Gottinger has researched Gunskirchen-Wels in "Die Ungarischen Juden auf ihrem Todesmarsch in das KZ Gunskirchen" (Ph.D. diss., Universität Linz, 2004). Hans Maršálek mentions and describes the camp in *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), pp. 73, 292, 339. An exhaustive description of the history of the camp, which is heavily based on reports of U.S. liberators, is by Wiebke van Ijken, "Gunskirchen Extermination Camp," at [www.gusen.org/dok/gk/gk05x.htm](http://www.gusen.org/dok/gk/gk05x.htm), resp. <http://linz.orf.at/orf/gusen/dok/gk/gk01x.htm>. This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:176; and in "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1808.

There are numerous documents on the Gunskirchen-Wels camp held in AG-M under collections B 5, B 11, B/11/12 (Nebenlager Gunskirchen, Planskizze der Gräber-

anlage von Gunskirchen), B 12 and 13, B 24, and H 14. Transport lists to Gunskirchen-Wels are held under collection E 64 and E 10/6. The USHMMA holds survivors' reports including Acc.1995.A.554, John P. Ivany; RG-10.370, Georg Friedman Papers; RG-02.149, Józef V. Czarski collection; and RG-02.115, essays relating to Holocaust survivor Morris Stark. There are also reports from members of the U.S. Army who liberated the camp. The most compelling are RG-09.024 (Acc.1994.A.0228, 71st Infantry Division documents) with two reports of the 71st Infantry Division on events leading up to and during the camp's liberation; RG-09.005 (International Liberators Conference Gunskirchen) with eyewitness accounts by members of the U.S. Army RG-006\*01 (David Ichelson, "The Graves at Gunskirchen") consists of the reflections of one of the liberators of Gunskirchen on the camp and its subsequent history. RG-17.002\*01 is a list of former inmates of the concentration camp who died after their liberation from prison and were buried at the Wels city cemetery. In the USHMMPA there are several photographs that were taken at the Gunskirchen-Wels subcamp at the time the camp was liberated (WS # 41323, 77164, 78230, 77158, 77163, 77156, 76029, and 45036). There is an extensive literature written by former inmates and the U.S. liberators. Worthy of mention are: *The Seventy-First Came - - to the Gunskirchen Lager* (repr., Atlanta: Emory University, 1979); Gerald McMahon, *On Guard: The Fourteenth Infantry Regiment in Bavaria, 1945–46* (Fairfax, VA: Yaderman Books, 1990); Gerald McMahon, *A Corner of Hell: A Military History Report* (Fairfax, VA: Yaderman Books, 1990); Therese Müller, *Frän Auschwitz till Günskirchen* (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1993); Edward Zebowski, *My Brother Hail and Farewell!* (Tampa, FL: Woodstock Books, 1994), esp. chap. 13; and Martin Gilbert, *The Day the War Ended* (London: HarperCollins, 1995), pp. 76–77.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

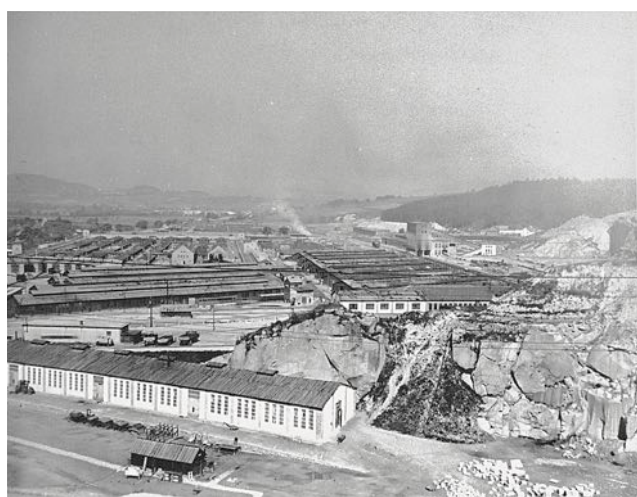
1. USHMMA, RG-02.115 (Acc.1994.A.0015)—essays relating to Holocaust survivor Morris Stark.
2. USHMMA, RG-09.006\*01, David Ichelson, "The Graves of Gunskirchen."
3. USHMMA, RG-09.024 (Acc.1994.A.0228), 71st Infantry Division documents relating to the liberation of Gunskirchen 1945: unsigned report dated May 6, 1945.
4. *Ibid.*, Report Major Cameron Coffman, p. 2.
5. See USHMMA, RG-17.002\*01, list of former concentration camp inmates buried at Wels, Austria, in 1945; a list of the former concentration camp prisoners buried in the Wels city cemetery.

## GUSEN (WITH GUSEN II AND GUSEN III)

In December 1939, a detail of 10 to 12 prisoners from Mauthausen began constructing barracks at a new subcamp about 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) away, between the villages of Langenstein and St. Georgen, at Gusen. By January 1940, the number of prisoners working there rose to about 200.

VOLUME I: PART B





Post-liberation view of the Gusen subcamp of Mauthausen, June 27, 1945.

USHMM WS #83816, COURTESY OF NARA

Prisoners and guards occupied the concentration camp on May 25, 1940. The selection of Gusen as the first subcamp of Mauthausen and its rapid growth were due initially to the nearby Gusen, Kastenhof, and Pierbauer stone quarries. In the spring of 1940, a professional quarry worker was placed in charge of the quarries, which produced freestone, paving stone, and gravel for distribution and sale throughout Austria. Two railway spurs ran to the quarries. Beginning in 1943, Gusen played an important role in armaments production.

After completion of the first barracks, Gusen grew rapidly to 32 prisoner barracks laid out in neat rows, a large complex for the SS guards, and several large industrial enterprises. The “protective custody” camp, about 180 by 400 meters (590 by 1,312 feet), held the prisoners’ barracks, prisoners’ kitchen (in the far northeastern corner), a brothel (in the southeastern corner, operational since July 1942), a crematorium (near the rear line of barracks and in use since the spring of 1941), several workshops, an infirmary, and a quarantine barrack. Prisoners assembled twice daily at the roll-call area at the eastern end and were counted. The main entrance to the camp was at the office building (*Fourhaus*), at the southeastern corner of the camp, and prisoner details passed through it each day on the way to and from work in the quarries, on a nearby railway line, or in one of the munitions plants. Wooden guard towers, equipped with floodlights and machine guns and later replaced by more permanent structures constructed out of granite, were placed along the barbed-wire fence that enclosed the perimeter of the rectangular-shaped protective custody camp. A second parallel fence, 2 meters (6.6 feet) high and constructed out of stone, was added in 1941. Guards patrolled the path between the fences. Later in the war, an outer barbed-wire fence extended around the entire Gusen complex, including the quarries and factories. The SS barracks were located south of the camp, along the Langenstein–St. Georgen road.<sup>1</sup>

Located immediately north of the main camp was a cluster of factories built in 1943 for war-related industrial production. Messerschmitt AG operated two large buildings where prisoners assembled airplanes and manufactured parts, and the complex extended farther north at the site, with several more buildings and two large tunnels. Late in the war, much of the airplane construction and assembly took place underground. Steyr-Werke had a facility at Gusen composed of 16 large buildings located northeast of the concentration camp where prisoners worked manufacturing parts for rifles, machine guns, and airplane motors. A spur from the railway line went through this site. In the spring of 1944, construction began on seven tunnels, each planned to extend a kilometer (0.6 mile) into the granite, where the assembly of airplanes took place for Steyr-Daimler-Puch (SDP) and Messerschmitt AG.

Gusen’s original capacity of 4,000 to 5,000 prisoners was quickly exceeded. The first large transport of prisoners came from Poland, and a large number of Poles were held in Gusen throughout the war. Also numerous were the “Rotspanier,” those who had fought against Franco in the Spanish Civil War. Later, a large number of French prisoners, held under the Night-and-Fog (*Nacht-und-Nebel*) Decree, were sent to Gusen, as were some Allied fliers, shot down nearby. In late January 1944, Gusen held 7,312 prisoners, mostly political offenders, and the figure continued to rise. On May 4, 1945, that number had swelled to 20,487, as many prisoners arrived from other concentration camps in the east that were being evacuated.

The pattern of deaths at Gusen reflected the severity and brutality of the treatment of the prisoners at the hands of the Kapos and guards, the starvation rations, the lack of basic sanitary facilities, and the forced labor under the most difficult of circumstances. Officials kept detailed records of prisoner deaths in four death books that recorded the following fatalities: 1940: 1,522; 1941: 5,570; 1942: 3,890; 1943: 5,116; 1944: 4,004; and until early April 1945: 7,740—a total of 27,842 individuals, identified by name, prisoner category, prisoner number, date and place of birth, cause of death, and



A view of the main gate and roll call square at the Gusen subcamp of Mauthausen, May 5–15, 1945.

USHMM WS #11456, COURTESY OF HJALMER LAKE



date and time of death.<sup>2</sup> Those unable to work because of injury, illness, or fatigue and weakness were typically killed, in 1940–1941, in the so-called death baths where they were drowned and during the latter years of the war in Block 31, the *Bahnhof*. Some victims, killed shortly after their arrival, were not registered at Gusen, and the actual number of those who perished there numbers at least 35,000.

The operation of Gusen was directly connected to Mauthausen. SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Chmielewski, who directed the establishment and construction and was in charge until January 1943, and his successor SS-Hauptman Friedrich August (Fritz) Seidler, who directed the massive growth in the number of prisoners and the shift to war-related industries, held the position of Schutzhaftlagerführer and were responsible for the daily operations of the camp. Both answered directly to SS-Obersturmbannführer Franz Ziereis, the commandant of Mauthausen. The four companies of guards assigned to Gusen were part of the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann Mauthausen (Death's Head Battalion Mauthausen). In 1944, their number reached an estimated 3,000. In late January–early February 1945, a number of guards from Gusen went to the Kampfgruppe Oberdonau, and their positions were filled by firemen from Vienna. Gusen was liberated by American soldiers on May 5, 1945, and investigations into crimes committed there began. These investigations by U.S. forces resulted in the prosecution of at least 16 former guards and Kapos at the Dachau Trials. West German authorities investigated more than 70 individuals. Several resulted in trials including the conviction of Chmielewski, who was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison.

### GUSEN II AND GUSEN III

During 1944, as armaments production grew in importance and the number of prisoners sent to Mauthausen soared, Gusen added two subcamps, Gusen II and Gusen III. Gusen II was located on the St. Georgen road and opened on March 9, 1944; it came to hold some 10,000 prisoners, many of whom worked in the Steyr-Daimler-Puck AG and Messerschmitt AG munitions plants. Gusen III, located north of St. Georgen at Lungitz, opened on December 16, 1944, and it held about 260 prisoners who made bricks or worked in a Messerschmitt parts depot.

**SOURCES** Hans Maršálek's *Konzentrationslager Gusen: Ein Nebenlager des KZ Mauthausen* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1987) provides an overview of the Gusen subcamp.

Biographical data on Chmielewski and Seidler come from their BDCPFs, which are available at BA-BL and NARA, RG 242, and which also reveal their experience at a number of concentration camps. Detailed biographical information on those individuals incarcerated there can be found in Mauthausen's register of prisoners (NARA, RG 228, Microcopy P-12) and the Gusen death books, which give the prisoner's name, date/place of birth, date of incarceration and reason, date/cause of death. Changes in the numbers of pris-

oners are identified in "Aussenkommando," Konzentrationslager Mauthausen, NARA, RG 242, Film 3, vol. 2. A list of 673 guards is held at YVA, M-9/E-12-8. The most extensive and revealing sources on the horrible conditions at Gusen are the postwar trials held by the U.S. Army at Dachau and those held later by West German courts. More than a dozen of the U.S. Army trials involved former Gusen guards and Kapos, including *USA v. Erik Schuetttauf* (000-50-5-3); *USA v. Georg Bach* (000-50-5-10); *USA v. Andreas Batterman* (000-50-5-11); *USA v. Giovanazzi* (000-50-5-12); *USA v. Karl Bertsch* (000-50-5-29); *USA v. Karl Glas* (000-50-5-31); *USA v. Karl Horcicka* (000-50-5-32); and *USA v. Georg Pirner* (000-505-5-42). The statements given by former prisoners, particularly in the trial of Chmielewski in the LG Ansbach, begin to reveal the horror inflicted upon prisoners. West German prosecutors initiated more than 70 criminal investigations involving Gusen, and the records of many are held at the ZdL (now BA-L).

Robert G. Waite

### NOTES

1. A detailed wartime map, "Lageplan Gusen I u II," is in *USA v. Bach*, NARA, RG 338, 000-50-5-101, Box 374.

2. "Totenbuch Gusen vom 1.6.40–26.2.42," "Totenbuch Gusen von 27.2.42 bis 20.2.43," "Totenbuch Gusen vom 21.2.43 bis 2.12.1944," "Totenbuch Gusen vom 2.12.1944 bis 25.4.1945," NARA, RG 238, 000-50-5, Boxes 337 and 338.

### HIRTENBERG [AKA WAFFEN-SS-ARBEITSLAGER HIRTENBERG, GUSTLOFF-WERKE]

The Hirtenberg women's subcamp was located in Niederösterreich (until 1945: Reichsgau Niederdonau), 38 kilometers (24 miles) to the south of Vienna, close to Baden at the foot of Triesting Valley. It existed from September 28, 1944 (the date of its first mention), April 15, 1945, according to Hans Maršálek; following the *Bundesgesetzblatt* and other sources, it lasted until April 16, 1945. Recent research by Andreas Baumgartner stated, however, that the evacuation of the camp must have taken place earlier, as Hirtenberg was occupied by Allied troops on April 6, 1945. Bertrand Perz accordingly puts the date of the evacuation at April 1, 1945.

The opening of the subcamp occurred when 391 women arrived from Auschwitz via Mauthausen (9 of the women in this transport from Auschwitz stayed at Mauthausen). A part of the fenced-in forced labor camp, the so-called Weinberg-lager, that already existed at Lindenberg hill, above the city area to the east of the cemetery at the entrance to the town, was separated. After the erection of some barracks for the inmates, the "Waffen-SS-Arbeitslager Hirtenberg, Gustloff-Werke," as it was officially called, was opened.

The camp commandant was SS-Hauptsturmführer Schröder. There were 24 male SS guards who were responsible for external security. Female guards operated inside the camp, as was usual in women's camps.

The Hirtenberg Patronenfabrik (Cartridge Factory) had originally been Jewish property and was taken over by the Weimar-based Wilhelm-Gustloff-Stiftung following the Anschluss of Austria by Germany in 1938. In the years thereafter, the company became one of Austria's leading manufacturers of ammunition. The majority of its employees were women, including Ukrainian forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs).

After the initial 391 women, another 11 prisoners arrived via Mauthausen on November 23, 1944: 3 came from Auschwitz and 8 from Ravensbrück. The Auschwitz women were the Slovakian Jew Irene Janowitz, a medical doctor, and 2 Hungarian Jewish nurses.

Different sources state the highest number of prisoners was 459. Baumgartner lists the composition of 402 verified female prisoners as follows: 194 Soviet "protective custody" prisoners, 101 Italians, 95 Poles, 5 Yugoslavs, 3 Hungarians, 2 Croats, 1 German, and 1 Slovak. Some 393 women were held in the camp for political reasons; 3 were Jewish, and 6 were "asocials." The youngest female in the camp was age 16; the average age of the women was 23, a relatively young age. The women worked in two 12-hour shifts. Officially, there was only one death during the camp's existence. There are no records of any return transports with women who were incapable of working. On March 23, a Russian female prisoner tried to escape.

The women were evacuated from Hirtenberg early in April 1945 and arrived at Mauthausen on either April 18 or 19. During the evacuation march, women tried to escape again: on April 7, 4 Soviet prisoners, and on April 16, 40 Soviet and 8 Polish women. On April 10, 7 young Russian women were shot while trying to escape from the evacuation march; it is also possible that the women were executed because they could no longer march.

**SOURCES** Bertrand Perz describes the Hirtenberg subcamp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 382–384. See also references to the camp in Andreas Baumgartner, *Die vergessenen Frauen von Mauthausen: Die weiblichen Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen und ihre Geschichte* (Vienna: Verlag Österreich, 1997), pp. 140–148, 223; for Baumgartner's dating of the evacuation, see p. 145, and for the prisoner composition, p. 223. Hans Maršálek sketches Hirtenberg in *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen. Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), p. 74. See also France Filipiè, *Slowenen in Mauthausen* (Vienna: Bundesministerium für Inneres, Referat iv/7/4, 2004). For the history of the Hirtenberger Patronenfabrik including its takeover by the Gustloff-Stiftung, see Marie-Theres Arnbohm, *Friedmann, Gutmann, Lieben, Mandl und Strakosch. Fünf Familienporträts aus Wien vor 1938* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2002), especially pp. 19–62. See also Klaus-Dieter Mulley, "Arbeitserschaft und Rüstungsindustrie im Triestingtal," in *Geschosse—Skandale—Stacheldraht. Arbeitserschaft und Rüstungsindustrie in Wöllersdorf, Enzesfeld und Hirtenberg*, ed. Klaus-Dieter Mulley and Hans Leopold (Ebenfurth: Eigenverlag der Gewerk-

schaft der Eisenbahner, Ortsgruppe Ebenfurth, 1999), pp. 264–292. This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:172; and in "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1812.

Documents referring to the Hirtenberg subcamp are to be found in the AG-M under references K C/1 to 4 (copies of entrance lists, correspondence of the Gustloff-Werke, a change report from April 17, 1945, about the shooting of seven female Soviet citizens "for escape"), E 20/17 (SS list of prisoner status of all camps and standing of guard personnel from March 19, 1945, to April 30, 1945, inclusive); 4c/3 (prisoner commitment of November 23, 1944), K 4 A1 to K 4 F 1 (copies of various reports about female prisoners in the subcamps), K/11/01 (memoirs of six female prisoners from France), as well as under references Y30 and K5/6.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## KLagenfurt-Lendorf

Gauleiter of Kärnten Dr. Friedrich Rainer was exactly what the leadership in Berlin expected of a loyal follower in the Ostmark. Rainer was a local power source in that region (Gau Kärnten), which since 1920 had been built by German nationalists as a "German-border bulwark" (*grenzdeutsches Bollwerk*) against the Slavs, the hereditary enemy in the Balkans.

After the *Anschluss* with Austria in 1938 and the invasion by Germany of Yugoslavia in 1941, Kärnten became even more geopolitically important. This region was no longer borderland but a bridge to the areas conquered by the Nazis in southeastern Europe.

After the Anschluss, the capital city in the Gau, Klagenfurt, commenced construction of a prestigious building: the barracks (*Kaserne*) for the Waffen-SS in the Klagenfurt suburb of Lendorf. To the Gau capital, the July 1938 groundbreaking (*Spatenstich*) ceremony was a great honor. While the construction contractors were local, the architect, Gerhard Weigel, hailed from Bavaria.

When the first battalion of the SS-Division Nordland occupied the barracks at the beginning of 1940, plans were well advanced to operate an SS-Junkerschule (Elite Officers' School) there. Close to the barracks for the men were planned and built garages, sports facilities, stables, a shooting range, air-raid shelters, a "Führerheim," and homes for officers—later known as the "Koglsiedlung."

Rudolf Kuntzsch, a former member of the SS who is familiar with events, states that the SS-Junkerschule in Klagenfurt-Lendorf commenced regular lessons on July 31, 1943, but was not officially declared a "SS-Waffen- und Junkerschule" until June 1, 1944.

A Mauthausen subcamp was planned for the barracks as support for its planned expansion. According to former Mauthausen camp recorder Hans Maršálek, the Klagenfurt-Lendorf

concentration camp was established on November 19, 1943, at the request of the Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei (Waffen-SS and Police Building Administration) Klagenfurt.

The Klagenfurt-Lendorf prisoners worked on building accommodations for the SS-Junkers, the stables, and air-raid shelters (underneath present-day Koglsiedlung). They also excavated the ground for a pond for firefighting and for a swimming pool and worked on repairing bomb damage, mostly in the area of the Klagenfurt main railway station.

Surviving Mauthausen transport lists confirm that the number of prisoners in the Klagenfurt-Lendorf subcamp varied between 80 and 130, with the high point being 130 between August 31, 1944, and December 31, 1944. The strength lists both before and after those dates give the number as 80 Mauthausen prisoners. There were 15 SS men, 1 SS officer, and 14 SS guards from Mauthausen who were transferred to Lendorf. This is at least the number that is documented for the period between March 19 and April 30, 1945.

The prisoners' barracks were located in the inner sanctum of the barracks, most likely close to the workshops. They included the camp's office and the infirmary. The barracks were surrounded with a barbed-wire fence (not electrified) and two guard towers (outside the fence). As was customary, the SS guards' barracks were located outside the concentration camp area. There were labor detachments in addition to the construction detachments: small detachments worked in the kitchen and workshops; they also removed bomb rubble and worked on the SS settlement (*Siedlungsbau*) outside the barracks.

The prisoners deported to Klagenfurt-Lendorf were overwhelmingly Germans, Austrians, Czechs, Poles, Italians, Russians, Spaniards, French, and Yugoslavs. They were "political" prisoners. The camp commandant was an Austrian named Konradi, with the rank of SS-Hauptsturmführer. He is said to have committed suicide before the partisans or the British entered Klagenfurt.

The camp elder, a German political prisoner, was Erich Brose. He was later replaced by a Czech, Stefek (a soldier for the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War), when Brose was returned to Mauthausen. Brose and the camp recorder Stepanik are alleged to have betrayed their comrades for listening to an enemy radio station (*Feindsender*). Stepanik hanged himself on June 26, 1944, because he feared he would be sent back to Mauthausen.

German political prisoner Kaspar Bachl, who was part of the settlement construction detachment (Siedlungsbaukommando), was able to escape on November 15, 1944, dressed in an SS uniform, which he had hidden on the construction site. He and another prisoner, also dressed as an SS man, were soon recaptured and returned initially to the barracks and then to Mauthausen. Another prisoner, possibly the Soviet Russian Julius Zirowka, was shot on April 15, 1945, while "trying to escape."

Postwar statements by camp survivor Franz Nikola are that Klagenfurt-Lendorf was "a relatively good camp" and

should not be compared with the Mauthausen main camp. This is confirmed by Otto Vostarek, who stated in an interview that the SS men in the Klagenfurt-Lendorf concentration camp were not so "zealous" (*diensteifrig*). The beds even had their own bed linen. The food was almost the same as that of the SS—but smaller portions without meat. There was, despite orders to the contrary, contact and conversations with civilian workers in the barracks, for example, with the barracks or the sewerage workers. The latter are thought to have been in contact with the partisans.

Statements on the dissolution of the camp show the chaos in giving and implementing orders at the end of the war. In April 1945, a large transport of prisoners from Klagenfurt-Lendorf was to be evacuated to the Dachau concentration camp. Those prisoners who remained in the barracks were to pull down the prisoners' barracks and the SS guards' barracks by May 6, 1945. On May 7, these prisoners were taken by truck to the Loibl Süd subcamp, as an evacuation to Mauthausen was no longer possible. It is also thought that the commandant of the SS-Junkerschule Klagenfurt-Lendorf refused to carry out a Mauthausen order to murder all the prisoners before they fell into enemy hands.

The Yugoslav prisoners were released in the Loibl Süd subcamp; a group of Austrians and Germans were collected by the Klagenfurt-Lendorf camp commandant, Konradi, and taken back to the camp, where they were put in SS or Wehrmacht uniforms. They were to kill the camp's SS who tried to flee.

Another group of prisoners, Poles, French, and Luxembourgers, among others, who remained in the Loibl Süd subcamp, "accompanied" SS guards through the Loibl Tunnel. They were living shields, protection against partisans who controlled the Loibl Valley. This group also returned to Kärnten from the Loibl Süd subcamp, where they were liberated from their "companions" by partisans in Rosental.

Although Klagenfurt had been heavily bombed by Allied aircraft on January 16, 1944, and was attacked from there many times after that, the SS caserne was never hit. It is true that a bomb landed nearby, but the damage from the shock waves of the bomb was only slight.

The conditions in the Klagenfurt-Lendorf camp offered the prisoners better survival chances than they would have had in the Mauthausen main camp. Individual strategies for survival could be planned and had more chances of success. These camp prisoners "profited" from the easily comprehensible and regular command structures of the military environment. There were scarcely any excessive beatings or other arbitrary acts of violence. The death rate in Klagenfurt-Lendorf was low. Unlike other Mauthausen subcamps, for example, the subcamp in the Loiblpass, the Klagenfurt-Lendorf camp did not have the reputation for "death through work" (*Tod durch Arbeit*).

The prisoner's greatest threat to life was a return to the Mauthausen main camp, which was equivalent to a death sentence. The constant uncertainty about survival and the suffering caused by social isolation and deprivation of rights



were, however, part of the daily life in the Klagenfurt-Lendorf camp.

**SOURCES** Research on concentration camps in Kärnten is sparse. There has been little research on the Mauthausen subcamp in the SS-Kaserne Klagenfurt-Lendorf. The author published a first collection of witness interviews and provided an overview of the camp in “Der Gauleiter, die SS und das vergessene KZ in Klagenfurt-Lendorf,” *KäJP* (2001): 224–252. Also useful are the books by Janko Tišler and Jože Rovšek, *Mauthausen na Ljubelju* (Klagenfurt, 1995); and August Walzl, *Zwangsarbeit in Kärnten im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Klagenfurt, 2001). This subcamp is listed in Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995).

The essay is based upon interviews conducted by the author and also collected from a variety of publications and from unpublished protocols and witness archives, example, Janko Tišler’s private archive.

Peter Gstettner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## **LEIBNITZ GRAZ [AKA AFLENZ, KALKSTEINWERKE]**

As with the establishment of the Peggau subcamp, the establishment of the Leibnitz subcamp near Graz (also known as Aflenzen on the River Sulm or the Kalksteinwerke [Limestone Works]) was connected to the increased production of fighter aircraft following the German defeat in the air war against Britain. A large project was planned for Thondorf near Graz in addition to the construction of the Flugmotorenwerke (Aircraft Motor Works) Ostmark in the suburb of Wiener-Neudorf close to Vienna. It was intended to build in Thondorf a Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP) factory that would manufacture parts for the Daimler Benz aircraft engines. The official order for the construction of the factory was issued on June 3, 1941. As with all sectors of the armaments industry, there was an acute shortage of labor, and this resulted in the massive use of foreign labor at the Steyr factory in Thondorf. As early as April 1942, more than one-half of the labor force was foreign. These forced laborers were accommodated by Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG in Graz in the Eastern labor camps (*Ostarbeiterlager*) “Murfeld I and II.”

From the middle of 1943 on, more and more projects were developed for underground relocation as a result of the increasing threat to the strategically important armaments industries in the Ostmark by Allied air attacks. By the end of 1943, a suitable site had been found for the Steyr factory in Graz-Thondorf: in the so-called Römer Quarry at Aflenzen on the River Sulm near Leibnitz, where tunnels already existed. According to plans by the industrial architects Lattal and Tritthart, the production area could be increased by July 1944 to 8,000 square meters (9,568 square yards). The code name for this increased area was “Salm.” The expansion of the tunnels for Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG was a cooperative project with the SS-owned German Earth and Stone Works (DESt).

The use of concentration camp prisoners in Leibnitz, as with just about all underground relocation projects, probably resulted from the good understanding that the general director of the Steyr factory, Georg Meindl, had with the highest officials of the SS.

The first transport of 201 prisoners left the Mauthausen main camp in the direction of Leibnitz on February 8, 1944.<sup>1</sup> A second transport followed on March 11, 1944, with 300 prisoners from Mauthausen. This transport increased the camp strength to 500 prisoners. An additional 200 prisoners arrived from the subcamp Wiener Neudorf on July 9, 1944. By mid-September, the camp reached its maximum strength of 711 prisoners. The prisoner numbers subsequently decreased, as sometimes prisoners from Graz were transferred to the Peggau subcamp. On December 6, 1944, the Leibnitz detachment was reinforced with another 100 prisoners from Mauthausen.<sup>2</sup>

The overwhelming majority of the Leibnitz subcamp prisoners were Soviet citizens and Poles. There were small groups of other nationalities—Yugoslavs, Frenchmen, and Italians. There was even a Chinese citizen imprisoned in Leibnitz. All prisoners were accommodated in four prisoner barracks that were built on a cornfield close to the village of Aflenzen. The prisoner-functionaries were almost exclusively German and Austrian prisoners and wore the green triangle. There were three camp leaders—the first was SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Altfuldisch. He was transferred to the Grossraming work detachment, and later he was ordered back to the main camp. He was then replaced in Leibnitz by SS-Hauptscharführer Paul Riecken. Riecken was replaced in June 1944 by SS-Untersturmführer Fritz Miroff, who was ordered from Linz I to Leibnitz. Riecken took command again in the autumn of 1944 when Miroff was transferred to the newly created camp at Peggau. The guards, according to statements by the former prisoner Robert Grissinger, numbered between 40 and 50 and were SS ethnic Germans coming from outside the Reich.<sup>3</sup>

The prisoners had to cover a distance each day of 500 meters (1,640 feet) to reach their work site in the tunnels. This way was fenced in by a 2-meter-high (6.6-foot-high) barbed-wire fence, called by the prisoners the “Lion’s Path” (Löwengang). Initially, the prisoners were solely involved in excavating the tunnels. As with most subcamps in which there was to be relocation underground of armaments industries, the death rate in Leibnitz was relatively high. The working conditions and thereby survival chances, however, improved in the summer of 1944 when the production of aircraft engines and truck parts began. The relocation of production from Graz-Thondorf was accompanied by 2,000 civilian workers and 1,000 machines. The former prisoner, Grissinger, spoke of shifts between 10 and 11 hours that were reduced to 9 hours in winter because of the increased possibilities of escape.<sup>4</sup>

Grissinger also mentioned that the Leibnitz subcamp since the summer of 1944 had relatively good living conditions when compared with other detachments. The improved



survival chances are reflected in the death statistics in the roll-call books. Between February 1944 and April 1945, about 75 prisoners died in the Leibnitz subcamp. About 50 prisoners were transferred back to the main camp, presumably because they were ill or weak. The roll-call book records that 7 prisoners escaped at different times, with no indication of recapture.

In the beginning, the dead were taken to Mauthausen or to the Graz crematorium for cremation. Later, the camp command decided to bury the corpses in a mass grave close to the camp. After the war, 20 corpses were exhumed from the grave; 12 were buried in the Ehrenhausen cemetery, and the mortal remains of 8 French prisoners presumably were taken back to France.

In March 1945, as part of preparations to dissolve the camp, the SS guard, consisting mainly of the ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche), was replaced with Hungarian members of the German Home Guard (Volkssturm). On April 2, 1945, the camp was dissolved but only after the order was given to destroy all official documents. Then 467 prisoners were sent on foot from Leibnitz via Judenburg, the Phyrn Pass, and Gmunden in the direction of the Ebensee subcamp.<sup>5</sup> On April 18, 1945, 407 arrived.<sup>6</sup> Some 49 prisoners escaped when they were near Judenburg on April 6, 1945.<sup>7</sup> According to Grissinger, many of them, however, were captured and killed by the local population and left lying along the route as a deterrent. And 8 prisoners who were no longer capable of walking were shot by the guards.<sup>8</sup>

The three camp commandants at Leibnitz were tried after the war before a U.S. military court in Dachau. Hans Altfuldisch, the first Leibnitz Lagerführer, was convicted during the main trial of Mauthausen war criminals, sentenced to death, and hanged.<sup>9</sup> The camp leaders Fritz Miroff and Paul Riecken were sentenced in a subsequent Dachau Trial. Miroff was executed in 1948.<sup>10</sup>

**SOURCES** Secondary sources contain little on the Leibnitz-Graz subcamp. References to the Leibnitz subcamp as part of the armaments production by Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG are to be found in Bertrand Perz, *Projekt Quarz: Steyr-Daimler-Puch und das Konzentrationslager Melk* (Vienna, 1991). Barbara Stelzl in an essay on National Socialist camps in Graz and the surrounding area also refers to the Peggau subcamp; see “Lager in Graz: Zur Unterbringung ausländischer Zivilarbeiter, Kriegsgefangener und KZ-Häftlinge 1938–1945,” in *Graz in der NS-Zeit 1938–1945*, ed. Stefan Karner (Graz, 1998), pp. 353–369. Anita Farkas has written on the Mauthausen subcamps in Styria: “Kollektives Gedächtnis und Erinnerungsbedarf in der Steiermark: Auf den Spuren der Erinnerung an die Konzentrationslager Aflenz, Peggau und Schloss Lind” (Ph.D. diss., Klagenfurt, 2001). The essence of her work has now been published in the article “Erinnerungsbedarf an die Konzentrations-Nebenlager von Mauthausen in der Steiermark,” in *Die Mühen der Erinnerung: Zeitgeschichtliche Aufklärung gegen den Gedächtnisschwund*, ed. Peter Gstettner et al. (Vienna, 2002), 1:62–78. An unpublished collection of interviews with local inhabitants has been put together by Herbert

Harb, “Das KZ im Dorf Aflenz: February 1944–April 1945” (n.p., n.d.).

Source material on the Leibnitz-Graz subcamp is to be found in AG-M. In addition to names’ lists, transport lists, and reports, there is a copy of the Leibnitz Evidence Book, the original of which is located in the IPN. Besides that, there is an interview with the former prisoner Robert Grissinger as well as those of other survivors. Further scattered material is to be found in IPN. The trial files against Hans Altfuldisch as well as Fritz Miroff and Paul Riecken are held in NARA, RG 549. Files regarding the plans by Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG to be relocated underground are held in the BA-B collection of RmfrUK. Finally, the short memoirs of survivor Edmund Glazewski should be mentioned: “Das KZ-Lager Aflenz,” in *Ehrenhausen: Festschrift*, ed. Stadtgemeinde Ehrenhausen (Graz, 1990), pp. 332–333.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Transport list of February 8, 1944, AG-M, Y/44.
2. Details on prisoner movements are taken from the Roll Call Book of the Work Detachment, AG-M, E/6/11.
3. Record of interview with Robert Grissinger, October 20, 1967, AG-M, V/3/23.
4. Ibid.
5. Report of the Lagerschreibstube on Prisoner Movements during the Evacuation Marches, April 9, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.
6. Variation Report of the Ebensee subcamp, April 20, 1945, AG-M, B/35/1.
7. IPN, Mauthausen Concentration Camp 24, k.81 (Escape Report April 6, 1945); see also Variation Report of the Ebensee subcamp, April 20, 1945, AG-M, B/35/1.
8. Variation Report of the Ebensee subcamp, April 20, 1945, AG-M, B/35/1.
9. NARA, RG 153, *USA v. Hans Altfuldisch, et al.*, Case 000-50-5.
10. NARA, RG 153, *USA v. Eduard Dlouhy, et al.*, Case 000-50-5-14.

## LENZING

The Lenzing subcamp was located in Lenzing (part of the community of Pettighofen) on the banks of the Ager River near Lake Atter in Oberösterreich (until 1945: Reichsgau Oberdonau). It began on October 30, 1944 (other sources: November 3, 1944), with the arrival of a transport of about 500 women from Auschwitz via Mauthausen. The women were accommodated in two buildings of the Zellwolle und Papierfabrik Lenzing (also Lenzinger Zellwolle-AG), both of which were fenced in with barbed wire. The factories produced synthetic products, including uniform pieces for the Wehrmacht. The factory, which had a long tradition, was originally owned by Jews. Immediately following the Anschluss of Austria with Germany, the factory burned down in circumstances that were never explained and was then “ary-anized.” An extensive rebuilding program began, but it was



A group of female survivors stands outside the barracks of the newly liberated Lenzing subcamp of Mauthausen.

USHMM WS #62764, COURTESY OF ARNOLD SAMUELSON

not finished by the end of the war. In the last years of the war, around 50 percent of the inmates were forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) from Poland, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Slovakia, Greece, and France. The workforce was accommodated close to the factory.

According to historian Andreas Baumgartner, there had been close connections between the synthetic wool factory and the Mauthausen concentration camp since 1943. The factory produced the so-called Biosyn-Wurst or Mycel-Wurst, which was produced from albumen, with the help of a fungal culture from the wastewater arising from the production of the synthetic wool. The sausage was tested on the Mauthausen prisoners. Production ceased when the sausage caused severe inflammation in the digestive organs of the prisoners.

The women who arrived in Lenzing constructed their own two-tiered bunk beds in the former paper mill's large factory hall. Their quarters were separated into four "Blocks." SS officers arrived on November 3. On that date the camp officially began operations. There were 20 SS men, including camp leader Karl Gieseler. They were responsible for outside security. There were also female SS in the camp whose mistreatment of the prisoners has been recorded.<sup>1</sup> By the end of January 1945, two additional transports of female prisoners had arrived at Lenzing from Auschwitz. According to Baumgartner, there were now 577

women in the camp. Older accounts state that there were 565 women in the camp, but this figure now appears to be superseded. Baumgartner states that among the women there were 323 Hungarian Jewish women, 65 Poles, 58 women from the Reich Protectorate of Böhmen und Mähren, 38 Russians, 39 Germans and Austrians, and 35 Slovaks; 528 women were Jewish, and 49 were political prisoners. The youngest female in the Lenzing subcamp was 12 years old. There was at least one pregnant woman who at the end of January 1945 was forced to abort her baby in the Mauthausen infirmary.

The women worked in the camp; they built roads and air-raid bunkers and worked in a synthetic wool factory. Despite the highly toxic nature of their work, including exposure to hydrogen sulfide, the women were given neither protective clothing nor protective glasses. Many women suffered temporary blindness. Hella Wertheim, one of the prisoners, has written the following about the work that damaged her health:

I worked mostly at the spinning wheel, where a three-meter [almost ten feet] wide machine with fifty-five nozzles on either side was immersed into the spinning bath and then forced the material that was to be spun through its many arms into the nozzles. Then the threads were extruded through the nozzles. We were threatened with death if we made a mistake. Sometimes the nozzles did not work; they were clogged. If I could not unclog them, then all I could do was summon my courage and go to the foreman and ask for help. . . . [O]ften the clouds of sulfur got into my eyes so that I could not see for hours. All had been forced here, but at least the foreign workers [*Fremdarbeiter*] were given protective glasses and clothing. We were given nothing to protect our eyes. When I could not see and could not work, I was taken to the sick bay on the first floor. There I had to wait until the effect of the sulfuric acid wore off.<sup>2</sup>

The women had to get up each morning at 3:00. They then marched for half an hour to work at the paper factory, accompanied by male and female SS with dogs. The daily work began at 5:00 A.M. The women worked in two shifts each of 12 hours for three weeks without a break. Then they had two days off. The strict working conditions and the extreme lack of food resulted on January 5, 1945, in the first prisoner death. Three more deaths followed. According to Baumgartner, many of the women suffered from hunger edemas (mostly on the eyelids and legs), skin diseases, and tuberculosis. On the other hand, many women did not report their illnesses because there was a directive from the main Mauthausen camp that no more than 50 women could be simultaneously sick in the subcamp. The camp doctor, Dr. Bauer, threatened the sick women with transport back to Mauthausen (which probably would have meant their deaths). The files do not reveal,

however, any return transports from Lenzing to Mauthausen. There is a record that on April 17, 1945, four Soviet prisoners escaped.

On January 11, 1945, there was a serious incident when the prisoners were on their way to work. The female SS forced the column of women to cross railway tracks immediately in front of an oncoming train. Five women, all Hungarian Jews, were killed by the train. Shortly after the incident the factory ceased production, probably because there were no longer supplies of raw materials. The women were then occupied in cleaning, repairing, and painting. The SS guards fled the camp on May 4, 1945, as Allied troops approached. Only the factory security guards remained. The subcamp was liberated by U.S. troops on May 5, 1945.

**SOURCES** Andreas Baumgartner describes the subcamp in *Die vergessenen Frauen von Mauthausen: Die weiblichen Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen und ihre Geschichte* (Vienna: Verlag Österreich, 1997), pp. 148–159. See also Florian Freund's article on the Lenzing subcamp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 389–391; and Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), p. 75. For further information, see also Christian Hawle, Gerhard Kriechbaum, and Margret Lehner, *Täter und Opfer: Nationalsozialistische Gewalt und Widerstand im Bezirk Vöcklabruck 1938–1945; Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995). This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 179; and in “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1821. For investigations against female guards at the Lenzing camp (not one was ever put on trial), see Jeanne Touissant, “‘Unter Ausnutzung ihrer dienstlichen Gewalt.’ Österreichische Volksgerichtsverfahren gegen ehemalige SS-Aufseherinnen aus Oberdonau: 1945–1950,” in *Frauen in Oberdonau. Geschlechtsspezifische Bruchlinien im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Gabriella Hauch (Linz, 2006), pp. 399–423.

The AG-M includes documents on the Mauthausen subcamp under references K 4 D/1 to 6 (copies of Rectification of 36 false names of female inmates from various prisoner reports); K5/6, E20/17 (SS list of prisoners' and guard personnel status from March 19 to April 30, 1945); K4d/4 (English-language statutory declaration by five prisoners on April 18, 1945, before Major Eugene Cohen, the investigating officer of the liberating army); K 4 A1 to K 4 F 1 (copies of various reports on female prisoners in the subcamps); K/11/01 (memoirs of six French female prisoners); and K 4d/4 (statutory declarations by five prisoners on April 18, 1945). The ZdL investigated the Lenzing subcamp. Its investigations here are held in file record IV 419 AR-Z 287/77 at BA-L. Hella Wertheim, a former Lenzing prisoner, describes the camp in Hella Wertheim and Manfred Rockel, eds., *Immer alles geduldig getragen: Als Mädchen in Theresienstadt, Auschwitz und Lenzing, seit 1945 in der Grafschaft Bent-*

*heim* (Nordhorn: Museumsverein für die Grafschaft Bentheim, 1993), pp. 61–67.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. See the statements by prisoners in the AG-M, K4d/4 (statutory declaration dated April 18, 1945, by five prisoners before the YS investigating officer of the liberating army, Major Eugene Cohen).

2. Hella Wertheim and Manfred Rockel, eds., *Immer alles geduldig getragen: Als Mädchen in Theresienstadt, Auschwitz und Lenzing, seit 1945 in der Grafschaft Bentheim* (Nordhorn: Museumsverein für die Grafschaft Bentheim, 1993), p. 63.

## LINZ I

Following the successful cooperative venture in the construction of the aircraft engine factory in Steyr in 1941 between the SS, on the one hand, and the Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG) and its subsidiary company Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP), on the other, the RWHG looked for other cooperative ventures in which concentration camp labor could be used. A venture between RWHG and the SS for processing timber in Bachmanning failed in the autumn of 1941 because the SS did not want to participate in armaments industries external to the concentration camp system. However, a few months later, in May 1942, there was a “successful” cooperative venture in the construction of a hydroelectric power plant at Ternberg, where on May 15, a Mauthausen subcamp was erected. It was also in 1941 that the SS-owned German Earth and Stone Works (DESt) in Pram-bachkirchen wished to construct a large brick mill, which—with the exploitation of concentration camp prisoners—was intended to produce 30 million bricks per year. However, Reich Minister for Armaments and Munitions Albert Speer stopped the project because it was not important enough for the war effort.

The blast furnace ovens at the RWHG commenced operation in Linz in the autumn of 1941 and produced large quantities of clinker (or slag). At this point, both the RWHG and DESt became interested in cooperating with each other to recycle the clinker into building materials. In July 1942, the RWHG's managing board chairman, Paul Pleiger, suggested to the SS that they should cooperate in constructing a plant to process the clinker. While agreement was quickly reached between chief of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Oswald Pohl and Pleiger, pursuant to which the RWHG was “to hand over the processing of the clinker to the SS in a generous way,” there followed long and difficult negotiations in settling the contract for the establishment of the undertaking and the distribution of profits.<sup>1</sup>

It was only the pressure of Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler that resulted in a conclusion—“for all undertakings



Pleiger-SS, fifty-fifty is to be the sacred rule.”<sup>2</sup> A contract was then signed on November 7, 1942, to establish the DEST Hochofenschlackenwerk (Blast Furnace Oven Slag Factory), Linz/Donau. This contract provided that the DEST on behalf of and at the cost of the Hütte Linz (metallurgical plant) was to construct a clinker processing facility and a labor camp, both of which were to be leased from the Hütte Linz. The DEST processed the slag produced by the Hütte Linz’s blast furnaces.<sup>3</sup>

The construction of the factory and the camp was managed by the construction team headed by engineer Fischer, who originally was to supervise the construction of the large brick factory at Prambachkirchen. Until 1944, the operation was directed from Prambachkirchen. Beginning in the middle of December 1942, a work detachment consisting of 30 prisoners was taken daily from Mauthausen to Linz, where at first they built four prisoner barracks.<sup>4</sup> Once the first two barracks had been finished, 100 Mauthausen prisoners were transferred on January 11, 1943, to the “SS-Labor Camp Linz.”

The prisoners were first busy constructing the factory buildings. The production of building material began on July 1, 1943. Despite the ongoing production, the majority of the prisoners continued to be occupied with construction work. Pohl inspected the clinker processing facilities and the concentration camp on May 25, 1943, and promised additional prisoners for the construction work. In July 1943, the WVHA allocated an additional 400 prisoners to complete the exit road for the clinker works facility and for the construction of an entrance road to the facility. Approximately 100 of these prisoners were transferred to Linz I on July 31, but the transfer of the remainder was delayed due to the limitations of the camp’s capacity to house the prisoners. The lack of building material meant that construction of the fourth barrack began only in January 1944.

Other organizations not directly involved also requested the use of concentration camp prisoners. The local Nazi group Spallerhof was successful in obtaining labor for the construction of air defense facilities at Bindermichl.

The RWHG intended from the spring of 1944 to extend the use of prisoners to the ever more important task of tank production at its subsidiary Alpine Montanbetriebe Hermann Göring Linz, the iron works factory Oberdonau GmbH, and the steel factory Stahlbau GmbH. The general director of the RWHG in Linz, Wilhelm Schilken, successfully negotiated the allocation of 6,000 prisoners for this task. As a result, on May 22, 1944, the construction of a second subcamp for the RWHG began in Linz. This camp is known as Linz III. A large number of prisoners destined for this camp were temporarily held in Linz I.

On July 25, 1944, Linz I was largely destroyed in an Allied air raid on the Linz industrial area. A large number of prisoners, at least 73, died during the bombing raid, but many corpses or body parts could not be identified. As a result of the destruction, Linz I could no longer be used. It was dissolved on August 3, 1944, and the remaining 631 prisoners were transferred that day to Linz III.

Altogether, 1,756 prisoners were transferred to Linz I. Between August 1943 and April 1944, the number was between 520 and 569 prisoners. After April 14, 1944, the number of prisoners increased constantly because the prisoner tasks were always being extended. On July 14, 1944, the high-water mark for prisoner numbers, 958, was reached.

It is possible to reconstruct the prison composition for 1943: 39 percent of the prisoners were Poles, 30 percent were Yugoslavs, 13 percent were from the Soviet Union, and 12 percent were from the German Reich. Some 72 percent of the prisoners were political prisoners. Another 19 percent were being held in limited “preventive custody” or as “Reich forced labor” (AZR). In Linz I, there were also a smaller number of “Russian civilian workers” (6 percent), prisoners of war (POWs), and Wehrmacht members.

Even though the prisoners who were in both Linz Reichswerke camps state that they preferred Linz I, the conditions there were poor. Food was inadequate, as were the accommodations in stone barracks. The camp was overcrowded from the spring of 1944. The prisoners had to do heavy physical work. The so-called clinker detachments were feared by the prisoners—the prisoners had to work in the clinker pits, located in the open air, and there were often accidents. From the camp’s inception, SS-Obersturmbannführer Fritz Miroff was its leader. Miroff was not only Lagerführer in Linz I, but he served also at the main camp and the subcamp of Gusen. He also was camp leader of Bretstein, Leibnitz, and Peggau. Miroff was sentenced to death in proceedings against Eduard Dlouhy and others. He was executed on November 26, 1948.<sup>5</sup>

The Dachau war crimes trials, conducted by the U.S. military judicial authorities, were proceedings against 31 people who were accused of having committed crimes in Linz I or Linz III. Three of the proceedings related predominantly to events in the RWHG subcamps in Linz: the proceedings against Hans Bergerhoff and others, which included the camp Lagerführer of Linz III, Karl Schöpferle, three members of the camp guard, and block and work detachment leaders. Of the 12 accused, 5 were sentenced to death, and 1 was acquitted.<sup>6</sup> Proceedings against Josef Bartl and others included 4 members of the camp guard as well as 2 civilian skilled workers. Prison terms of between 3 and 25 years were handed down.<sup>7</sup> There was a proceeding solely against the Rapportführer of Linz I and Linz III, Hermann Sturm. He was sentenced to a 25 year imprisonment.<sup>8</sup>

Linz I, Linz III, and the RWHG were the subject of proceedings in the main Nuremberg Trials. The RWHG’s managing board chairman, Paul Pleiger, was sentenced to 15 years in jail in the subsequent United States Nuremberg Trial No. 11.

**SOURCES** A comprehensive history of the RWHG subcamps in Linz, on which this article is based, is to be found in Bertrand Perz’s publication “KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter der Reichswerke ‘Hermann Göring’ in Linz,” in *NS-Zwangsarbeit: Der Standort Linz der Reichswerke Hermann*



*Göring AG Berlin, 1938–1945*, ed. Oliver Rathkolb (Vienna, 2001), pp. 449–590. The same author has also published “Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager in Linz,” in *Nationalsozialismus in Linz*, ed. Fritz Mayrhofer and Walter Schuster (Linz, 2001), 2: 1041–1094. The first academic study of the Linz subcamps was by Helmut Fiereder, “Nebenlager des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen in der Hütte Linz der ‘Reichswerke Hermann Göring,’” *HfSL* (1986): 95–113; at a later date he contributed to a catalog for an exhibition in Linz on the camps—see Betriebskörperschaften der Voest-Alpine Stahl Linz GmbH und Jubiläumsfond, eds., *50 Jahre Voest* (Linz: Gedenkstätte KZ Linz I/III, 1999). Reference should also be made to the contribution by Fiereder in the volume *Der Nationalsozialismus in Linz* (as above) which includes the prisoner statistics referred to: “Die Häftlinge in den Konzentrationslagern Linz I/III und Linz II,” 2: 1095–1106. Hans Maršálek’s *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen* (Vienna, 1995) should also be mentioned. Information on the high-temperature-oven clinker factory can also be found in Enno Georg, *Die wirtschaftlichen Unternehmungen der SS* (Stuttgart, 1963); and Walter Naasner, *SS-Wirtschaft und SS-Verwaltung: “Das SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt und die unter seiner Dienstaufsicht stehenden wirtschaftlichen Unternehmungen” und weitere Dokumente* (Düsseldorf, 1998).

The AG-M holds the report of survivor Ottokar Merinsky. This archive contains numerous lists of names, transport lists, and roll-call reports. Material on the Reichswerke camps is to be found in numerous locations, some of which are as follows: in Austria, in the ASt-Ln, IfZ-UW/ÖGZ, and the Oö.La; in Germany, in BA-B, the ASt-N, and the IfZ; in Poland, at APMO and IPN. The NARA and the BA-L (formerly ZdL) also hold relevant documents relating to postwar trials. The NARA reference is RG 338, Records of US Army Commands, 1942–, Records of Headquarters, US Army Europe (USA-REUR), War Crimes Branch, War Crimes Case Files (“Cases Tried”), 1945–1959. Christian Bernadac, “Linz I–Linz III, in *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976), pp. 149–205, has published reports of French survivors. Pio Bigo was a prisoner in both Reichswerke camps and reported on his experiences in *Il triangolo di Gliwice: Memoria di sette Lager* (Alessandria, 1998).

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Telex, Pohl to Wolff dated July 28, 1942, Nuremberg Document NID 12833.

2. Copy Telex, RFSS to Generaldirektor Pleiger, February 29, 1942, copy dated October 23, 1942, Nuremberg Document NID 12829.

3. DESt Composition and Analysis of the Examination Reports for 1941–1943, BA-B, NS 3/719; Agreement between Pohl and Pleiger, November 7, 1942, Nuremberg Document NG 2915.

4. Memoir by Ottokar Merinsky, 1962, AG-M, V/3/41.

5. NARA, RG 338, Records of US Army Commands, 1942–, Records of Headquarters, US Army Europe (USA-REUR), War Crimes Branch, War Crimes Case Files (“Cases Tried”), 1945–1959; hereafter NARA, War Crimes: Case 000-50-5-14, *USA v. Eduard Dlouby, et al.*

6. NARA, War Crimes: Case 000-50-5-1, *USA v. Hans Bergerhoff, et al.*

7. NARA, War Crimes: Case 000-50-5-24, *USA v. Josef Bartl, et al.*

8. NARA, War Crimes: Case 000-50-5-41, *USA v. Hermann Sturm.*

## LINZ II

The region of “Ostmark” became a target within reach of the Allied air forces after the American and British troops had captured North Africa and Sicily. The first air raid on the Ostmark was carried out on Wiener Neustadt on August 13, 1943. The city of Linz was an important target for the Allied air raids because of the numerous industrial concerns, first of all, the Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG). Since the beginning of 1943, the city of Linz had taken measures to protect the civilian population. However, there were delays in the expansion of the existing air-raid shelters. From March 1944 at the latest, all available resources from the construction sector were committed to the extension of the “Stock Cellar” (*Aktienkeller*)—the steel rolling mill (*Wälzlagerwerk*) of the Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP) was transferred there after the air raid on Steyr-Münichholz. Therefore, there was almost no workforce or work material left available for antiaircraft defense construction for the civilian population.

Adolf Hitler paid special attention to this city where he spent his youth and personally looked into issues regarding the antiaircraft defense for the civilian population. He appointed the Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler to look into this matter.<sup>1</sup> With the involvement of the SS and Hans Kammeler, head of the Office Group C in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), which was responsible for the construction done by the SS—the responsibility for antiaircraft defense as a rule belonged to the city administration and the police—the use of prisoners became obvious at the time. The head of the WVHA, Oswald Pohl, could report to Himmler on February 7, 1944, that the deployment of 300 concentration camp prisoners, 30 percent of whom were skilled construction workers, was secured.<sup>2</sup> With the extension of the existing tunnels in the vicinity of downtown Linz, the capacity of these anti-aircraft defense facilities should have been considerably expanded.

The role of the SS in the construction of antiaircraft defense in Linz was limited mainly to the “lending” of concentration camp prisoners to construction companies. It is known from the testimony of a survivor that the companies Karl Pöchtrager, Karl Schwarz, and Asphalt und Dachdeckungs-gesellschaft GmbH (Asphalt and Roofing Company, Ltd., AS-DAG) used prisoners for the work done in the air-raid shelters. Documents from the Pöchtrager company show that the prisoners were used for reinforcing, digging, assembling, and plumbing work as well as for transport.<sup>3</sup>

On February 21, 1944, 100 prisoners from Mauthausen were transferred to Linz for antiaircraft defense construction.

Since the camp in the RWHG in Linz already functioned as a subcamp, the newly established one was called Linz II.

Over the course of the subcamp's existence, a total of 380 prisoners were transferred to Linz II. The highest occupancy at any one time was reached on August 21, 1944, when it had 285 prisoners. From 240 prisoners whose names are known, about 49 percent came from the Soviet Union, 33 percent from Poland, and 7 percent from the German Reich; 40 percent of these prisoners were listed under the category of political prisoner, 37 percent as Russian civilian workers, and 7 percent each were Soviet war prisoners and prisoners "watched over in secure conditions."<sup>4</sup>

The conditions of imprisonment in the Linz II camp were extremely bad. On the one hand, this is explained by the hard physical work the prisoners had to do underground during the daytime. On the other hand, it is explained by the fact that the prisoners were housed directly in the shelters and spent most of their imprisonment time without daylight or fresh air. However, the food provided by the city of Linz was better than in other camps. Eight prisoners died in the Linz II camp, which would correspond to a death rate of approximately 2 percent. But with this number, one has to take into consideration that the prisoners from this camp who were critically ill and unfit for work were transferred back to the main camp. Moreover, Linz II did not have its own infirmary. The camp was served by the medical personnel from the Linz III camp.

There is almost no documentation about the guarding of the camp. There is also only a little information from memoirs. The camp was guarded by approximately 50 guards belonging to the SS. SS-Oberscharführer Christoph Werner was in charge of the camp. Members of the theater orchestra of Linz became responsible for the guarding of the camp on instructions of Nazi Gauleiter August Eigruber in April 1945. They were described as "very friendly" by a survivor.

**SOURCES** This essay is based mainly on Bertrand Perz's account of the Linz II camp, "Auf Wunsch der Führers . . . : Der Bau von Luftschutzstollen in Linz durch Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Linz II," 22: 9–10 (1995): 342–356. Perz subsequently published this essay in a slightly changed version in Fritz Mayrhofer and Walter Schuster, eds., *Nationalsozialismus in Linz*, 2 vols. (Linz, 2001), 2: 1041–1094. The only text about this subcamp before this publication was the short presentation in Gisela Rabitsch's "Konzentrationslager in Österreich (1938–1945): Überblick und Geschehen" (Ph.D. diss., Universität Wien, 1967). Information about the air-raid defense measures in Linz can be found in Richard Kutschera, "Die Fliegerangriffe auf Linz im Zweiten Weltkrieg," *Historisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Linz* (Linz, 1966).

To a larger extent, there is material on the construction measures regarding the air-raid defense in the ASt-Ln. Most likely because the prisoners in Linz were mainly Soviet citizens and Poles, only a few accounts about this camp are known to exist. One account comes from the German prisoner Fritz Grabowski, June 1, 1945, ITS, Arolsen Historic Section (His-

torical Documents Concerning Various Concentration Camps, File 279); another can be found in the private archive of Bertrand Perz (Letter by Stefan Szulborski, Piaseczno, Poland, to Bertrand Perz, August 19, 1985). Documents on the negotiations at the leadership level of the SS can be found in the BA-B.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Mihaela Pittman

## NOTES

1. Telex, Himmler to Pohl from January 4, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/1900.
2. Telex, SS-WVHA Pohl to Himmler concerning the air-raid defense constructions in Linz from February 7, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/1900.
3. Construction company Karl Pöchtrager, invoices regarding performed management work and missed hours at the shelter construction Märzenkeller, ASt-Ln, B 29a, "Luftschutz 1944–1963, Part 1."
4. Roll-call book of the outside details, daily reports from February 21, 1944, to March 15, 1945, E/6/11; Movements in the KL Mauthausen in the month of April 1945, E/6/7, both AG-M; or AG-M, Data Bank Project "Erfassung aller dokumentierten Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen." Data bank questionnaire for prisoners from the subcamp Linz II (unfinished project, as of July 30, 2003).

## LINZ III

As a result of the expansion of the prisoner deployment at the Reichswerke "Hermann Göring" (RWHG) in Linz, another camp had to be set up in addition to the already existing Linz I camp. Prisoners were deployed to the RWHG's weapon-producing subsidiary businesses Alpine Montanbetriebe Hermann Göring, Linz; metal plant Eisenwerk Oberdonau GmbH; steel enterprise Stahlbau GmbH; and Hütte Linz (to support the expansion of this iron and steel work). The space for imprisonment was too small in the Linz I camp for the housing of additional prisoners.

The prisoners of the Linz III camp were deployed initially mainly in the weapons production business at the Oberdonau metal plant and Stahlbau steel factory. As a result of the closure of the Linz I camp, the prisoners from Linz III also had to work for the German Earth and Stone Works (DESt) in the blast furnace slag processing plant (*Hochofenschlackenwerk*) Linz/Donau. The work at the iron and steel work became the most important deployment location, and the prisoners were used for different jobs there; 60 percent of the prisoners were deployed at Hütte in March 1945.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the prisoners deployed at the Hütte iron and steel work, a large number of prisoners were also included who actually had to work outside the RWHG at clearing up operations for the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways), for the construction of air-raid shelters, or for the post administration. The deployment at the railroad in particular became more and more important. As a whole, 49 percent of the prisoners were engaged in the extraction of raw material for the Hütte Linz and DESt.

Another 39 percent of the prisoners were deployed for weapons production at the Oberdonau metal plants and at the Stahlbau steel factory.<sup>2</sup>

Because of a lack of construction material as a result of the war conditions, the location chosen for the subcamp, Linz III, was the already existing Camp 54. Italian military internees (IMIs) had been housed there earlier. The camp was located on an island between the Traun and the Mühlbach rivers and was consequently easy to guard, though exposed to flooding. On May 22, 1944, an advance party (Vorkommando) consisting of 30 prisoners was transferred to Linz to modify the existing Camp 54 into a subcamp of Mauthausen. The actual opening of the camp took place on May 26, 1944.<sup>3</sup> The occupancy of the camp rose very fast. On June 6, 398 prisoners were transferred to Linz III, and on June 30, there were already 1,402 prisoners in the subcamp.

In the course of Allied air raids on the Linz industrial zone on July 25, 1944, the subcamps existing in the area were hit. After this air raid, 19 prisoners from the Linz III camp were reported dead and 97 missing. The large number of missing prisoners can be explained by the fact that many corpses could no longer be identified—it can be assumed that the majority of the ones reported missing were actually dead. The Linz I camp was damaged to such an extent during this air raid that it could not be used anymore. This was the reason why the remaining 631 prisoners were transferred on August 3, 1944, to the Linz III camp. The number of prisoners in Linz III went up to 2,817 after this transfer.

The highest occupancy was reached on October 6, 1944, with 5,660 prisoners. A total of 6,787 prisoners were brought to the Linz III camp,<sup>4</sup> of which 5,037 are known by name.<sup>5</sup> The evaluation of that data concerning the prisoners known by name reveals that people from 21 nations were deported to this subcamp. About 38.2 percent of the prisoners came from the Soviet Union, 37.1 percent were from Poland, 7 percent were from France, 5.6 percent were from the German Reich, 4.7 percent were from Italy, 4.1 percent were from Yugoslavia, and a smaller number came from other European nations. If classified in categories, the largest group of prisoners were the political prisoners (49.2 percent); 35 percent were “Russian civilian workers,” 8.9 percent were Jews, and 2.4 percent were prisoners “watched over in secure conditions.” There were a smaller number of prisoners belonging to the following categories in the Linz III camp: “§ 175” (homosexuals), “Forced Labor Reich” (AZR), “Bible Students” (Jehovah’s Witnesses), “Limited preventative incarceration,” prisoners of war (POWs), “Red Spaniards,” members of the Wehrmacht, and French and Polish civilian workers.

As can be seen from the number of prisoners, the conditions of imprisonment in the Linz III camp were totally different from those in the Linz I camp, where there were at most 958 prisoners. Survivor Ottokar Merinsky compared the two RWHG camps as follows: “Camp III was in comparison to camp I like a home for the poor and the Hotel Sacher.

Instead of stonewall blocks there were old wooden huts. When there was high water the streets were under water. Along the huts were boardwalks. There were no toilets in the huts; the latrines were 20 to 100 m (66 to 328 feet) away from the blocks. The camp was filled above its capacity, and the block leaders were like raging dogs. Nobody could be sure that he could not be pushed into the water from the boardwalk simply because of a leader’s moody impulse and shot dead with a revolver.”<sup>6</sup> The different living conditions in the two camps cannot be explained only by the much higher number of prisoners, by the inferior construction material used for the Linz III camp, and by the fact that the camp was located near high water. The difference also has to be seen in connection with the existence of the Linz III camp at a later moment in time. As the war progressed, the increasing pressure on weapons production as well as the deterioration of the supply of basic goods for everyday use had a detrimental effect on the prisoners’ working conditions. In the last weeks before the liberation of the camp, getting supplies to the camp broke down completely. These conditions generated a large number of illnesses. For this reason, Linz III set up its own infirmary and, later on, also a second hut for the critically ill.<sup>7</sup> On March 21, 1945, 998 of the 5,324 prisoners were reported sick, about 20 percent.<sup>8</sup>

The different imprisonment conditions can be noticed when comparing the death rates in the two camps. While 129 deaths were recorded in the Linz I camp, 701 were recorded in Linz III—these numbers do not include the prisoners who were unable to work and who were transferred back to the main camp. If one leaves aside the victims of the Allied air raid from July 25, 1944, then it can be concluded that the death rate for Linz I was about 0.5 percent in the time span of one and a half years; for Linz III, it was about 9 percent. Most deaths in Linz III were recorded in the weeks before liberation; 314 prisoners died in April 1945 alone. In this phase, the camp leader, Schöpferle, is supposed to have given the order to kill the prisoners in the infirmary by lethal injection, by starvation, and by electric chair (*elektrischen Stuhl*).<sup>9</sup> About 50 sick prisoners were killed in May 1945 by alternating hot and cold showers. Between 110 and 112 Jewish prisoners were isolated in a hut in order to kill them by starvation. According to the statement of one of these prisoners, five days later, only 60 prisoners in the hut were still alive.<sup>10</sup>

The prisoners from Linz III were liberated on May 5, 1945, by U.S. forces. The accounts of the liberation diverge from one another. While the sick remained in the camp, the rest had been evacuated to the surrounding area of the city of Linz. One account states that these prisoners were liberated there, while according to other accounts the prisoners disarmed the guards and started to march back to the camp.

The guarding of the camp was done by the 6th Guard Company of the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann (Death’s Head Guard Battalion) Mauthausen as well as by members of the Wehrmacht and probably also the 10th SS-Totenkopf Guard



Company.<sup>11</sup> Up to 370 members of the SS guarded the Linz III camp. In addition, members of the RWHG's plant protection (*Werkschutz*) were also assigned to guard prisoners. Civilians recruited for the Volkssturm (German Home Guard), "men sixty years and older," were also assigned to guard duty toward the end of the war. This circumstance was perceived as a relief by the prisoners.<sup>12</sup>

The leader of the camp from its opening until May 1945 was SS-Obersturmbannführer Schöpferle. His civilian profession was that of an architect; for this reason, he was deployed to some camps for camp construction, starting in May 1941, in the subcamps Vöcklabruck, Bretstein, Grossraming, Wiener Neustadt, Schwechat, and Redl-Zipf. Schöpferle was sentenced to death in one of the trials against war criminals run by the U.S. Army in Dachau and executed in 1948.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the postwar trials mentioned in the entry for Linz I, two succeeding trials run by the U.S. military court in Dachau are to be mentioned. In both trials the death sentence was pronounced against members of the SS who had performed duties in the Linz III camp. SS-Sanitätsdienstgrad Christian Wohlrab was sentenced to death for the murder of sick prisoners by injecting them with gasoline and executed on May 15, 1948.<sup>14</sup> The temporary Rapportführer in Linz III, Franz Kofler, was executed after being given the death sentence on May 24, 1948.<sup>15</sup>

**SOURCES** This article relies essentially on the outstanding essay by Bertrand Perz on the subcamps of the RWHG in Linz: "KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter der Reichswerke 'Hermann Göring' in Linz," in *NS-Zwangsarbeit: Der Standort Linz der Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin, 1938-1945*, ed. Oliver Rathkolb (Vienna, 2001), pp. 449-590.

The AG-M and NARA hold primary sources useful for this essay. Svatá Jarmila published the report of the camp clerk from Linz III, Vaclav Vaclavik, *Milenci SS smrti* (Plzen, 1945). Vaclavik also wrote an unpublished report from memory, probably in 1963. See Mauthausen/Linz I for additional resources.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Mihaela Pittman

## NOTES

1. Bertrand Perz, "KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter der Reichswerke 'Hermann Göring' in Linz," in *NS-Zwangsarbeit: Der Standort der Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin, 1938-1945*, ed. Oliver Rathkolb (Vienna, 2001), p. 506: The utilization of various resources from the file Reichswerke Alpine Montanbetriebe "Hermann Göring" Linz, KZ-Häftlinge ab I.III. 44, 1944-1945, NARA, T83, Roll 226.

2. Perz, "KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter der Reichswerke 'Hermann Göring' in Linz," p. 509.

3. Report of the activity of the administrative department of the concentration camp Mauthausen, entry from May 26, 1944, French translation published in Christian Bernadac, *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976), p. 363.

4. Roll-call book, daily reports from May 22, 1944, until March 15, 1945, E/6/11; movements in the KL Mauthausen in the month of April 1945, E/6/7, both AG-M.

5. AG-M, Data Bank Project, "Erfassung aller dokumentierten Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen." Data bank questionnaire for prisoners from the subcamp Linz III (unfinished project, as of July 30, 2003).

6. Ottokar Merinsky memoirs, 1962, AG-M, V/3/41.

7. Letter by Karl Kaufmann to the Supreme Allied Court of Appeal, Munich, October 2, 1947, NARA, RG 338. Records of US Army Commands, 1942-, Records of Headquarters, US Army Europe (USAREUR), War Crimes Branch, War Crimes Case Files ("Cases Tried"), 1945-1959 (hereafter cited as "NARA, War Crimes"): Case 000-50-5-41, *USA v. Sturm*.

8. List of the sick prisoners in Mauthausen and subcamps from March 21, 1945, AG-M, H/14/1.

9. Vaclav Vaclavik memoirs (unpub. MSS, Plzen, ca. 1963), p. 56; testimony Dr. Josef Pla from February 5, 1947, NARA, War Crimes: Case 000-50-1, *USA v. Karl Schöpferle, et al.*

10. Courtroom examination of Markus Griebler, NARA, War Crimes: Case 000-50-5-1, *USA v. Karl Schöpferle, et al.*, record of the court proceedings, p. 29.

11. Roll-call list of the 6th Company KLM; Labor camp Linz III and roll-call list of the Unterführer and men detailed to the KL Mauthausen, labor camp Linz III, both July 28, 1944, Nuremberg document PS 2176.

12. Ottokar Merinsky memoirs, 1962, AG-M, V/3/41.

13. NARA, War Crimes: Case 000-50-51-1, *USA v. Schöpferle, et al.*

14. NARA, War Crimes: Case 000-50-5-21, *USA v. Josef Kattner, et al.*

15. NARA, War Crimes: Case 000-50-5-23, *USA v. Franz Kofler, et al.*

## LOIBLPASS

During 1943, two connected camps were established on the Loiblpass: from June 3, 1943, at an altitude of approximately 950 meters (3,117 feet) above sea level, a concentration camp located on the southern side of the territory of present-day Slovenia; and from November 29, 1943, at an altitude of 1,100 meters (3,609 feet), a concentration camp on the northern side in Carinthia. According to the official terminology, they were "Waffen-SS labor camps." The main concentration camp at Mauthausen supplied the labor camps with approximately 1,650 prisoners in the period from 1943 to 1945.

Following the German invasion of Yugoslavia, the first preparations commenced in 1941 for improving the Loiblpass road and constructing a tunnel 1,561 meters (5,121 feet) long through the highest section. The first planning contracts were signed in May 1941 between civilian construction firms and the relevant Nazi department responsible for construction based in Klagenfurt. Soon thereafter, the state construction company, Organisation Todt (OT), started the surveying and road construction work.

During 1943, the following camp facilities were installed on both sides of the Loiblpass: a camp for civilian workers,



intended for state employees overseeing the construction work and those belonging to the private construction companies; an SS and police camp to house the concentration camp guards; and the actual concentration camp intended for prisoners from Mauthausen. The first prisoner transport arrived from Mauthausen on June 3, 1943, comprising 330 prisoners, including 316 French prisoners, who had been selected in Mauthausen for the "Detachment X" at Loibl.

The concentration camp guards were recruited from men of the 3. SS-Totenkopfsturmbann (Death's Head Guard Battalion) based in Mauthausen. They were supplemented and reinforced by police guards from the SS-Alpenland unit.

New prisoner transports arrived in Loibl almost every month: Poles, Soviets, Yugoslavs, Czechs, Germans, Norwegians, Luxembourgers, Spaniards, Hungarians, and prisoners of other nations.

In the summer of 1943, the northern Loibl concentration camp was also established, to which initially the prisoners were taken every day from the southern Loibl camp on the old road over the pass. Transfer to the northern camp on the Carinthian side was seen as an additional punishment. On account of the extreme conditions (cold temperatures and deep snow in winter, heat and lack of water in summer), and due to the special brutality of the guards, the northern Loibl camp became known as "hell in the mountains."

On August 1, 1943, SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Siegbert Ramsauer became the camp doctor. Dr. Ramsauer was responsible for all three camp facilities, including the concentration camp on the Carinthian side.

In the southern Loibl concentration camp, SS-Hauptsturmführer Jakob Winkler served as commandant; in the northern Loibl concentration camp, SS-Hauptscharführer Lemmen was in charge until the end of April 1943; he was succeeded by SS-Oberscharführer Paul Gruschwitz. His deputy, SS-Oberscharführer Walter Brietzke, was in charge of the work detachments.

By December 4, 1943, the breakthrough linking up the two ends of the tunnel was achieved in the presence of Gauleiter Rainer, SS-General Edwin Rösener, camp commandant Winkler, and numerous senior officials of the state construction administration (all high-ranking members of the Nazi Party).

During 1944, the number of prisoners in both concentration camps reached its peak, with a total of 1,274 prisoners. In the years from 1943 to 1945, the in- and outflow of prisoners fluctuated considerably. The prisoner transports, which went back to Mauthausen, were full of worn-out, exhausted, and sick prisoners. Some prisoners were also returned to Mauthausen as a punishment.

Dr. Ramsauer was responsible for selecting the prisoners to be sent back to the main camp. Excluded from the return transports were the prisoners that Ramsauer deemed "unfit for travel," who he killed himself.

In the northern camp as well as the southern camp, there was a "crematorium" in which the corpses were burned. The crematorium consisted of a ditch constructed with brick walls, upon which an iron grid was placed. On top of this a bonfire

was built for burning the corpses of the prisoners. Generally, Dr. Ramsauer was present when corpses were burned at the southern Loibl concentration camp.

On December 4, 1944, exactly one year after the two ends of the tunnel were linked, the first Wehrmacht vehicle was able to drive through the Loibl tunnel.

On April 15, 1945, the Germans started to dissolve the northern Loibl subcamp, which had become unsafe due to the increased partisan activity in the area. The dissolution of the southern Loibl subcamp started on May 7, 1945: about 100 Yugoslav prisoners and some 20 sick prisoners remained behind in the southern camp. Approximately 950 prisoners set out through the tunnel on foot toward the north. Their aim was to reach the bridge over the Drava River close to Klagenfurt, which had already been taken by the British. Since the Loibl Valley and the bridge over the Drava were already controlled by the partisans, the SS guards marched "under the protection" of the prisoners. On account of the heavy fighting between the German forces streaming back from the Balkans and the partisans, the prisoners had to divert their march into a side valley. Here the partisans finally liberated the prisoners from the clutches of their SS guards.

In Loibl itself, 33 prisoners lost their lives. Of these, 15 were shot "while trying to escape": that is, the prisoners were selected due to inadequate work or other "transgressions" and sentenced to death. In most cases, on the way to the work site the prisoner was forced through the cordon of guards and then shot. The camp commandant would then order an "investigation" after the shooting and write in the report that the prisoner had tried to escape.

At least eight prisoners died in the infirmary or were murdered there by Dr. Ramsauer. In other cases, the prisoners died of exhaustion, starvation, disease, or as a result of the tortures and beatings they received from the guards. Especially feared were the "Corridas": the prisoners were forced to load up wheelbarrows with heavy stones, and the SS guards and Kapos then forced them to run back and forth, driving them on with cruel beatings from whips and rubber truncheons, until the prisoners collapsed. The first "Corrida" was conducted on July 14, 1943, that is, on Bastille Day, the French national holiday. It lasted from 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. Also feared were visits by the "dentist," usually an unqualified dental technician or even a mechanic who simply ripped or broke out all the teeth of some of the prisoners. Like the SS doctor, Dr. Ramsauer, he did not use any medicine, and he sent the badly injured prisoners immediately back to work.

Although the SS constantly invented new punishments for their sadistic entertainment, otherwise they had absolutely no imagination with regard to organizing the prisoners' free time. In both camps, there were boxing matches, which were also popular with some Kapos and prisoners. In the southern Loibl subcamp, there was also for a while a soccer field, where "national" teams made up from the ranks of the civilian workers and the prisoners played against each other.

As in almost every camp, there was also a flourishing black market in Loibl, although the range of items traded remained very modest: cigarettes, bread, sweets, and other food products. Occasionally, clothing or medicine was also exchanged. Letters and parcels, which officially should have been passed on to the prisoners by the camp leadership, only started to reach their intended recipients on a regular basis in 1944. Deliveries smuggled into or out of the camp through contacts to the civilian workers were a rarity. With respect to this type of "post," the Slovenian civilian worker Janko Tišler was the most important link to the outside world. As early as September 1943, he posted the first prisoner letter in Neumarktl marked with an address in France.

The political organization among the French prisoners, who had mostly been members of the resistance in France, began in the southern Loibl subcamp immediately upon the arrival of the first transport in 1943; it started at the end of April 1944 in the northern Loibl subcamp. Later on, the Polish prisoners also organized a resistance cell. For all groups, Tišler was the contact to the outside world, especially to the partisans who were active in the area.

From the diary entries of Tišler, it can be deduced that 29 prisoners escaped from the two Loibl camps, or at least made escape attempts. Most of them were Frenchmen, the others being Poles, Russians, Italians, Slovenes, and 1 German; 24 prisoners probably succeeded in escaping. This large number is most likely due to the assistance of civilian workers, who as members of the resistance working undercover had contacts with the partisans, and also to the courage of the (Slovenian-speaking) population in the villages and on the farms both north and south of the Loiblpass.

All the escapes were planned and carried out from the work details on the way to the work sites or from the tunnel. No escape was possible from the camp sites, as they were heavily guarded and surrounded by several layers of tall barbed-wire fencing. After an escape became known, there were the usual collective punishments; for example, the prisoners were made to stand the whole night in front of the camp gate in the deep snow. Escapees that were recaptured were in most cases beaten terribly and then sent back to Mauthausen.

During an escape by 3 Soviet prisoners, one guard was killed and two others seriously wounded. In consequence, more than 100 Soviet prisoners were arrested and physically punished for a day and a night, before being sent to the gas chamber in Mauthausen.

In 1946 and 1947, a British military tribunal in Klagenfurt investigated the events in the concentration camps on the Loiblpass. On November 10, 1947, it issued these verdicts: the SS men Winkler and Brietzke, who were found to have been the main persons responsible for numerous cases of murder, were sentenced to death by hanging. (These verdicts were carried out on March 10, 1948.) The commandant of the northern camp, Paul Gruschwitz, was sentenced to 12 years in prison, and the SS-Rapportführer of the northern camp, Karl Sachse, received 20 years. Six additional SS men who had held senior positions as guards at the camp were sentenced to

prison terms of from 3 to 9 years. All of those sentenced who did not receive the death penalty were released after only a few years, in most cases before 1955.

Three other SS men who served at Loibl were only arrested and tried years later. Two of them were acquitted, although they were adjudged to have committed murder or to have severely maltreated prisoners. One was sentenced (not in Carinthia but before a local court in Slovenia) to 10 years in prison.

The verdict of the British military tribunal in the case of Dr. Ramsauer attracted much public attention. Most people, including the accused himself, expected that he would get the death sentence, as the euthanasia killings were clearly documented. The sentence, however, was "life imprisonment." Dr. Ramsauer was released in March 1954 and soon thereafter was employed again as a doctor in the regional hospital and had his own private practice in the center of Klagenfurt. Until his death in 1991, he was viewed as a highly respected doctor and citizen of Klagenfurt.

**SOURCES** The history of the two subcamps on the Loiblpass has scarcely been touched by academic research. Until now, the only monograph on the Loibl camps in German was authored by Josef Zausnig, *Der Loibl-Tunnel: Das vergessene KZ an der Südgrenze Österreichs*, foreword by Peter Gstettner (Klagenfurt, 1995). The book is based on interviews conducted by the author personally and source materials made available by Janko Tišler. Certain detailed aspects of the history of the Loibl camps have been discussed in various publications, including, for example, Josef Nischelwitzer, "Loibl—Baustelle des Todes," in *Josef Nischelwitzer 1912–1987: Skizzen aus seinem Leben und seiner Zeit* (Klagenfurt, 1988), pp. 91–93; and Florian Freund, "Wieviel 'kostet' ein KZ-Häftling? KZ Loibl-Pass," *JDÖW* (1989): 31–51. The groundbreaking work of Hans Maršálek, *Mauthausen*, 3rd and exp. ed. (Vienna, 1995), which has also been translated into German, English, and Italian, contains a number of references to the subcamps on the Loiblpass. Maršálek was a camp clerk in Mauthausen, and after 1945 he played an important role in the establishment of the museum at the Mauthausen memorial site and in making the history of the camp public.

It was initially, above all, former prisoners from France, Poland, and Yugoslavia who collected information and recorded their experiences about Loiblpass. The autobiographical novel of André Lacaze, *Le tunnel* (Paris, 1978), attracted some attention on its publication (but has since been largely forgotten). All of these early sources have been used by Janko Tišler and Jože Rovšek in the book *Mauthausen na Ljubelju* (Klagenfurt, 1995). This work only appeared in the Slovenian language. It comprises the most important primary source, since Tišler has processed a wide variety of authentic sources: testimonies and reports of former prisoners, letters, protocols, and transport lists, which he has gathered—and above all his own personal experience as a civilian worker on the Loiblpass and, from July 1944, as a resistance fighter with the partisans.

Peter Gstettner  
trans. Martin Dean

## MELK ("QUARZ") [AKA KOMMANDO "QUARZ"]

In January 1944, a Mauthausen subcamp was established in the abandoned Wehrmacht Freiherr-von-Birago pioneer barracks in the lower Austrian city of Melk (until 1945: Reichsgau Niederdonau), about 100 kilometers (62 miles) to the east of Linz. An advance detachment of around 500 prisoners arrived at the camp on April 11, 1944. They were to prepare part of the barracks for around 7,000 prisoners. The camp was then opened on April 20–21, 1944. The prisoners were accommodated in 18 blocks, which, in part, were furnished with Wehrmacht equipment. The company, Quarz GmbH, which used the prisoners, supplied beds, sacks of straw, and blankets. The camp was better equipped than most concentration camps; however, this was soon to change as a result of the overcrowding and catastrophic hygienic conditions.

Altogether there were 14,390 prisoners from at least 26 countries held in Melk. It was only in the middle of September that the planned prison capacity of 7,000 inmates was reached. From September 1944, prisoners evacuated from the Natzweiler main camp began to arrive in Melk and, from January 1945, prisoners from Auschwitz. According to historian Hans Maršálek, the camp reached its maximum capacity

on January 30, 1945, with 10,352 prisoners. The larger national groups included Poles, Hungarians, French, Soviet citizens, Germans, Italians, Greeks, and Yugoslavs. However, there were also in Melk prisoners from Albania, Egypt, Denmark, Portugal, Turkey, the United States, and other countries. Around 30 percent of the prisoners in Melk were Jews. The last prisoner transport reached the camp on January 29, 1945: among the 2,000 prisoners from Auschwitz were 119 children between ages 9 and 15.

A camp crematorium had been erected in the autumn of 1944. Between December 1944 and April 1945, more than 3,500 deceased prisoners were cremated in it. According to transport reports, 1,440 sick and injured prisoners were returned to Mauthausen as "unable to work" (*arbeitsunfähig*). The Standortarzt (garrison doctor) recorded in the register of deaths 4,802 prisoners who died in Melk, including 1,019 in January 1945, or more than 30 per day. One-third of the prisoners who were brought to Melk died within the first six months of the camp's existence. SS statistics list the nationalities of the dead: 1,575 Poles; 1,432 Hungarians; 546 French; 388 Soviet citizens; 302 Italians; 174 Yugoslavs; 150 Germans and Austrians; 101 Greeks; 36 Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians; 26 Dutch; 22 Czechs; 17 Norwegians; 12 Spaniards; 9 Belgians; 3 Swiss; 4 Luxembourgers; 2 Turks; 1 Portuguese; 1 Albanian; and 1 stateless person.



New arrivals assemble for roll call at the Melk subcamp of Mauthausen, 1944–1945.  
USHMM WS #02009, COURTESY OF NARA



According to statements by Jean Varnoux, a former prisoner, there were fewer than 10 SS members in the camp. The remaining guards consisted of around 500 Luftwaffe soldiers who had been put under the command of the SS. The first camp leader, Hauptsturmführer Anton Streitwieser, was replaced in May 1944 by Obersturmbannführer Julius Ludolph. The Rapportführer was SS-Oberscharführer Curt Jansen, and the Arbeitsdienstführer was Oberscharführer Ernst Schindler. Hauptscharführer Otto Striegel was in charge of food transports.

A barracks for the sick was established in June 1944 in the camp; a second was established in September 1944. First, SS-Unterscharführer und Sanitäter Gottlieb Muzikant was in charge of medical care. The prisoners have described him as brutal and without feeling. He is responsible for countless cases of prisoner mistreatment and deaths. It was only months later that a Luftwaffestabsarzt, Medizinalrat Dr. Josef Sora, was to take up duties in the camp. French camp doctor Guy Lemordant stated that from January 1945 there were 2,000 seriously ill prisoners in the infirmary, which had a capacity for only 100 prisoners.

Quarz GmbH, a subsidiary of the armaments company Steyr-Daimler-Puch (SDP), employed the prisoners. As part of the program of the SS-Sonderstab Kammler, Quarz GmbH excavated in Roggendorf near Lossdorf underground caverns to be used as sites for the production of ball bearings. The prisoners worked three shifts around the clock, excavating six caverns in the mountain, each several hundred meters long. They also laid rails, poured concrete for the approaches to the cavern, constructed barracks for equipment and machines, laid cables and water pipes, and transported building equipment and machines from the Lossdorf railway station to the construction site. Despite the enormous effort, by the winter of 1944–1945, only a fraction of the planned cavern could commence production. Two-thirds of the planned cavern of 65,000 square meters (700,000 square feet) was not complete when the camp was dissolved in April 1945.

In addition to working underground and producing armaments, the prisoners built houses for Luftwaffe members as well as barracks for SDP employees and laborers. They worked in a munitions factory in Merkendorf, constructed a high-water barrier, and worked for the company Hopferwieser in Amstetten, preparing timber and posts to support the cavern. The prisoners were often leased to local construction companies including Braun & Boveri; Czernilofsky; Himmelstoss & Sittner; Hofmann & Maculan; Philipp Holzmann AG; Lang & Manhoffer; Latzel & Kutscha; Mahal & Co.; Mayreder, Kraus & Co.; Bau AG Negrelli; Rella, Stigler & Rous; Strassenbauunternehmen AG (STUAG); Schachtbau Wayss & Freytag; and Überland AG.

Maršálek stated that there were several prisoner executions in Melk. For example, on May 11, 1944, a prisoner was shot while “trying to escape.” During an air raid on July 8, 1944, 250 camp inmates were killed and 197 were injured—the injured were probably murdered in the next few days with injections into the heart. A similar event occurred on Febru-

ary 19, 1945, when a transport of 250 Slovakian prisoners from Melk was attacked by Allied fighters; 7 prisoners managed to escape, and 20 died; 49 injured prisoners were murdered in Melk. Prisoners in the labor detachments in the “Quarz” construction area often tried to escape: according to the SS, there were 29 escape attempts; it is known that 9 of these attempts failed and 1 was successful.

According to Maršálek, there was an international prisoners’ organization in Melk whose members had contact with civilian workers and individual members of the guards. At the beginning of 1945, Hungarian Jewish prisoners, with the assistance of civilian workers, smuggled seven pistols into the camp from the construction site. The camp doctor at Melk, Dr. Josef Sora, also had close connections with the prisoners. He passed on news from the BBC to specific camp inmates, boycotted the order by the camp commandant to allow 50 prisoners suffering from tuberculosis to starve to death, and in April 1945 negotiated with the Melk district president (Landrat) and Niederdonau Gauleiter Dr. Hugo Jury to prevent the planned murder of the camp inmates at the Roggendorf cavern.

Production ceased on April 1, 1945, as a result of the advance by Soviet troops. At this time, there were around 7,500 prisoners in the camp. On March 12, 1945, a group of 34 Scandinavian prisoners were transferred by the Red Cross back to their home countries via Mauthausen and Neuen-gamme. The remaining camp prisoners were then evacuated to Ebensee, Mauthausen, and Gusen. On April 11, a transport to Mauthausen of 1,500 youths and sick prisoners was put together, and Muzikant murdered 30 to 40 seriously ill prisoners in the infirmary. Two more transports left Melk on April 13, with 1,440 prisoners in total sent to Ebensee. They went by goods train and barge. The last transport of 1,500 prisoners left the camp on April 15 in the direction of Ebensee. According to documents from the Mauthausen main camp, the Melk subcamp existed officially until April 19, 1945.

Members of the Melk guards were convicted after the war in the Dachau military trials. Camp leader Julius Ludolph was executed in July 1947. The head of the infirmary, Muzikant, was sentenced by the Fulda Landgericht (regional court) in 1960 to life imprisonment in a penitentiary for the murder of 90 seriously ill prisoners by phenol injections and for strangling at least another 100 prisoners. Streitwieser, the first camp commandant, who at first escaped successfully, was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1967 and died in prison in 1972. Leading members and employees of the SDP were never brought before the court.

**SOURCES** Bertrand Perz describes the Melk subcamp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 405–408. Perz is also the author of the most detailed and well-researched work on the Melk camp and its role in the National Socialist armaments program: *Projekt Quarz: Steyr-Daimler-Puch und das Konzentrationslager Melk* (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1991). There is an appendix to the work with a detailed list



of sources. Perz also published a brochure on this camp that lists the nationalities of the prisoners. See Perz, *Konzentrationslager Melk, Begleitbroschüre zur ständigen Ausstellung* (Vienna, 1992), p. 52. Hans Maršálek in *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995) describes the camp at pp. 76, 92, 145 (executions), 241 (executions and death), and 316 (international prisoner organizations). Descriptions on the camp are found in Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, ed., *Kurzgeschichte Mauthausen, Gusen, Ebensee, Melk* (Vienna, n. d.). The entanglement of SDP personnel with the Third Reich, which was decisive for the Melk subcamp, has been researched by Bertrand Perz in "Nationalsozialistisches Management: Zur Person des Generaldirektors der Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG Dr. Georg Meindl," in *Glührendrot/Krisenbleich: Zeitmontagen zur Arbeit und Kultur in der Industrieregion Steyr*, ed. Reinhard Mittensteiner and Brigitte Kepplinger (Steyr, 1998), pp. 168–176; and in "Politisches Management im Wirtschaftskonzern: Georg Meindl und die Rolle des Staatskonzerns Steyr-Daimler-Puch bei der Verwirklichung der NS-Wirtschaftsziele in Österreich," in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen, 1996), pp. 95–112. Claims that in the cavern facilities at Roggendorf heavy water was produced by means of "fractioned distillation" as part of the process to construct an atomic bomb have not been substantiated. On these claims, see Markus Schmitzberger, *Was die US Army in der Alpenfestung wirklich suchte: Eine Theorie zum Decknamen der Anlage 'Quarz' in Roggendorf bei Melk* (Schleusingen: Amun-Verlag, 2001). For more detail on the intervention by the Luftwaffe medical doctor for the prisoners, see Erika Weinzierl, *Zu wenig Gerechte: Österreicher und Judenverfolgung 1938 bis 1945* (Graz: Styria-Verlag, 1997), p. 178. This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 181; and in "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1824.

The AG-M holds documents on the Melk subcamp including the following: Signaturen F 4/1 (Angaben des im Arbeitseinsatz eingesetzten Häftlings Wolfgang Sanner); B 40/1 to 40/10; B 30/1 to B 30/16; B 12/36 (Berichte und Kopie von Transportlisten, u.a. von Melk); E 6/11 (Rapportbuch, Gesamtstand der Häftlinge in den Nebenlagern, Tagesaufstellungen); B 60/11 (Aufstellung der Lager-schreibstube vom 9. April 1945 über die Nebenlager-Häftlinge); E 10/6 (Veränderungsmeldungen April 1945); B 60/5 and 6 (Todesmeldungen von Evakuierten); B/30/09 (Skizze des Lagers Melk mit Beschriftungen); B/30/12 (Lageplan mit Beschriftungen der einzelnen Objekte, mit einer Aufstellung der Funktionshäftlinge); and B/30/13a (Lagerplan). There are also held here microfilms from the collection of the ZBoWid, VHU, and the ITS on Melk. Numerous archival documents according to Bertrand Perz are held in the A-SDP, including the collections "History of the Company, Ownership and Descriptions of the Balance Sheets of the Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG," dated April 19, 1947 (with two supplements), as well as the files of the Darlehensvertrag

OKH, Führungsaufbau Walzlagerwerk, Führungsaufbau, Statistische Informationen, Unter-Tag Quarz, Verlagerungen Quarz, and others. There are also documents on the camp in A-BMdI, Abt. IV/4, and in the DÖW. The USHMMA holds the following original documents on the Melk camp: Acc.1995.A.077—Andrew Woolrich (prisoner report) and Josef V. Czarski, RG-02.149, Acc.1994.A.171 (prisoner report), as well as several oral history interviews with camp survivors, for example, Bernard Weinstein (RG-50.002\*0047; 1993.A.0088), Cedomir Markovic (RG-50.030\*0308), and Norman Belfer (RG-50.030\*0367). Other collections, including those relating to the role of the U.S. Army in Melk are held in the NARA, Collections T-990 (Totenbuch des SS-Standortarztes KL Mauthausen), T 83 (Records of Private Austrian, German and Dutch Enterprises), M-1100 (Records of US Army War Crimes Trials, Case 000-5-5-2, *USA v. Ernst Dura, et al.*), M-1191 (Records of US Army War Crimes Trials, Case 000-50-5-6, *USA vs. Hans Joachim Geiger, et al.*), M-1019 (including *USA v. Hans Altfuldisch, et al.*, Case 000-50-5, *USA v. Josef Kattner, et al.*, Case 000-50-5-21), as well as RG 243 (including damage assessments photo intelligence reports, III.1.1835 Melk, USSBS Records, Section 4, European Target Intelligence, and Plant Report on Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, Wälzlagerwerk Steyr, Austria, USSBS Records, Section 1, European Documents, report 53 c/2). In RG 165, Entry 179, Box 376, there are two detailed interrogation reports on SDP dated 28. December 1945 and 16. February 1946.

The YVA holds statements by Dr. Hirsch Simon (O3/3399) and Dr. Alexander Puder (O2/1030). Other documents particularly relating to SDP are held in the IWM in the collections German Underground Installations (CIOS Section Intelligence Division Office, chief engineer, US-FET, Washington, DC, 1945), FD 787/46 (Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, company organization, meetings of boards of directors and working committees . . .), as well as FD 784/46 (Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, Vienna—data on contracts with directors and senior personnel . . ., 1937–1945). Investigations by the ZdL are held in File 419 AR-Z 4/64 at BA-L. Trial documents relating to the Melk subcamp are held in the following archives and collections: LG Wien (VG 5d Vr 211/48, Strafsache gegen Franz Judmann, and VG 12 Vr 5709/47, Strafsache gegen Hermann Schultze), Sta. LG Fulda (Ks 1/60, Strafsache gegen Gottlieb Muzikant), Sta. LG München I (Ks 1/58, Strafsache gegen Wilhelm Reischenbeck), and Sta. Köln (24 Ks 1/66, Strafsache gegen Karl Schulz and Anton Streitwieser). Other descriptions of the camp, some by former prisoners, are to be found in Jean Varnoux, *Sonderschrift über das SS-Arbeitslager Melk (Niederösterreich), Konzentrationslager von Mauthausen* (deutsche Sonderschrift des französischen Originals, 1991); Moshe Ha-Elion, *The Straits of Hell: The Chronicle of a Saloniki Jew in the Nazi Extermination Camps Auschwitz, Mauthausen, Melk, Ebensee* (Cincinnati, OH: Bowman & Cowdy, 2005); Pierre Saint Macary, *Mauthausen, percer l'oubli* (Paris: Harmattan, 2004); Alexander Marton, *186 ha-madregot: korotav shel na'ar Yehudi bama-banot Oshvits, Ma'utha'uzen, Melk ve-Ebenzeb* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999); Jeremia P. Eisenbauer, "Die vergessenen Toten von Melk: Das Melker Konzentrationslager und die Roggendorfer Stollenanlage," *MeM* 146 (July

1984), p. 33; and the DÖW, *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Niederösterreich 1934–1945: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1987).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## PASSAU I (WITH PASSAU III)

Plans were in place by the end of the 1930s to improve the Passau electricity supply by constructing an additional hydroelectric power station on the River Ilz. The proposed site, called Oberilzmühle (Upper Ilz Mill), was handed over to the Arno Fischer Research Institute in May 1942. Arno Fischer, a senior civil servant in Munich, had been active in the Organisation Todt (OT) and was the founder of the aerodynamic research institute named after him. At that time, he was the head of Rhein-Main-Donau AG. With political assistance and technical innovation, Fischer wanted to construct in Passau a new type of underwater power plant, a plant safe from air raids. By the end of the war, the development of the power station had not progressed beyond its infancy. After the war, what had been built underwater was dynamited.

The Passau I camp was established as a Dachau subcamp on October 19, 1942. Only one month later, on November 19, 1942, the administration of the camp, together with the Dachau subcamps St. Lambrecht (men's camp) and the castle Schloss Lind, was taken over by the Mauthausen concentration camp administration.

In addition to working on the construction of the underwater power plant, the prisoners had to clean up Passau after air raids. Another labor detail worked at the saw plant "Upper Ilz Mill." The prisoners also worked in quarrying and on the construction of a road.

Of all the prisoners at Passau I, only 39 prisoners are named, the majority of whom were Polish political prisoners.<sup>1</sup> Initially, Passau I was said to have been comprised of mostly political prisoners. Later it was allegedly to hold "temporary preventive custody" (*Befristete Vorbeugehaft*) prisoners. Prisoner strength is only documented from September 2, 1943, onward. On October 3, 1943, the prisoner numbers climbed from 38 to 88, reaching the highest documented number. Transfers back to the main camp reduced the numbers so that by February 2, 1945, there were 67 prisoners in the camp. On February 3, 1945, 47 prisoners were transferred to the main camp so that only 20 prisoners remained in Passau I. For the month of April 1945, there were 35 prisoners.<sup>2</sup> A letter from the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) to Fischer indicates that 50 of the 70 prisoners in Passau I in September 1944 were employed as skilled construction workers.<sup>3</sup>

On August 10, 1944, three Polish prisoners were shot "trying to escape," and on September 27, 1944, a German political prisoner was shot in "self defense" by camp leader Wilhelm Werner.<sup>4</sup> One witness stated that it was a planned

murder. There is no other evidence of cases of death in the camp.

At the end of April or the beginning of May 1945, the 26th Infantry Division of the U.S. Third Army liberated the camp without a fight. The SS had left the prisoners to themselves. Details on the guards' strength vary considerably: probably the camp was initially guarded by 7 to 8 SS men; later there were 14. Most of the SS were ethnic Germans from Yugoslavia. The camp leader was SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Werner.<sup>5</sup> Werner was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in a Dachau trial. Fischer was sentenced in absentia by a denazification court in Munich to 6 years in jail.

## PASSAU III

There was another camp—Passau III—that was dependent on Passau I. This subdetachment existed from March to May 1945 and was comprised of between 18 and 50 prisoners who worked during the day at the Passau Danube port at Jandelsbrunn for the inland shipping company Bayerischer Lloyd. They loaded and unloaded ships.

**SOURCES** The secondary sources on the Passau I camp are limited. There are few documents, and they contain limited information. Despite this, Elmar W. Eggerer and Anna Elisabeth Rosmus have attempted to write on the camp's history: Elmar W. Eggerer, "'Waldwerke' und 'Oberilzmühle': Die Passauer KZ-Aussenlager und ihr Umfeld," in *Passau in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus. Ausgewählte Fallstudien*, ed. Winfried Becker (Passau, 1999), pp. 527–542; and Anna Elisabeth Rosmus, *Out of Passau: Von einer, die auszog, die Heimat zu Finden* (Basel, 1999).

SS documents that deal with the prisoners and Passau I are very scarce.

A survivor, Johann Kunei, has had his recollections published in "Nationalsozialismus in Passau. Die Inszenierung des Alltags," in *Mahnmal für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus: Dokumentation und Aspekte zur Geschichte des "Dritten Reiches" in Passau*, by Stefan Rammer with Peter Steinbach Jr. and Herbert W. Wurster (Passau, 1996), pp. 107–136. The ASt-Lht holds two further witness statements. Documents from the trial against camp leader Wilhelm Werner are located in NARA, RG 338, Records of US Army Commands, 1942–, Records of Headquarters, US Army Europe (USAREUR), War Crimes Branch, War Crimes Case Files ("Cases Tried"), 1945–1959, Case 000-50-5-5, *USA v. Wilhelm Werner, et al.*

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-M, Data Bank Project: "Recording of all documented prisoners in the Mauthausen Concentration Camp. Databank inquiry regarding prisoners of Passau I subcamp" (project unfinished as of July 30, 2003).

2. Arbeitsberichte des Arbeitsdienstführers, Schutzhaftlager Mauthausen, F/2/15; Rapportbuch Aussenkommandos, Tagesmeldungen from February 17, 1944, to March 15, 1945,

E/6/11; re Mauthausen concentration camp movements April 1945, E/6/7, AG-M.

3. Copy of a letter from WVHA to Arno Fischer, September 28, 1944, AG-M, B/33/2.

4. The book “Unnatürliche Todesfälle,” M/1/9; re Häftlingszugangsbuch der politischen Abteilung. Y/36, AG-M.

5. NARA, RG 338 Case 000-50-5-5, *USA v. Wilhelm Werner, et al.*

## PASSAU II

The construction of the forest factory (*Waldwerke*) and the resultant erection of the Passau II subcamp have to be seen in light of the demand by the Army High Command (OKH) for a massive increase in the production of tank gear boxes. The Zahnradfabrik (Gear Wheel Factory) Friedrichshafen, a subsidiary of Luftschiffbau Zeppelin (Airship Construction Zeppelin), which manufactured gear wheels for heavy trucks and tanks, needed an additional production site for this purpose. The construction of the factory was planned as a cooperative enterprise between the Zahnradfabrik Friedrichshafen and the OKH. The latter, to be precise, the army-owned company Verwertungsgesellschaft für Montanindustrie GmbH (Mining Industry Reprocessing Company, Montan), made available the site; the Zahnradfabrik Friedrichshafen made available the technical equipment and the personnel. The site was a parcel of land on the northern bank of the Danube near Passau. The final phase of construction of the Waldwerke would consist initially of 2,000 workers, growing to between 3,000 and 4,000. Even before the commencement of production in June 1943, the Reich Ministry of Armaments and Munitions had demanded of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) on September 13, 1942, the establishment of a concentration camp at the Waldwerke.<sup>1</sup> However, the Passau II subcamp was not established until March 9, 1944.

The first transport of 100 prisoners from the Mauthausen concentration camp arrived at Passau II on March 9, 1944. On September 12, 1944, the camp recorded its highest number of prisoners—340. Altogether, 353 prisoners were transferred to the Passau II camp. Of these, only 1 would die in the camp. However, 15 prisoners were transferred back to Mauthausen. Most likely those that were transferred back to Mauthausen were seriously ill and could no longer work. It can be concluded from the low death rate that the prison conditions were better than in other subcamps.

Of the 353 prisoners deported to the subcamp, 329 are known by name.<sup>2</sup> The names in turn give a relatively accurate description of the composition of the prisoners: the majority came from Poland (36.2 percent), the Soviet Union (27.6 percent), and France (26 percent). There were smaller groups from Italy (5.7 percent), the German Reich, Spain, and other countries. The majority of prisoners were political prisoners (71.4 percent), and 20.7 percent were “Russian civilian workers.” Another 5.8 percent were Soviet prisoners of war

(POWs). The other categories were “temporary preventive custody” (*Befristete Vorbeugehaft*), “Red Spaniards” (*Rotspanier*), “security custody” (*Sicherheitsverwahrung*), and “Reich Forced Labor” (*Arbeitszwang Reich*).

Ten prisoners tried to escape from the camp. The name of the camp leader, SS-Oberscharführer Vogelsang, is only known because his name was mentioned in a report to the main camp following the escape of a Soviet prisoner on September 14, 1944.<sup>3</sup>

On October 29 and November 7, 1944, 150 and 177 prisoners, respectively, were transferred to the Flossenbürg concentration camp. The Passau II camp was then closed.<sup>4</sup>

**SOURCES** Elmar W. Eggerer has written a history of the camp, “‘Waldwerke’ und ‘Oberilzmühle’: Die Passauer KZ-Aussenlager und ihr Umfeld,” in *Passau in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus: Ausgewählte Fallstudien*, ed. Winfried Becker (Passau, 1999), pp. 527–542.

The prisoners of the Passau II subcamp are relatively well documented in AG-M. Documents on the history of the Passau “Waldwerke” and the Zahnradfabrik Friedrichshafen are said to be held by the Passau Zahnradfabrik but have not been released to researchers. There are a few documents in ASt-Lht.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Letter of the Technisches Amt of the RMfBM to SS-WVHA, Oswald Pohl, September 13, 1942, BA-BNS, 19/1542.

2. AG-M, Data Base Project “Erfassung aller dokumentierten Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen,” Data Base Questionnaire to Prisoners at the Passau II subcamp.

3. AG-M, B/33a/1.

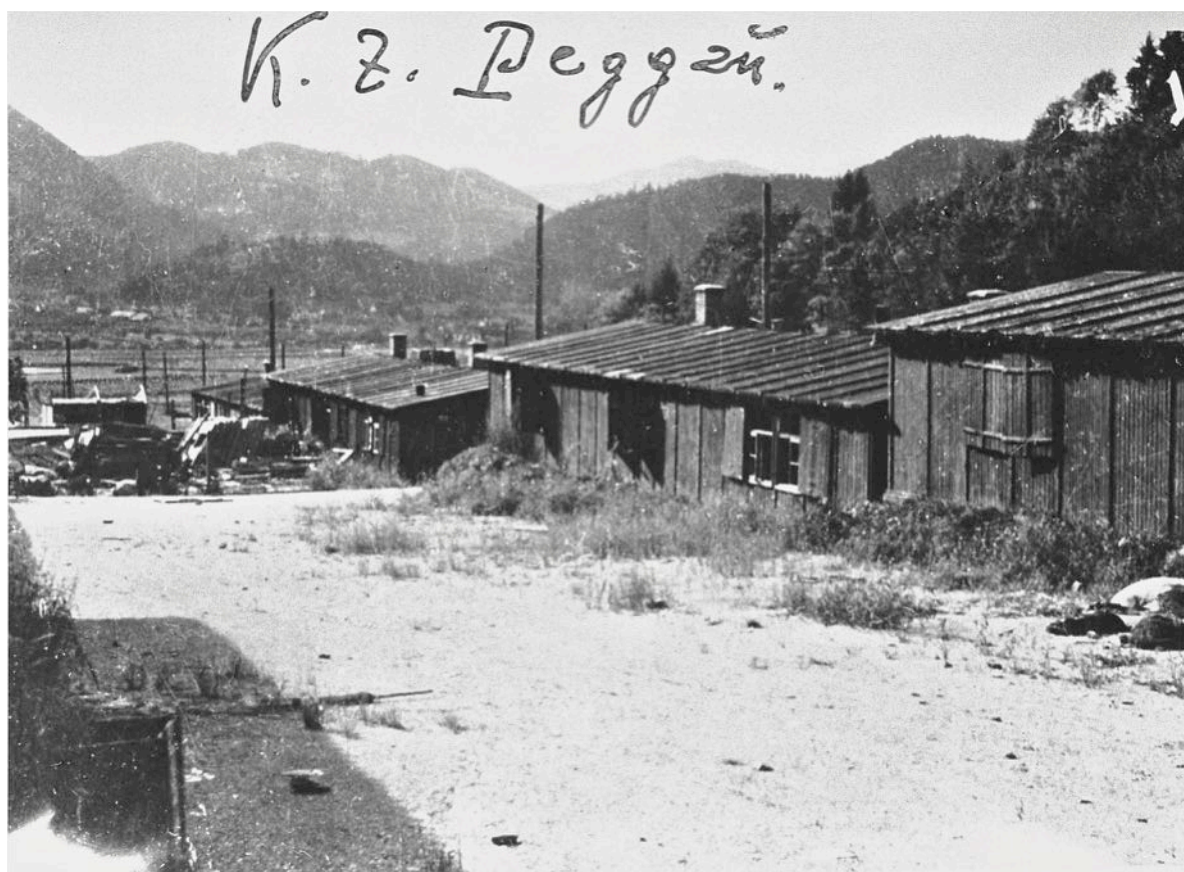
4. Rapportbuch Aussenkommandos, Tagesmeldungen, October 29, 1944, and November 7, 1944, AG-M, E/6/11.

## PEGGAU

The establishment of the Peggau subcamp is connected with the accelerated production of fighter aircraft due to Germany’s inability to prevail in its air war against the Allies. As in Wiener Neudorf, close to Vienna, the construction of a large Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP) aircraft engine factory began in August 1941 on the southern edge of Graz. Daimler-Benz aircraft engines were to be manufactured under license. There was an acute shortage of labor, so—as in all areas of the armaments industry—the Steyr factory in Graz-Thondorf largely used foreign workers. In April 1942, more than half of the Thondorf factory workers were foreign. These forced laborers were accommodated by SDP in the labor camps for Eastern workers, “Murfeld I and II.”

As the “Ostmark” was increasingly under threat of Allied air attacks from the summer of 1943 onward, the armaments





View of the Peggau subcamp of Mauthausen.  
USHMM WS #17597, COURTESY OF DÖW

industry saw itself forced, where feasible, to relocate its most important strategic production sites underground. The Steyr factory in Graz-Thondorf was also to be relocated underground. Following an air raid on the Steyr factory on July 26, 1944, the village of Peggau, about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) in the north from Graz, as well as the finished site at Leibnitz were chosen as suitable locations for the establishment of an underground facility for the manufacture of aircraft engines for the Graz-Thondorf factory. In Peggau, as with most of the underground relocations, concentration camp prisoners were to be used to construct the facility.

The so-called Peggau Wall is a steep mountainside close to Peggau. Several tunnels were excavated in the wall so that parts of Daimler-Benz aircraft engines could be manufactured there, together with parts for tanks and trucks. Each of the tunnels was about 7 meters (23 feet) high, 6 meters (20 feet) wide, and about 200 meters (656 feet) long. There were connecting caverns between each of the six main caverns. The tunnels for SDP were a cooperative enterprise with "ARGE Marmor" (a code word), being a subsidiary of the SS-owned Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke GmbH (German Earth and Stone Works, DESt). The managing director of the Steyr factory, Georg Meindl, had a good relationship with the highest SS functionaries. It was probably for this

reason that prisoners from the concentration camp at Mauthausen were provided.

The first transport of 400 prisoners from the main camp reached Peggau on August 17, 1944.<sup>1</sup> Another transport of 200 prisoners from Mauthausen arrived on September 3, 1944.<sup>2</sup> The number of prisoners thus reached nearly 600.<sup>3</sup> On October 20, 1944, another 100 prisoners were transferred from Leibnitz. As some prisoners had already died in Peggau or had been transferred back to Mauthausen, altogether about 670 people were now imprisoned in Peggau. Additional prisoners were sent to the Peggau subcamp on December 5, 1944 (50 prisoners), December 26, 1944 (30 prisoners), and January 6, 1945 (50 prisoners), all from the subcamp at Leibnitz Graz. Following the dissolution of the Eisenerz camp and the evacuation of its 220 prisoners, the number at Peggau increased again.<sup>4</sup> Another 9 Eisenerz prisoners who had remained behind followed on March 14, 1945,<sup>5</sup> with the result that the camp reached its maximum number of prisoners of 888.

The majority of the Peggau prisoners came from the Soviet Union and Poland. In addition, there were Yugoslavs, Italians, and Frenchmen. They were accommodated in 10 barracks about 1 to 2 kilometers (0.6 to 1.2 miles) from the tunnels where they worked. The site had been expropriated



from the Catholic Vorau Convent. The prisoner-functionaries were selected from among German and Austrian prisoners who wore the green triangle. The Peggau subcamp leader was SS-Untersturmführer Fritz Miroff, who had been sent from the Leibnitz subcamp. Besides him, there were another four to six SS members in Peggau. The remainder of the guards comprised around 15 members of the Municipal Police (Schutzpolizei) and about 80 Ukrainian guards who had deserted from the Wlassow Army to the Wehrmacht. All were under the command of the Revier-Leutnants der Schutzpolizei Franz Weber from Graz.

The prisoners had to march each day to the tunnel factory, thereby passing the periphery of the village of Peggau. The work, for the most part, was the excavation of the caverns, a task that was particularly exhausting. The type of work coupled with the merciless drive set by the guards led to many deaths and injuries. Allegedly, the prisoners would later be directly involved in production. Almost 3,000 workers and more than 1,000 machines had been relocated from Graz-Thondorf to Peggau. The prisoners worked in two shifts each of 12 hours. The severe working conditions were typical for camps such as Peggau. Besides this, the prisoners' survival chances were also diminished by the particularly brutal treatment by the guards. In addition to the working conditions, the victims were shot for "trying to escape"; the guards used this reason as an evasion. Several cases of prisoners being shot are documented in survivors' reports. Survivor Jean Germaneau reported cases in which prisoners were killed in the infirmary with an injection into the heart.

There is one case of an attempted group escape from Peggau: on December 24, 1944, several Soviet prisoners successfully crossed the electrified fence. Their absence was only detected at roll call the following morning. The prisoners were nevertheless caught and forced to stand at attention for 48 hours at the camp fence. They were then driven by the guards onto the electrified fence and killed.

The Mauthausen concentration camp roll-call book gives evidence that between the date that Peggau was established to the middle of March 1945 at least 63 prisoners died in Peggau. Initially, the dead were cremated in the Graz crematorium. Some 117 other prisoners, the majority probably because they were ill or physically weak, were sent back to the main camp.<sup>6</sup> Toward the end, when the number of dead dramatically increased, a mass grave was dug close to the camp. After the war, 138 bodies were exhumed from it (82 would remain in the grave, on which later was placed a tombstone). Altogether it can be assumed that between 150 and 200 prisoners died in Peggau alone.

The Eisenerz work detachment was transferred almost in toto to the Peggau camp at the beginning of March 1945. Peggau was evacuated on April 2, 1945. Before the evacuation march began, 15 prisoners who could no longer walk were shot in the tunnels. The remaining 850 prisoners were driven at first on foot to Bruck an der Mur. There, they were loaded onto cattle wagons and transported to Mauthausen, where

they arrived on April 7, 1945.<sup>7</sup> Another 21 prisoners died during the evacuation, and 9 were officially recorded as successfully escaping.<sup>8</sup>

After the war, the camp leader Miroff was sentenced to death by hanging by a U.S. military court in Dachau.<sup>9</sup> Weber, the commander of the guards, was tried before a People's Court (Volksgericht) in Graz and sentenced to 20 years in prison.<sup>10</sup>

**SOURCES** Peggau has been the subject of little attention. Barbara Stelzl has touched on the Peggau subcamp in an essay on National Socialist camps in Graz and its surroundings, "Lager in Graz: Zur Unterbringung ausländischer Zivilarbeiter, Kriegsgefangener und KZ-Häftlinge 1938–1945," in *Graz in der NS-Zeit 1938–1945*, ed. Stefan Karner (Graz, 1998), pp. 353–369. Anita Farkas wrote her dissertation on Mauthausen subcamps in the Styria, "Kollektives Gedächtnis und Erinnerungsbedarf in der Steiermark. Auf den Spuren der Erinnerung an die Konzentrationslager Aflenz, Peggau und Schloss Lind" (Ph.D. diss., Klagenfurt, 2001). The results of the research are also published in the article "Über den 'Erinnerungsbedarf' an die Konzentrations-Nebenlager von Mauthausen in der Steiermark," *Schtl* 1:105–106 (2002): 62–78. Anita Farkas has recently published a work on the culture of memorial sites with emphasis on Peggau as an example: "Sag mir, wer die Toten sind!" *Personalisierung des Opfergedenkens—ein Beitrag zur Gedenkstättenarbeit in der Steiermark am Beispiel der NS-Opfer von Peggau* (Klagenfurt, 2002).

The AG-M and the IPN hold primary but scattered sources on the Peggau subcamp—mostly lists of names, transport lists, and roll-call reports but also interviews with survivors. The files relating to the trial against Fritz Miroff are in NARA; those against Franz Weber are in the LG Graz. The underground relocation plans of SDP are to be found in the files of the RmfRK held in BA-B. For testimonies, worth mentioning is Jean Germaneau's "Konzentrationslager Peggau (Peggau Concentration Camp)," which appeared as an attachment to *BAM* 210 (1982): 4–37.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Transport List, August 17, 1944, AG-M, Y/45.
2. Transport List, September 3, 1944, AG-M, Y/45.
3. Rapportbuch Aussenkommandos, AG-M, E/6/11.
4. All details are from Rapportbuch Aussenkommandos, AG-M, E/6/11.
5. Transport List, March 15, 1945, AG-M, Y/45.
6. Rapportbuch Aussenkommandos, AG-M, Memorial E/6/11.
7. Meldungen der Lagerschreibstube über Häftlingsbewegungen während der Evakuierungsmärsche from April 9, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.
8. Meldungen der Lagerschreibstube über Häftlingsbewegungen während der Evakuierungsmärsche from April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/13.
9. *USA v. Eduard Dlouby, et al.*, Case 000-50-5-14, NARA RG 153.
10. LG Graz, File Franz Weber 1962/727.

### REDL-ZIPF ("SCHLIER")

The subcamp in the Upper Austrian town of Redl-Zipf had the code name "Schlier." It is connected with the acceleration of production of the "miracle weapons" that were the result of the ever-increasing threat of German defeat. Beginning in June 1943, work began on the construction by concentration camp prisoners of a factory for the serial production of the so-called A4 (Aggregat 4) rockets in Wiener Neustadt. However, at the end of August 1943, the decision was made, due to the increasing air bombardment on factories where the A4 rockets were produced, to relocate underground and to separate the areas of research and development from production. The serial production of the A4 rockets would be centralized in the underground facilities of the Mittelwerk GmbH in Nordhausen. Simultaneously, a subterranean rocket research facility would be constructed in Ebensee.

As a result of the relocations, it was decided on August 30, 1943, to transfer the production of liquid oxygen required for the rocket development program from the "Rax Factory" in Wiener Neustadt to the brewery cellars at Redl-Zipf. This required renovation work, which included an expansion of the facility. The work at the cellars was managed by the SS-Sonderstab Kammler. Work commenced within a few days after the decision was made to begin. As with most of the Kammler projects, concentration camp prisoners were required to do the work.

The first documented transfer of 68 prisoners from the Mauthausen concentration camp arrived on October 11, 1943, at the Redl-Zipf subcamp. Several more prisoner transports from the main camp and the Wiener Neustadt subcamp quickly followed in short intervals. Prisoners were not only busy working for the dummy company Steinbruchverwertungs GmbH, Betrieb Schlier (Quarry Processing Ltd., Schlier Branch). Behind the Steinbruch company were the Army High Command (OKH) and the Armaments Ministry. Prisoners also worked for, among other places, Mayreder & Co., Ferro Betonit Werke AG, Rella, and the Fiebinger engineering office, which was responsible for the preparations for the excavation of the underground tunnels. The prisoners were primarily used to expand the brewery cellars, establish a bunker to hold the testing equipment for a rocket propulsion chamber, and construct a transformer bunker and a connecting railway line. Plans were also prepared to use concentration camp prisoners to produce fuel and to inspect the rocket propulsion chambers.

The construction of the facility was delayed by accidents in the factory, partly caused by prisoners' sabotage. An explosion in one of the tunnels on February 28, 1944, resulted in the death of 14 civilian engineers and technicians working at the Schlier factory. None of the prisoners were injured or killed. A Slovenian prisoner was suspected of being the saboteur; he was murdered by the Gestapo while being interrogated.

There was another large explosion on August 29, 1944, when an oxygen tank blew up; 28 people were killed, all of

whom were civilian engineers or skilled tradesmen. Investigations could not determine whether this was an act of sabotage or an accident.

During this period of expansion of the underground facility, the living conditions in the camp were the worst possible. The death rate in Redl-Zipf was at its highest between December 1943 and February 1944. The very heavy labor in the tunnels filled the infirmary with the wounded and seriously ill. The infirmary was under the command of SS-Medic (Sanitätsdienstgrad) Christian Wohlrab. As in many other subcamps, there are documented cases where the SS killed those prisoners from the infirmary designated as "incurable" by means of a benzene injection into the heart.

The highest number of prisoners in the Redl-Zipf subcamp was more than 2,000, recorded in the middle of December 1943.<sup>1</sup> The largest national groups were from France, Italy, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Spain (these included prisoners from the so-called Caesar detachment from Vöcklabruck, who were initially transferred to Ternberg and later to Redl-Zipf via the Mauthausen main camp). Due to the high death rate and the transfer of prisoners back to the main camp as well as large transports of prisoners to the Ebensee subcamp (on May 11, 1944, about 499 prisoners were transferred to Ebensee),<sup>2</sup> the prisoner numbers had fallen by the middle of May 1944 to about 600.

Following the commission of the fuel factory in the summer of 1944, the prisoner numbers were reduced to about 160 as a first step (a report from June 5, 1944, states that there were 163 prisoners in the Redl-Zipf subcamp, 500 fewer than on June 1). At the end of 1944, there were again about 1,000 prisoners in the camp, however.<sup>3</sup> These remaining prisoners were mainly involved in production. There are many indications that from this point on the subcamp living conditions in Schlier dramatically improved.

The camp command was again changed in connection with the reduction in prisoner numbers. The first leader was Georg Bachmayer. He was succeeded in November 1943 by Karl Schöpferle, who was later transferred to the newly established Linz III subcamp. On June 3, 1944, Alfons Bendele took command of the Redl-Zipf subcamp.

As a result of prisoner transfers to the Gusen and Ebensee subcamps as well as the Mauthausen main camp, prisoner numbers at the Redl-Zipf subcamp had fallen by April 1945 to about 330.<sup>4</sup> Toward the end of the war and as a result of the collapse of the Eastern Front, prisoners from the so-called Operation Bernhard, also known as the Forgery Detail, were transferred from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp via the Mauthausen main camp to Redl-Zipf. It was only on April 13, 1945, after the prisoners had been in the Mauthausen camp for several weeks, that the 142 Jewish prisoners in this detachment became the responsibility of the Mauthausen main camp.<sup>5</sup> The detachment was sent to the Redl-Zipf subcamp, where it resumed production of, inter alia, counterfeit pound banknotes.

The order to evacuate the Redl-Zipf subcamp was finally given on May 3, 1945. At this point, there were about 470

prisoners remaining in the camp.<sup>6</sup> Some of the prisoners were evacuated by truck and others on foot to the Ebensee subcamp. Several prisoners were able to escape on the march to Ebensee.

The subcamp's register of deaths, which was protected from destruction, provides a victims' ledger for the Redl-Zipf subcamp.<sup>7</sup> There are 266 entries (however, it should be remembered that large numbers of prisoners who were no longer capable of working were regularly sent back to Mauthausen; many of them died from illness or wasted away in the main camp).

Some of the principal perpetrators at the Redl-Zipf subcamp were tried in various trials before the U.S. military court in Dachau. According to statements by former prisoner Paul Le Caër, the last camp leader, Bendele, was handed over to the Americans by the prisoners. He and his predecessor Schöpferle were sentenced to death in Dachau.<sup>8</sup> In two other trials the medical orderly Wohlrab, who was accused of murdering many prisoners, and former roll-call leader Franz Kofler both received the death sentence.<sup>9</sup> The first camp leader in Redl-Zipf, Bachmayer, who had been at the Mauthausen main camp since March 1940 and was the first Schutzhaftlagerführer there (he also was responsible for the construction of Redl-Zipf and Ebensee), committed suicide in May 1945. Before he committed suicide, he killed his family.

**SOURCES** References to the Redl-Zipf subcamp and its connections with the rocket development program in the "Ostmark" are to be found in Florian Freund's work on the Ebensee subcamp, *Arbeitslager Zement: Das Konzentrationslager Ebensee und die Raketenrüstung* (Vienna, 1989); as well as in the work by Freund and Bertrand Perz on the "Rax factory" in Wiener Neustadt, *Das KZ in der Serbenhalle: Zur Kriegsindustrie in Wiener Neustadt* (Vienna, 1987).

Original sources on the Redl-Zipf subcamp are scattered among several archives, including IPN (transport lists) and the AG-M (among them, records of interviews of survivors). The AG-M holds the official memorial record prepared by a former prisoner of "Detachment Bernhard," Kurt Lewinsky. The original Redl-Zipf subcamp death register was handed by former prisoner Paul Le Caër to the French Camp Association. It is held in the AN. The files of the military proceedings against Schöpferle, Wohlrab, and Kofler are to be found in NARA. The memoirs of former French prisoner Paul Le Caër are particularly important for the history of the Redl-Zipf subcamp: *Schlier: Redl-Zipf 1943–1945* (Paris, 1984); Paul Le Caër and Etienne Le Caër, *K.L. Mauthausen: Les cicatrices de la memoire* (Paris, 1996); Paul Le Caër, *Ein junger Europäer in Mauthausen 1943–1945* (Vienna, 2002). In 1945, former prisoner and camp secretary in Redl-Zipf, Vaclav Vaclavik, published his memoirs in Czech, *Milenci SS Smrti* (Pilsen, 1945). The memoirs of Adolf Burger, a former member of the "Bernhard Detachment," are important for the history of this detachment: *Unternehmen Bernhard: Die Geldfälscherwerkstatt im KZ Sachsenhausen* (Berlin, 1992).

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Arbeitsberichte des Arbeitsdienstführers KLM, AG-M, F/2/15.
2. Rapportbuch Aussenkommandos, AG-M, E/6/11.
3. All details come from the Rapportbuch, AG-M, E/6/11.
4. Ibid.
5. AG-M, B/36/5.
6. Verzeichnis der Bewegungen im K.L. Mauthausen, April 1945, AG-M, E/6/7.
7. A copy is to be found in AG-M, Collection B/36/15.
8. *USA v. Hans Bergerboff, et al.*, Case 000-50-5-1, NARA RG 153
9. *USA v. Josef Kattner, et al.*, Case 000-50-5-21; and *US v. Franz Kofler, et al.*, Case 000-50-5-23; both in NARA RG 153.

## SCHLOSS LIND

The Schloss Lind subcamp is closely connected to the camps at the St. Lambrecht Monastery, which was also administered by Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht (Admont and St. Lambrecht Manor Administration), which was under the direction of Hubert Erhart.

The prisoners at the Schloss Lind subcamp did agricultural and construction work. They were accommodated on the third floor of the castle. There were also French and Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) at Schloss Lind. For a Mauthausen subcamp, the prison conditions at Schloss Lind were relatively bearable. This in part was due to the small size of the camp. Working on a farm also meant that there was sufficient food for the prisoners.

The Schloss Lind subcamp was established on June 22, 1942, when 20 prisoners were transferred from the Dachau concentration camp. The subcamp was administered by Dachau until November 19, 1942. On November 20, it, together with the subcamps Passau I and St. Lambrecht (men's camp), came under the administration of the Mauthausen concentration camp. At Schloss Lind there was also presumably a change in the guards, which resulted in a considerable increase in the mistreatment of the prisoners and in a deterioration of the detention conditions.

Between September 1943 and April 1945, there were 19 or 20 prisoners at any one time in the subcamp at Schloss Lind.<sup>1</sup> The names of 24 of the Schloss Lind prisoners are known,<sup>2</sup> 19 of whom appear on a list dated November 26, 1942, of prisoners who had been transferred from Dachau to Mauthausen.<sup>3</sup> Of those whose names are known, 9 were Poles, 6 came from the German Reich, 4 were Spaniards, 3 were Czechs, and 1 was French. Other than the 4 Red Spaniards (Rotspaniern), all were categorized as "protective custody" prisoners.

It is not known if any prisoners died at the camp. As part of events that took place at the male camp at St. Lambrecht on July 5, 1943, three prisoners from Schloss Lind, two Poles and a German, were transferred to the concentration camp at Gusen.<sup>4</sup> Three Red Spaniards from St. Lambrecht were transferred to Schloss Lind to replace them. There were then



occasional transfers of individual prisoners back to the Mauthausen concentration camp.

On May 3, 1945, Erhart is said to have given the order to evacuate the prisoners to Mauthausen. However, due to the rapid advance of the Allied forces, the prisoners on the evacuation march had to return to the camp. Schloss Lind was liberated on May 5 by members of the Austrian Freedom Movement (Österreichischen Freiheitsbewegung). British units reached the camp on either May 11 or 12.

Survivors reported that at Schloss Lind there was only a small SS detachment. When the camp was administered from Dachau, it was said that an SS-Unterscharführer named Fritz was in charge. When the camp was administered by Mauthausen, there were presumably three different camp leaders, the last being SS-Unterscharführer Josef Schmidt, described as someone who “brutally beat” the prisoners.

**SOURCES** Dietmar Seiler has published a detailed description of the camp at Schloss Lind, “Abgelegen: Anmerkungen zum KZ-Aussenlager Schloss Lind,” in *AEIOU: Drausst bist du, drausst bist du noch lange nicht . . .*, ed. Aramis (pseud.) (Neumarkt, n.d. [1996]), pp. 47–65; and “Die SS im Benediktinerstift: Aspekte der KZ-Aussenlager St. Lambrecht und Schloss Lind” (Graz, 1994). A short history of the subcamp is also to be found in a work by Barbara Distel, “KZ-Kommandos an idyllischen Orten: Dachauer Aussenlager in Österreich,” *DaHe* 15 (1999): 54–65. Anita Farkas’s dissertation focuses on the culture of memory in Styria, “‘Kollektives Gedächtnis und Erinnerungsbedarf in der Steiermark’ Auf den Spuren der Erinnerung an die Konzentrationslager Aflenz, Peggau und Schloss Lind.” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Klagenfurt, 2001).

The Oral History Archive at the IfWSg holds an interview with former prisoner Tadeusz Korczak. Dietmar Seiler’s private collection on Schloss Lind holds, among other things, the reports of two camp survivors.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Work Report of the Work Leader, Schutzhaftlager Mauthausen, F/2/15; Roll Call Book Work Detachment, Daily Reports, February 17, 1944, to March 15, 1945, E/6/11; Movements in Mauthausen concentration camp April 1945, E/6/7—all in AG-M.

2. AG-M, Data Bank Project: “Recording of all documented prisoners in the Mauthausen Concentration Camp. Databank inquiry regarding prisoners of Schloss Lind subcamp” (project unfinished as of July 30, 2003); as well as variation report for July 5, 1943, Camp Record Office, Mauthausen concentration camp, IPN, KZ Mauthausen 26, k. 89.

3. Dachau concentration camp list for Lind subcamp: St. Lambrecht and Passau transferred 124 prisoners to Mauthausen, Camp Record Office, Mauthausen concentration camp, November 26, 1942, IPN, KZ Mauthausen 7, k. 244–246.

4. Variation Report, July 5, 1943, Camp Record Office, Mauthausen concentration camp, IPN, KZ Mauthausen 26, k. 89–90.

## SCHLOSS MITTERSILL, SCHLOSS LANNACH

As part of the massive expansion of the concentration camp system, the Ravensbrück female concentration camp established over 60 subcamps; 2 of these subcamps were established in the Ostmark (Austria). One of them, established in 1944, was located in Mittersill, Salzburg.

In Schloss Mittersill, the SS established a research institute called the Reich Institute Sven Hedin. This institute required labor, and a prisoner work detachment consisting of Jehovah’s Witnesses was sent from Ravensbrück. The institute was part of the Ahnenerbe association, which specialized in Asian research with emphasis on pseudoscientific studies on race and ethnology. The Ahnenerbe’s goal was to prove the superiority of the Germanic race and culture. In 1942, war shortages and its poor scientific reputation caused the Ahnenerbe’s activities to be suspended, and Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler’s personal staff took over control of the association. The Sven Hedin Institute in Mittersill was involved not only in race research but also in pseudo-archeological research. Himmler demanded female concentration camp prisoners from Ravensbrück. In addition, two male prisoners from the Bernau penitentiary and two female Ukrainian forced laborers were requisitioned to work at the Schloss Mittersill subcamp.<sup>1</sup>

A female prisoner detachment of 15 Jehovah’s Witnesses was transferred on March 24, 1944, from the Ravensbrück main camp to Mittersill.<sup>2</sup> All the female prisoners were accommodated in Schloss Mittersill. A 52-year-old female SS overseer accompanied the transport. She would be responsible for security inside the subcamp. There were also 13 male SS guards allocated to the subcamp; they were commanded by SS-Hauptscharführer Geer. The camp commandant had his quarters in a Mittersill inn. The remainder of the SS guards were most probably accommodated in the castle.

A prisoner subdetachment, consisting of nine female Jehovah’s Witnesses, was transferred from Mittersill to Styria a few days after the establishment of the subcamp at Schloss Mittersill. At the end of March 1944, the SS established at Schloss Lannach, approximately 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) to the southwest of Graz, a Schloss Mittersill subcamp. The transport to this new subcamp consisted of nine female prisoners, the SS female warden and an SS-Untersturmführer Dr. Vareschi, and one other SS member. Six German female Jehovah’s Witnesses remained at Mittersill.<sup>3</sup>

Schloss Lannach was leased by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). Here there was a plant genetics department for research and teaching. Its main task was the development of heat- and drought-resistant grains to be used by the settlements in the east. Furthermore, the department was preoccupied with the development of a particular type of plant that could be used for cooking oil.<sup>4</sup> In addition to the 9 female concentration camp prisoners, there were also 17 prisoners of war (POWs) who were used as forced laborers at Schloss Lannach.<sup>5</sup>



At 45 years, the average age of the female prisoners at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach was relatively high. When the camp was established in 1944, the youngest female prisoner was age 32 and the eldest was almost 60. Four of the Jehovah's Witnesses had behind them long years of imprisonment and had already been held in early concentration camps such as Moringen and Lichtenburg.<sup>6</sup> The prisoners included 12 Germans, the largest national grouping. There were 2 female Poles and 2 female Jehovah's Witnesses from the so-called Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (present-day Czech Republic). The female prisoners were used for cleaning and other domestic duties. They also worked in the fields and the gardens.<sup>7</sup> As the women lived and worked mostly within the castle walls, they had almost no contact with the local population.

The female prisoners were apparently fed from the common SS kitchen. There is an invoice for food for the prisoners from May 1944.<sup>8</sup> The female Jehovah's Witnesses probably received food that had a higher nutritional value than prisoners received in other concentration camps.

Historian Andreas Baumgartner provides three explanations why the prisoners received increased rations at the rate of 2 Reichsmark (RM) per day—the costs may have been higher than those of the large kitchens in the concentration camps or the Jehovah's Witnesses in fact received better and more costly meals at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach. The most probable explanation is that the camp administration in fact calculated a rate of 2 RM per day per prisoner but only used part of that for the prisoners and pocketed the rest.

What is known about the female prisoners' treatment is that there were neither killings nor deaths in the Schloss Mittersill or Schloss Lannach subcamps. There was practically no change in prisoner numbers. Baumgartner states that there was probably an exchange of prisoners whereby the eldest Jehovah's Witness was returned to the main camp and a Jehovah's Witness from Ravensbrück was sent to Schloss Lannach as her replacement.<sup>9</sup> The woman sent back to the main camp survived more than five and one-half years in the concentration camps and was liberated in Ravensbrück. Another female Jehovah's Witness was transferred from the Schloss Mittersill subcamp to Mauthausen. She almost did not survive her time in Mauthausen but was finally liberated.<sup>10</sup>

The living conditions in the camps at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach are estimated to have been much better than in the female concentration camps at Ravensbrück and Mauthausen.

Both subcamps, originally part of the Ravensbrück camp system, were taken over by the Mauthausen camp for administrative reasons in September 1944.<sup>11</sup> This organizational measure did not result in any personnel changes. There are also no reports of any changes in the guards.

In the final phase of the Third Reich, obviously no consideration was given to the evacuation of the camps at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach, because of the long distance from the Mauthausen main camp and the collapsing trans-

port network. The female prisoners at Schloss Mittersill were liberated by American troops on May 8, 1945. A U.S. infantry division pushing east from the Tyrol in the direction of Pinzgau, where Mittersill is located, liberated the Jehovah's Witnesses at the Schloss Mittersill subcamp.

The women at Schloss Lannach were liberated a little later. On May 9, a motorized unit of the Red Army reached the area to the west of Graz, where Schloss Lannach is located. The guards had most probably fled by this time.

Details on the SS guards are lacking. There was only a general investigation into acts of homicide in the Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach camps. The investigation did not proceed due to a lack of evidence.<sup>12</sup>

**SOURCES** A scholarly publication on these subcamps was written by Andreas Baumgartner, *Die vergessenen Frauen von Mauthausen: Die weiblichen Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen und ihre Geschichte* (Vienna, 1997), which forms the basis of this essay. Some details were taken from a work by Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen* (Vienna, 1995). Hermann Kaienburg's detailed study *Die Wirtschaft der SS* (Berlin, 2003) contains details about how Schloss Lannach fitted into the SS economy.

Archival sources used by Baumgartner mostly come from the AG-M and from Baumgartner's private archive. A collection of data relating to the Jehovah's Witnesses who were imprisoned in these two subcamps is to be found in GAZJ. There are few documents in AG-R. Material on the SS economy in relation to Schloss Lannach is to be found in the BA-B. The BA-L (formerly ZdL) holds a report on possible criminal acts in the subcamps at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach.

Anita Farkas  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-M, K4e.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. BA-B, NS 19-773, NS 2583.
5. BA-B, NS 3-722.
6. GAZJ, Collection KZ Mittersill/ KZ Lannach.
7. BA-B, NS 3-722.
8. AG-M, K4e.
9. AG-M, K5/6.
10. GAZJ, Collection KZ Mittersill/ KZ Lannach.
11. AG-M, K5/6.
12. BA-L, B 162 AR 6901606.

## ST. ÄGYD AM NEUWALDE

The St. Ägyd am Neuwalde subcamp was located in the village of St. Ägyd am Neuwalde in southern Niederösterreich (Lower Austria; until 1945: Reichsgau Niederdonau). It was opened on November 2, 1944, and closed on April 1, 1945, according to historian Hans Maršálek (or according to the International Tracing Service [ITS], on April 4, 1945).

Usually, this camp is seen in connection with the Kraftfahrtechnische Lehranstalt der Waffen-SS (Motor Vehicle

Technical Education Institute [SS], KTL), which had its headquarters in Vienna. But Bertrand Perz argues that the employment of the inmates could perhaps also be seen in connection with a larger construction project such as the erection of a production site for car engines, a giant facility for the production and storage of fuel, or a production site for V-weapon components. Whatever project was planned, the isolated location of St. Ägyd, hidden deeply in the mountains of Lower Austria, would have provided ideal conditions. However, due to the advancing front line, none of these plans was ever realized, and until April 1945 the prisoners were only used to construct the camp, to expand a cavern, and to prepare the planned construction work. Probably some inmates were indeed employed by the KTL to maintain and repair truck engines. Other employers of prisoners from the St. Ägyd camp were the companies Schmitt & Junk (a construction company from Munich) and the Stephansdach Holzbau GmbH, which operated a sawmill and a carpenter shop.

The camp was located on a property that had been confiscated from the Catholic Church in the summer of 1944. It consisted of two barracks for the inmates, as well as some administrative and technical buildings, and was surrounded by barbed wire and watchtowers. Next to the camp, there were a number of barracks in which the guards were accommodated. They consisted of about 30 to 40 Volksdeutsche SS men. The camp commander was SS-Hauptscharführer Willi Auerswald, who had earlier been on duty at the Steyr-Münichholz camp. The roll-call leader (Rapportführer) was Anton Perschl.

On November 2, 1944, the first 300 prisoners arrived. More than half of them were Poles; the others were Yugoslavians, Soviets, and Germans. Of this group, 125 were considered skilled laborers, and 14 were assigned to be prisoner-functionaries. Due to the severe work and living conditions in the subcamp, there was a high fluctuation of inmates. Repeatedly, prisoners from St. Ägyd were sent back to Mauthausen. Until January 8, the number of inmates dropped to 268—about 10 percent of the inmates had died within the first two months of the camp's existence, and some had been sent back to the main camp. On January 8, more than 90 prisoners who were incapable of working were sent back to Mauthausen; on February 20, 50 more. On February 21, 184 inmates were brought from Mauthausen, mostly Soviets but also Italians, Poles, and Germans. Out of 497 inmates that had been transferred in total to St. Ägyd, about 46 died.

The 391 remaining prisoners were evacuated on April 1. They had to walk to the railway station in St. Ägyd and were taken by train to St. Pölten. From there, they walked to Krems an der Donau and continued by train to Mauthausen. On April 4, 1945, 297 prisoners arrived there; 4 had died.

Camp commander Willi Auerswald was sentenced to death in the Dachau Trials. In 1948, his sentence was reduced to life, then early in the 1950s to 10 years of imprisonment. Anton Perschl was sentenced in Vienna in 1952 to seven months of imprisonment.

**SOURCES** A detailed description of the camp by Bertrand Perz can be found in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 426–429. A further description can be found by Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen. Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), p. 77. For more information, see Christian Rabl, “Vergessen oder verdrängt? Das Mauthausen-Aussenkommando St. Ägyd am Neuwalde und seine Rolle im NS-Lagersystem” (Ph.D. diss., University of Vienna, 2006); and Hans Heppner and Friedrich Enk, *Chronik der Marktgemeinde St. Ägyd am Neuwalde* (St. Ägyd, 1998). Also see the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:183. This camp is also listed in “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1842.

Files on the subcamp St. Ägyd am Neuwalde are located in the AG-M under call numbers B/60/11 and B/42/01 (Nebenlager St. Ägyd am Neuwalde: Lage- und Höhenplan).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## STEYR-MÜNICHHOLZ

The ball-bearing factory Münichholz, “one of the most important specialist industries for German air armaments,” according to Hans Maršálek, was located in the Münichholz district of the city of Steyr in Oberösterreich (Upper Austria) during World War II.<sup>1</sup> Guidance equipment and later aircraft engines were produced in the facility. The rolling mill in Steyr-Münichholz had been founded in 1941 and quickly became the third-largest producer of ball bearings in the German Reich; almost half of the labor force consisted of male and female forced laborers from all European countries. The rolling mill belonged to Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP).

By no later than September 1938, the city of Steyr had close relations with the nearby Mauthausen concentration camp. As Karl-Heinz Rauscher states, from that time the corpses of prisoners who died in Mauthausen were cremated in the Steyr crematorium. Until 1945, victims of Mauthausen and its subcamps comprised 86 percent of all people cremated at the Steyr crematorium.

From the end of 1941, prisoners from Mauthausen were required to work for SDP. At first they were sent on a daily basis to Münichholz on buses and later on trains, but this approach turned out not to be efficient enough for the SDP managers. According to Rauscher, from January 1942, following the initiative of the managing director of the SDP, Meindl, prisoners were required to construct a temporary barracks camp in Steyr-Münichholz that was to accommodate Mauthausen prisoners who were to work in the SDP's new aircraft engine factory. From January 1942 on, about 300 inmates, the majority of them Spaniards, worked on erecting this camp. It was intended that permanent accommodation would be the Steyr-Garsten prison. However, due to political intrigue, the

prison was not made available for the concentration camp inmates. The result was that on March 14, 1943, the temporary camp in Steyr-Münichholz was opened as the new Mauthausen subcamp. The camp consisted of six accommodation barracks, an infirmary, stores barracks, toilet barracks, kitchen, one barracks for the camp command, and one for the guards.

Not only the SDP but also the Steyr community benefited from the prisoners' labor. Prisoners were used to construct the camp and various air-raid defense buildings, to build aircraft engines and perform quality control on them, to produce ball bearings, and to assemble aircraft engines and tank components. They worked in two 12-hour shifts. The city of Steyr used the prisoners in building streets, cellars, and bunkers. Initially there were 300 male prisoners in the camp. By the end of February 1944, there were 1,022 prisoners, and by the end of 1944, about 2,000 prisoners. Rauscher states that the prisoners were mostly of Russian, Yugoslav, and Polish nationality. In Steyr-Münichholz, there were also Spanish International Brigadists and French resistance fighters. From fall 1944 on, there were also Jewish prisoners in the camp. Otto Heess was the camp commander from August 27, 1943, to May 6, 1945. The roll-call leader (Rapportführer) was Willi Auerswald.

After reviewing the city of Steyr's record of the number of cremations, Rauscher estimates the number of prisoners who died in the Steyr subcamp or who were returned to Mauthausen as "unable to work" (*arbeitsunfähig*) and probably murdered there as 900. Several prisoners died while trying to escape, while others—with the help of the local Münichholz parish—appeared to have succeeded. During a heavy air raid on Steyr on April 2, 1944, prisoners were killed. Even before that raid, the ball-bearing factory had been repeatedly bombed, as, for example, on February 23 and 24, 1944.

A group of prisoners from the camp Wiener Neustadt arrived in the camp on April 9, 1945. A few days later, these prisoners and a first group of prisoners from the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp marched to Gusen; those who could not walk were taken to Mauthausen and murdered. These measures reduced the almost 2,000 prisoners to around 1,200. Evacuation marches from other camps meant that the last officially recorded number of prisoners in the camp at the end of April 1945 was 2,918, but when the camp was liberated on May 5, 1945, there were 3,090 prisoners.

A number of postwar trials dealt with events at the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp. For killing an inmate, Czech SS guard Franz Kautny was sentenced to death in a case that dealt with crimes committed at the Mauthausen main camp and its subcamps. Heess was sentenced to life in prison; Auerswald (who later became the camp commander in St. Ägyd), to death by hanging. The sentence was later reduced to 10 years of imprisonment. The Austrian inmate Franz Steurer who had been the block elder of Block 4 in Münichholz was sentenced to a life term in a penitentiary.

**SOURCES** Bertrand Perz is the author of a description of the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara

Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 437–440. A detailed and comprehensive description of the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp is by Karl-Heinz Rauscher, *Steyr im Nationalsozialismus: Politische, militärische und soziale Strukturen* (Gnas: Weishaupt-Verlag, 2003), pp. 197–202. On p. 196, the author describes the long history of the relationships between the city of Steyr and the Mauthausen concentration camp, which predated the camp. Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), pp. 7, 9, 77, describes the Steyr-Münichholz camp. Further references to the subcamp are to be found in Florian Freund and Bertrand Perz, *Das KZ in der Serbenhalle: Zur Kriegsproduktion in Wiener Neustadt* (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1987); Christian Bernadac, *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976); Bertrand Perz, "Der Arbeitseinsatz im KZ Mauthausen," in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen, 1998), pp. 533–557; Perz, "Steyr-Münichholz. Ein Konzentrationslager der Steyr-Daimler-Puch A.G.," *JdÖW* (1989), pp. 52–61; Perz, "Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager in Linz," in *Nationalsozialismus in Linz*, ed. Fritz Mayrhofer and Walter Schuster (Linz, 2001), 2:1041–1094; Perz, "Politisches Management im Wirtschaftskonzern. Georg Meindl und die Rolle des Staatskonzerns Steyr-Daimler-Puch bei der Verwirklichung der NS-Wirtschaftsziele in Österreich," in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 1996), pp. 95–112; David Wingate Pike, *Spaniards in the Holocaust: Mauthausen, the Horror on the Danube* (London, 2000); Martina Schröck, *Vom Spanischen Bürgerkrieg ins Konzentrationslager: Die republikanischen Spanier im KZ Mauthausen* (Passau, 1996); Waltraud Neuhauser-Pfeiffer and Karl Ramsmaier, *Vergessene Spuren: Die Geschichte der Juden in Steyr* (Linz: Edition Sandkorn, 1993); Helmut Retzl, "Sadismus und qualvoller Tod," *ABSS*, March 9, 1988; the published dissertation of Gisela Rabitsch, *Die Konzentrationslager in Österreich 1938–1945: Überblick und Geschehen* (Vienna, 1967); and *Konzentrationslager Melk: Begleitbroschüre zur ständigen Ausstellung* (Vienna, 1992). See also the report of former inmate Josef Felsberger, "Erlebnisse meiner Schutzhaft im Konzentrationslager Mauthausen (Münichholz, Gusen I), dated Dec. 13, 1945; the radio feature "Ehemalige KZ-Häftlinge erzählen (DöW, 1803); and a video documentation from 2001 by Leo Weidinger, *Das KZ-Nebenlager Steyr-Münichholz. Zwangsarbeit für die Steyr-Werke*. This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:186; and in "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1842.

Details on the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp are held in AG-M under references B/38/03 (Nebenlager Wien-Saurerwerke: Evakuierungsliste von Wien-Saurerwerke nach KL Steyr, 1282 Namen, 2.4.1945–23.4.1945); and V/03/45 (Interviews und Häftlingsberichte: Bericht des Franz Kalteis, ehemaliger Häftling im Konzentrationslager Mauthausen sowie im Nebenlager Saurerwerke, September 15, 1969). The use of the



prisoners by the city of Steyr is documented in various construction files held in the ASt-Sty; in the DÖW under reference 112111; and in the IfZ-UW under reference T 83/77. Records regarding the trial against former personnel of the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp can be found at the following sources: *US vs. Kurt Otto* (NARA, 000-Mauthausen-5); *US vs. Wilhelm Kauffeld* (NARA, 000-Mauthausen-10); *US vs. Laurianc Navas* (NARA, 000-50-5-25); *US vs. Hubert Frisch et al.* (NARA, 000-50-5-38); *US vs. Fabian Richter et al.* (NARA, 000-50-5-40); Franz Steurer trial (People's Court of Vienna, I d Vr 4845/48).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), p. 77.

## ST. LAMBRECHT (MEN)

The St. Lambrecht Monastery was the first Austrian monastery to be confiscated by the National Socialists. This occurred in May 1938, and the Gau Steiermark (Styria) became the registered proprietor. Together with other monasteries, St. Lambrecht was administered by the Manor Administration Admont and St. Lambrecht (Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht), which was under the command of SS-Obersturmbannführer (later SS-Standartenführer) Hubert Erhart.<sup>1</sup> The Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht in turn was controlled by the German Association for the Care of Ethnic Germans and Settler Assistance (Deutscher Reichsverein für Volkspflege und Siedlerhilfe e.V., Berlin). This association originated from the SS-Race and Settlement Main Office (Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt, RuSHA), and in 1942 it came under the jurisdiction of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). The association's chairman at this time was Oswald Pohl, head of the WVHA. The association was originally established with the main task of resettling Germans in non-German border areas of the German Reich so as to strengthen the ethnic Germans within those areas. It also managed church confiscated property.<sup>2</sup> The association was unsuccessful in its attempt to gain ownership of the monastery assets, and so a lease was negotiated with the Gau Styria over the monastery lands.

In St. Lambrecht, the Deutscher Reichsverein aimed to restructure the ownership of 10 percent of the monastery grounds so that it became so-called hereditary farms. They would be leased on favorable conditions to farmers. One further goal at St. Lambrecht was to establish a farm laborer settlement. To establish the settlement, the association demanded concentration camp prisoners. The first transport of 80 to 100 Dachau prisoners arrived in St. Lambrecht on May 13, 1942. The camp was administered until November 19, 1942, by the Dachau concentration camp. On November 20, 1942, St. Lambrecht, together with the subcamps at Schloss

Lind and Passau I, came under the administration of the Mauthausen concentration camp.

At first the prisoners were put to work within the monastery, constructing the camp and the SS accommodations. After that work was done, the majority of the prisoners had to construct the farmer settlement, and up to 30 prisoners were put to work on the farm and in the forests. Some also worked in the kitchens and as cleaners. From the winter of 1942–1943 onward, the prisoners were also used by Erhart to build a villa for his family not far away from the monastery. At the beginning of 1944, the Office for Publications, Vienna (Publikationsstelle Wien) was relocated to the St. Lambrecht monastery. A few prisoners then worked for this institution.

In the summer of 1943, there was a rotation of almost all the prisoners. On June 29, 1943, 15 German and Polish prisoners were transferred back to the main camp. On July 1, 1943, 14 of these prisoners were reported as having been shot while “trying to escape.” A few days later, on July 5, 1943, 79 prisoners, mainly Polish and German political prisoners as well as Red Spaniards (Rotspaniern), were forced to march to the Gusen camp; 3 Red Spaniards were forced to march to the Schloss Lind subcamp, and 1 Red Spaniard to the main camp.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, 99 Red Spaniards and a Polish “protective custody” prisoner were transferred from the main camp.<sup>4</sup> The 79 prisoners who were transported to Gusen were allocated to a punishment company. Only a few are said to have survived. The reasons for this action are not documented, but survivor Josef Nischelwitzer thinks that the leader of a construction detail, who came from Upper Silesia, had overheard Polish prisoners discussing escape plans.<sup>5</sup>

Little can be said about the composition of the prisoner population in the period when the camp was administered from Dachau. According to one report, the prisoners in the first transport were mostly Poles, but there were also Germans and people from the former Czech Republic.<sup>6</sup> The names of 103 prisoners sent to the St. Lambrecht subcamp before July 1943 are known:<sup>7</sup> 45 came from the German Reich, 33 were Poles, 19 were Spaniards, 5 were Czechs, and 1 was a Yugoslav; 73 were categorized as political prisoners, 19 as Red Spaniards, 7 as “asocials” (*Arbeitszwang Reich*), and 2 as temporary preventive custody (*Befristeter Vorbeugungshaft*) prisoners.

The names of 129 prisoners transported to the subcamp after July 2, 1943, are also known.<sup>8</sup> These names allow one to discern the nationalities of the prisoners: 109 (84.5 percent) were Spaniards, 6 Poles, 5 Italians, 3 Soviets, 3 Frenchmen, 2 Reich Germans, and 1 Hungarian. In addition to the Red Spaniards, there were 13 political prisoners (10.8 percent); 2 percent were in security arrest (*Sicherheitsverwahrung*); there was 1 Soviet prisoner of war (POW); the remainder were (1 each) categorized as a Russian civilian worker, or rather a civilian worker, as “Jewish,” and as a temporary preventive custody prisoner.

It can no longer be determined how many prisoners in total were sent to St. Lambrecht. The first strength report was dated from September 2, 1943, when 121 prisoners were sent from



the main concentration camp to the subcamp; 44 of these were sent back to the main camp, including 31 Red Spaniards, in a transport on December 1, 1943. These Red Spaniards apparently were not sent back to the main camp for punishment or to die. Rather, as skilled workers, they were reallocated to another work detachment. Between September 1943 and May 1945, there were on average 80 prisoners in the camp. The highest documented number of prisoners was on October 2, 1943, when there were 101 prisoners in the camp. No prisoners died in the camp after September 1943, but it should be noted that in addition to the Red Spaniard transport another 13 prisoners were transferred back to the main camp.<sup>9</sup>

Conditions in the camp deteriorated considerably when the Mauthausen concentration camp took control. Mistreatment of prisoners increased with the new camp guard. Nevertheless, the food was better than in other subcamps—if only for the reason that the Manor Administration operated its own farm.

Unlike the subcamp at Schloss Lind, which was also administered by the Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht, the evacuation of St. Lambrecht was not attempted. However, in its last days, there were allegedly no guards in the camp. It was liberated shortly after Schloss Lind, after May 11 or 12, by British forces.

The camp leader was initially SS-Unterscharführer Remle.<sup>10</sup> He was replaced by SS-Hauptscharführer Ernst Angerer, who came from Munich. According to a report by Josef Nischelwitzer, who enjoyed privileges as a construction detachment Kapo, Angerer was not “an oppressor and not a murderer . . . he was basically different from the others. The detachment was relatively bearable.”<sup>11</sup> Angerer is said to have been arrested because he gave favors to the prisoners. He is said to have been convicted and punished by being transferred to the SS-Sondereinheit Dirlewanger for probation.

When the Mauthausen administration took over, Angerer was replaced as camp commander by SS-Untersturmführer Erich Schöller. The camp guard, which consisted of between six and eight men, was also replaced.<sup>12</sup> A member of the guard was convicted in proceedings before a U.S. military court in Dachau for mistreating prisoners and sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment.<sup>13</sup>

**SOURCES** A history of the three camps administered by the Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht has been written by Dietmar Seiler: *Die SS im Benediktinerstift: Aspekte der KZ-Aussenlager St. Lambrecht und Schloss Lind* (Graz, 1994). Barbara Distel has also written about the camps: “KZ-Kommandos an idyllischen Orten. Dachauer Aussenlager in Österreich,” *DaHe* 15 (1999): 54–65. Stefan Jagoschütz concentrated on the St. Lambrecht Monastery in his theological diploma “Das Benediktinerstift St. Lambrecht im Nationalsozialismus: 1938–1945” (Diplomarbeit, Salzburg, 1990). Information on the Deutscher Reichsverein für Volkspflege und Siedlerhilfe e.V., Berlin, can be found in a work by Walter Naasner, *SS-Wirtschaft und SS-Verwaltung: “Das SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt und die unter seiner Dienstaufsicht stehenden wirtschaftlichen Unternehmungen” und weitere Dokumente* (Düsseldorf, 1998).

The report by survivor Josef Nischelwitzer has been published as “St. Lambrecht: Die Geschichte eines Häftlingskommandos,” in *Josef Nischelwitzer 1912–1987: Skizzen aus seinem Leben und seiner Zeit*, ed. KPÖ Kärnten (Klagenfurt, 1988), pp. 55–74. Dietmar Seiler’s interviews with local inhabitants and persons who were in contact with the camp are held by the Oral History Archive of IfWSg. The AG-M holds copies of the transport list, the subcamp roll-call book, statements by Josef Nischelwitzer, and 71 prisoner cards. The IPN holds a few transport lists. There is further information in the Sti-A-StLam and the Seiler private archive collection St. Lambrecht. For the trial of an SS guard from the St. Lambrecht camp, see NARA, RG 338, Records of U.S. Army Commands, 1942, Records of Headquarters, USAREUR, War Crimes Branch, War Crimes Case Files (“Cases Tried”), 1945–1959, Case 000-50-5-8, *USA v. Willi Auerswald et al.*

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, NS 3/900 and 1462.
2. BA-B, NS 3/312, fol. 19.
3. Variation Report for June 29, 1943, Mauthausen Concentration Camp Record Office. KZ Mauthausen 26, k. 85; Variation Report for July 5, 1943, Mauthausen Concentration Camp Record Office, KZ Mauthausen 26, k. 89–90, both in IPN.
4. Variation Report for July 2, 1943, Mauthausen Concentration Camp Record Office, AG-M, B/44/3.
5. Josef Nischelwitzer, “St. Lambrecht: Die Geschichte eines Häftlingskommandos,” in *Josef Nischelwitzer 1912–1987: Skizzen aus seinem Leben und seiner Zeit*, ed. KPÖ Kärnten (Klagenfurt; 1988), p. 65; AG-M, B/44/5.
6. Jan Kosinski, Report and List of fifty-six prisoners of the first transport to St. Lambrecht on May 13, 1942, AG-D, 23.387.
7. Variation Report July 5, 1943, Camp Record Office Mauthausen Concentration Camp, IPN, KZ Mauthausen 26, k. 89–90; AG-D, 23.387.
8. Variation Report for July 2, 1943, Camp Record Office Mauthausen Memorial Concentration Camp, B/44/3; Report of the St. Lambrecht Town and the St. Lambrecht Police Office, list of seventy-one prisoners in the camp at its liberation B/44/1/1, AG-M; as well as AG-M, Data Project, List of All Documented Prisoners in the Mauthausen Concentration Camp, Data Bank Questionnaire to St. Lambrecht Prisoners (project incomplete as of July 30, 2003).
9. Work Leader Report Mauthausen Protective Custody Report F/2/15; Subcamp Daily Reports, February 17, 1944, to March 15, 1945, E/6/11; Movements in Mauthausen Concentration Camp, April 1945, E/6/7—all in AG-M.
10. Jan Kosinski, Report, AG-D, 23.387.
11. Nischelwitzer, “St. Lambrecht: Die Geschichte eines Häftlingskommandos,” p. 60.
12. Ibid. Copies of a record of interview of Josef Nischelwitzer by the Federal Police Office Klagenfurt, State Police Department, March 6, 1970, AG-M, B/44/5.
13. NARA, RG 338, Case 000-50-5-8, *USA v. Willi Auerswald et al.*

## ST. LAMBRECHT (WOMEN)

As with the men's subcamp, the female prisoners at St. Lambrecht worked for the Manor Administration Admont and St. Lambrecht (Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht), part of the German Association for the Care of Ethnic Germans and Settler Assistance (Deutscher Reichsverein für Volkspflege und Siedlerhilfe e.V. Berlin). The work was forestry work, cleaning, and working in the kitchens. At the beginning of 1944, the Office for Publications, Vienna (Publikationsstelle Wien) was relocated to the monastery at St. Lambrecht. Some of the prisoners also had to work for this organization.

In February or March 1943, 30 women from the Ravensbrück concentration camp are said to have been transferred to St. Lambrecht. The St. Lambrecht subcamp for women, erected with the arrival of these prisoners, was physically and organizationally separate from the subcamp for men. It remained under the administration of the Ravensbrück concentration camp until September 15, 1944. When the camp was transferred to Mauthausen, the remaining 23 prisoners were entered into the Mauthausen prisoner register. The prisoners, together with some prisoners from the main camp and the Schloss Mittersill subcamp, were given the first prisoner numbers ranging from 1 to 58.

All the women at St. Lambrecht were Jehovah's Witnesses. The members of the International Association of Bible Researchers (Internationaler Bibelforscher-Vereinigung) had been persecuted by the National Socialists since 1933. They were persecuted because they refused to undertake military service, to swear allegiance to the state, and to obey the rules of state institutions. This group of Jehovah's Witnesses remained incarcerated in St. Lambrecht until the subcamp was liberated. This is noteworthy because in September 1943 the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) gave a directive that Jehovah's Witness groups in the concentration camps were to be scattered, and the individuals were to be separated from each other.

Of the 23 women, 12 were from the German Reich; there were 5 Poles, 5 Dutch, and 1 Belgian. The eldest was born in 1889. The women had an average age of 41 years when they were liberated.<sup>1</sup> There are no documented cases of any deaths or of any transfers back to the main Mauthausen concentration camp after September 15, 1944. This suggests that the prison conditions were bearable in the St. Lambrecht female subcamp.

Toward the end of the war, the International Committee of the Red Cross was able to negotiate the release of the Belgian, French, and Dutch prisoners. A list of prisoners to be handed over to the Red Cross included the names of St. Lambrecht prisoners from the Netherlands and Belgium.<sup>2</sup> However, the rapid advance of Allied forces prevented the evacuation of the subcamp or prisoner transports to the main camp. As with the subcamp for men, the subcamp for women is likely to have been liberated by British units shortly after Schloss Lind was liberated, after May 11 or 12, 1945.

According to a statement by a prisoner from the subcamp for men, the female guards were just as bad as the male guards.<sup>3</sup> According to the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg, Jane B., a female St. Lambrecht overseer, appears in a number of proceedings relating to the Ravensbrück concentration camp.<sup>4</sup>

**SOURCES** Dietmar Seiler describes the history of the three subcamps assigned to the Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht in *Die SS im Benediktinerstift: Aspekte der KZ-Aussenlager St. Lambrecht und Schloss Lind* (Graz, 1994). Probably because of the dearth of documents, only a small chapter is devoted to the subcamp for women. Based largely on Seiler, a short history of the subcamp is to be found in Andreas Baumgartner's work on the female prisoners of the Mauthausen concentration camp, *Die vergessenen Frauen von Mauthausen: Die weiblichen Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen und ihre Geschichte* (Vienna, 1997); as well as in an essay by Barbara Distel on the Dachau subcamps in Austria, "KZ-Kommandos an idyllischen Orten. Dachauer Aussenlager in Österreich," *DaHe* 15 (1999): 54–65.

Only a few documents on the subcamp for women at St. Lambrecht are known. They are held in the AG-M, the Sti-A-StLam, and the Seiler private archive, collection St. Lambrecht. Dietmar Seiler has conducted interviews with the local population and with people who had contact with the camp. These interviews are kept by the Oral History Archive of the IfWSg. A report of a former prisoner of the St. Lambrecht subcamp for men mentions the subcamp for women: Josef Nischelwitzer, "St. Lambrecht: Die Geschichte eines Häftlingskommandos," in *Josef Nischelwitzer 1912–1987: Skizzen aus seinem Leben und seiner Zeit*, ed. KPÖ Kärnten (Klagenfurt; 1988), pp. 55–74.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. A copy of the Admissions Register of the female Mauthausen Concentration Camp, AG-M, K/5/6; original held by ITS.
2. AG-M, K/6/2.
3. AG-M, B/44/8.
4. AG-M, K/10/09/06A.

## ST. VALENTIN

St. Valentin is located in the district of Amstetten in Lower Austria (Niederösterreich; until 1945: Reichsgau Niederdonau). The Nibelungenwerke, one of the largest tank production sites during World War II, was located in St. Valentin. Hans Maršálek states that during the war mostly Type IV tanks were built here: 4,340 of the 8,209 Type IV tanks that were produced during World War II came from St. Valentin, or more than 50 percent of the total production in the German Reich.<sup>1</sup> Of the 3,366 Type IV tanks manufactured in Germany in 1944, 2,809 originated from St. Valentin. Even in April 1945, 65 tanks were delivered to the Wehrmacht's Heeresgruppe Süd.<sup>2</sup> The *Jagdtiger* and *Elefant*

tanks were also manufactured in St. Valentin but in lesser numbers.

Already in 1938 the Army High Command (Oberkommando des Heeres) had prepared plans to increase the capacities for the production of tanks in the Ostmark, the former Austria. Thus, the production site for tanks was created in St. Valentin, in close proximity to the iron production sites in Linz (Hütte Linz) and the Eisenwerke Oberdonau, both managed by the Reichswerke "Hermann Göring." Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP), a former Austrian and then, from 1938, German armaments manufacturer, was first a leaseholder of the production site through the Nibelungenwerke, a subsidiary solely created for this purpose. In 1942, SDP finally acquired the company. At the same time, production was upgraded from repairing to producing tanks. The close cooperation of SDP with the SS also included the use of slave labor: between March 1942 and the autumn of 1943, the SDP engaged around 10,000 prisoners in different sites. Later, the number would increase to 14,000.

The St. Valentin camp was opened on August 21 (other sources: August 22), 1944, with the arrival of 500 male prisoners, among them 481 Jews. The latter had arrived in Mauthausen only one day earlier from Krakau-Plaszow. On August 28 and September 7, two more transports followed, each with 500 prisoners. Due to deaths on-site and transports back to the main camp, the subcamp never exceeded a maximum number of 1,480 inmates. The inmates were kept in approximately 10 barracks that were located about 300 meters (984 feet) behind the company grounds, close to the testing area for the assembled tanks. The camp was guarded by about 110 SS men under the command of a certain Heidingsfelder; the roll-call leader (Rapportführer) was Johann Schiller. During the existence of the camp, at least 150 inmates died, and six attempts to escape were reported.

The inmates were used in the vital war industry of tank manufacture. They worked within the company where they were kept in specific areas, separate from other employees, and they erected the testing area for assembled tanks and an air-raid bunker. In April 1945, when parts of the tank production were relocated to Ebensee, 695 inmates from St. Valentin were also relocated, between April 19 and 23. Then the camp was closed as Allied forces approached. But the exact date of its closure differs according to various sources: the International Tracing Service (ITS) states that the camp probably closed on April 19, 1945—the date when the first prisoners were evacuated to Ebensee. This information is based on the files of the Mauthausen camp and eyewitness statements. The German *Bundesgesetzblatt* gives April 21 as the closure date, whereas Maršálek puts the date as April 23—after the transports of prisoners to Ebensee had ceased.

After the war, a number of trials dealt with events at the St. Valentin subcamp, among others the U.S. Mauthausen military tribunals that took place in Dachau. For the severe mistreatment of inmates, leading to death, Rapportführer Schiller was sentenced to 30 years in prison. Former camp clerk Hans Carl von Posern was sentenced to life imprison-

ment for the mistreatment and killing of inmates. The Landgericht (Regional Court) Vienna sentenced Ferdinand Polsterer, former leader of the factory security force in the Nibelungenwerke, to 12 years in a penitentiary. The Landgericht Munich I sentenced Wilhelm Lipinsko, a former prisoner-functionary, to 6 years of imprisonment for the mistreatment of prisoners.

**SOURCES** Bertrand Perz is the author of the essay on St. Valentin in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 433–436. Hans Maršálek mentions St. Valentin in his *Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), pp. 19, 78. References to the camp are also found in *Konzentrationslager Melk: Begleitbroschüre zur ständigen Ausstellung* (Vienna, 1992); DÖW, *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Niederösterreich 1934–1945: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1987); and Bertrand Perz, "Politisches Management im Wirtschaftskonzern. Georg Meindl und die Rolle des Staatskonzerns Steyr-Daimler-Puch bei der Verwirklichung der NS-Wirtschaftsziele in Österreich," in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen, 1996), pp. 95–112. On St. Valentin's role in armaments manufacturing, see Norbert Schausberger, *Rüstung in Österreich: 1938 bis 1945* (Vienna, 1970). On SDP, see Bertrand Perz, *Projekt Quarz: Steyr-Daimler-Puch und das Konzentrationslager Melk* (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik, 1991). This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 184; and in "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1843.

The AG-M holds information on the St. Valentin subcamp under the references B 45/1 and 2 (Berichte über das Nebenlager St. Valentin); M F 4/1 (Angaben des im Arbeitseinsatz eingesetzten Häftlings Wolfgang Sanner); B 40/1 to 40/10, B 30/1 to B 30/16, B 12/36 (Berichte und Kopien von Transportlisten); as well as E 6/11 (Rapportbuch, Gesamtstand der Häftlinge in den Nebenlagern, Tagesaufstellungen). Information on postwar trials regarding the events at St. Valentin can be found at the following sources: *US vs. Johann Schiller* at NARA (Case 000-50-5-39); *US vs. Hans Carl von Posern* at NARA (Case 000-50-5-46). At NARA, see also *US vs. Peter Baerens et al.*, (Case 000-50-5-22), which contains details about Ebensee. For the trial against Polsterer, see LG Vienna, Vg I a Vr 6923/46; for the case against Lipinski, see LG Munich I, 1 Ks 17/49. The USHMMA lists the names of 25 prisoners who survived the St. Valentin subcamp. The account of former prisoner Nathan Gutman, "The Angel of St. Valentin," is under the reference Acc.1996.A.0373. It describes his last weeks of the war in St. Valentin.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Norbert Schausberger, *Rüstung in Österreich: 1938 bis 1945* (Vienna, 1970), p. 197.



2. Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen; Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), p. 87.

## TERNBERG

The Reichsgau Oberdonau underwent a phase of rapid industrialization immediately following the *Anschluss* of Austria to the German Reich. This resulted in an enormous demand for electrical energy. The National Socialists turned to an idea developed in the 1920s and 1930s to supply electricity to the Gau Oberdonau. The idea was to construct a series of hydroelectric power stations along the River Enns. Following resolution of some disputes concerning responsibility for the construction of the Enns power station, the Österreichische Kraftwerke AG (Austrian Power Generator) was chosen to construct power stations at Grossraming, Staning, and Mühlradig. The Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG), Linz, was chosen to build the power station at Ternberg. Its subsidiary Deutsche Bergwerke und Hüttenbau GmbH (German Mining and Steelworks Construction) was the general contractor. In turn, it contracted with Allgemeine Hoch- und Ingenieurbau AG (AHI-Bau) for the construction of the Ternberg hydroelectric power plant.

Construction in Ternberg began in the autumn of 1939 with the installation of the infrastructure necessary to construct a power station. Actual construction began in October 1941. By this time, there was a shortage of labor in Oberdonau. To make up for the shortage, foreign civilians, prisoners of war (POWs), penal prisoners, and concentration camp prisoners were used. With a peak in February 1944, there were around 2,000 such people working on the construction of the Ternberg power plant. The Wohnlager 75 (Accommodation Camp 75) was established to accommodate about 1,200 workers including Polish and French POWs, Eastern workers, penal prisoners, and civilian workers. The camp included six prisoner barracks that were separated from the other barracks by barbed wire.

The camp was established on May 15, 1942, to deal with the labor shortage. The Mauthausen concentration camp was unable to provide the number of prisoners required. It dissolved the Vöcklabruck subcamp on May 14 and transferred all of its concentration camp prisoners to Ternberg.<sup>1</sup> On May 16, 1942, according to a local police report, there were 320 Red Spaniards in the camp. They were guarded by 45 SS men and worked at the AHI-Bau.<sup>2</sup>

The Mauthausen concentration camp categorized veterans of the Spanish Civil War, that is, Spanish Republicans and members of the International Brigades, as Red Spaniards. Initially, these prisoners were placed by the SS at the lowest level in the Mauthausen hierarchy. Some 4,200 of the approximately 7,000 prisoners brought to the camp had been killed by the end of 1942. The Red Spaniards rose in the camp hierarchy as newer prisoners arrived, prisoners who were even more discriminated against. In time, their work discipline enabled them to assume a privileged position.

From June 1941, the “Cäsar Detachment,” which consisted exclusively of Red Spaniards and was named after its Kapo, César Orquín Serra, was sent to the subcamps at Vöcklabruck and Ternberg and eventually on to Redl-Zipf. Very few prisoners in this detachment died despite the heavy physical work. This was in large part due to the strong solidarity among the Red Spaniards. According to one prisoner report, Orquín Serra was able to get the SS to provide adequate food supplies; other reports state that Serra was duplicitous. The Kapos ensured that when the work details were put together, there was a combination of the physically weak with the healthy prisoners.

It can be assumed that the Red Spaniards were the majority of Ternberg’s prisoners. Only 13 of 408 prisoners died in the camp, a relatively low number when one considers the large size of the construction camp. In the nearby subcamp at Grossraming, where the prisoners were also constructing a power plant on the Enns, 227 of the 1,013 prisoners died between January 14, 1943, and August 29, 1944.

The majority of the Ternberg prisoners worked on the construction site. The excavation for the foundations, where the prisoners had to break up the hard rock with heavy hammers and carry it, was physically draining work. Some of the prisoners are said to have worked in the nearby quarry. Not only did the Deutsche Bergwerke require the prisoners to construct the power plant; the construction firm Hummel and Baumann used them to reroute Reichstrasse 95. The Reich Road Administration (Reichsstrassenverwaltung) paid the Deutsche Bergwerke for the use of the prisoners.

On September 18, 1944, 395 prisoners were transferred back to the main camp, and the subcamp at Ternberg was dissolved.<sup>3</sup> Although well advanced, work ended on the power plant. The project was no longer important enough for the war effort.

When questioned after the war before the state criminal court, SS-Scharführer Josef Schiller stated the “company commander” [Kompaniechef] was an SS-Obersturmführer Kieserle.<sup>4</sup> SS-Hauptsturmführer Anton Ganz was the camp leader (Lagerführer) at Ternberg from the end of 1942 to May or June 1943. He was later commander at Wiener Neustadt and Ebensee.<sup>5</sup> Ganz was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1972. He was particularly noted for his brutality in Ebensee—a survivor described him as arbitrary, dictatorial, and brutal.

**SOURCES** The history of the Ternberg camp has been described in two publications: Florian Freund, “Zwangsarbeit beim Bau der Ennskraftwerke,” in *NS-Zwangsarbeit in der Elektrizitätswirtschaft der “Ostmark” 1938–1945: Ennskraftwerke—Kaprun—Draukraftwerke—Ybbs-Persenbeug—Ernsthofen*, ed. Oliver Rathkolb and Florian Freund (Vienna, 2002); and Adolf Brunnthaler’s *Strom für den Führer: Der Bau der Ennskraftwerke und die KZ-Lager Ternberg, Grossraming und Dipoldsau* (Weitra, 2000). Information on Spanish Republicans at Mauthausen can be obtained from Martina Schröck, *Vom Spanischen Bürgerkrieg ins Konzentrationslager: Die republikanischen Spanier im KZ Maut-*



hausen (Passau, 1996); David Wingeate Pike, *Spaniards in the Holocaust: Mauthausen, the Horror on the Danube*. (New York, 2000); Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1995).

As with just about all subcamps that were dissolved toward the end of the war, there are scarcely any SS documents other than the scattered transport lists. This camp was not the subject of postwar trials. There is a relatively large amount of material dealing with the construction of the Enns power station in the BA-B and in the Oö.La. Additional primary sources may be found in BA-L and a published document, translated into French, in Christian Bernadac, *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976).

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Mauthausen Administration Activity Report, May 15, 1942, in Christian Bernadac, *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III*, (Paris, 1976), p. 334.
2. Report of the Ebenboden near Ternberg Police Station to the Steyr District Council, May 23, 1942, Oö.La, BH Steyr, Sch. 190 AZ 10/13-1942.
3. Subcamp Roll Call Book, Daily Report, September 18, 1944, AG-M, E/6/11.
4. Copy of a letter from the Landesgerichts für Strafsachen Wien to the KZ-Verband, November 10, 1948, AG-M, B/46/3.
5. BA-L, ZdL, Ludwigsburg, AZ 419 AR-Z 4/64.

## VÖCKLABRUCK

The subcamp at Vöcklabruck opened in June 1941 in the Wagrain district of the city of Vöcklabruck. It was the third subcamp of the Mauthausen concentration camp after Gusen and Bretstein. The prisoners were generally not used in armaments production in the early stages of the founding of the camp. The assumption was made that the camp was opened at the instigation of the SS-owned company German Earth and Stone Works (DESt). Its prisoners were engaged mainly in road construction work.

The first transport of about 300 prisoners was transferred to Vöcklabruck on June 6, 1941. The prisoners—with the exception of 2 prisoners from the German Reich and 1 Moroccan—were said to have been exclusively so-called Red Spaniards.

The camp's prisoners were deployed to different labor details in the surrounding area of Vöcklabruck. The two biggest details, Strassenbau I and Strassenbau II, were assigned to do road construction work in the south of the city. Three smaller labor details, Vöcklabrücke, Agerbrücke, and Tiefenweg, were engaged in bridge construction. Other small labor details worked on the construction of a water pipe, in a stone quarry, in the nearby town of Attnang-Puchheim, and at demolition work.

The labor details were supposedly led by one or more civilians.

According to the statement of a survivor, a so-called gas van (*Gaswagen*) was used repeatedly for the killing of prisoners who were unable to work anymore. Two Spaniards and a Moroccan tried unsuccessfully to flee the camp on April 5, 1942. The Spaniards were supposedly recaptured; the Moroccan froze to death.

The Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG) asked for concentration camp prisoners to be deployed at the construction of the power station Ternberg in the spring of 1942. Because the commandant's headquarters of the Mauthausen concentration camp were not in a situation to provide the requested number of prisoners, the Cäsar Detachment, which consisted of Red Spaniards and was named after its Kapo, César Orquín Serra, and its guard force were transferred to the newly opened subcamp Ternberg on May 14, 1942. Consequently, the camp Vöcklabruck was closed.<sup>1</sup>

The Vöcklabruck subcamp was supposedly guarded by 30 SS men.

## SUBKOMMANDO VÖCKLABRUCK OF THE REDL-ZIPF SUBCAMP

Between September 30, 1943, and March 24, 1945, a subcommando of the subcamp Redl-Zipf also existed in Vöcklabruck.<sup>2</sup> From a transport list it can be concluded that 48 prisoners were transported from the subcamp Wien-Schwechat to this detail on October 13, 1943. The majority of these prisoners were of Polish, Spanish, and Soviet origin.<sup>3</sup>

**SOURCES** The fact that there is no extensive account of the Vöcklabruck subcamp is explained mainly by the poor documentation. The first one who attempted to write a history of the subcamp is Christian Hawle. His account is based essentially on the interview with a survivor: “Vöcklabruck-Wagrain,” in *Täter und Opfer: Nationalsozialistische Gewalt und Widerstand im Bezirk Vöcklabruck 1938–1945. Eine Dokumentation*, ed. Christian Hawle, Gerhard Kriechbaum, and Margret Lehner (Vienna, 1995), pp. 21–35. The Vöcklabruck subcommando of the Redl-Zipf subcamp is listed in ITS, *Vorläufigen Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1: 154.

As is the case with most of the camps that were closed before the end of the war, almost no SS documents about Vöcklabruck have been preserved. Pictures of the camp as well as the record of an interrogation of former prisoner Bernardo Martinez Castillo can be found in the AG-M. The most important source for the representation of the Vöcklabruck subcamp is the interview with prisoner B. The interview was conducted in 1985. In the collection of the ITS, there are documents about Vöcklabruck as well as about the subcommando of the Redl-Zipf subcamp. There is also some documentation in IPN. Christian Bernadac's *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976) reproduces some documentation for this camp in French translation.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Mihaela Pittman

## NOTES

1. Report of activity of the administrative office of the Mauthausen concentration camp, entry from May 15, 1942, in Christian Bernadac, *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III*, (Paris, 1976), p. 334.

2. Report of activity of the administrative office of the KZ Mauthausen, entry from September 30, 1943, published in *ibid.*, p. 351.

3. Change of status report for October 13, 1943, camp orderly room Mauthausen concentration camp, IPN, KZ Mauthausen 26, k. 160.

## WEYR

Weyr was located approximately 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) from the Grossraming subcamp, and it dates from the spring of 1943, probably mid- or late April. At that time, a detail of about 30 prisoners from Grossraming began clearing the forest land, leveling the ground in preparation for the construction of barracks. During the first few weeks at the Weyr site, the prisoners returned daily to Grossraming. After the site was enclosed with a barbed-wire fence and four barracks had been constructed, the prisoners stayed there. Additional barracks were built outside of the compound for the SS guards and the civilian workers. Weyr held about 100 prisoners, perhaps as many as 250, from various European nations, as well as 20 SS guards. Prisoners did road work and labor for civilian firms and were supervised by German Kapos. The Weyr subcamp was evacuated in October 1944, and the prisoners were returned to Mauthausen.

**SOURCES** There are no separate sources on Weyr. Readers should refer to the source section for Grossraming.

Robert G. Waite

## WIEN (SAURERWERKE)

## [AKA SAURERWERKE, WIEN-WEST]

The subcamp Wien (Saurerwerke) was located in District IX, Simmering, in Vienna. Here the prisoners worked for the former Austrian Saurerwerke AG in the Heidequerstrasse (sometimes also referred to as Haidestrasse).

The Austrian Saurerwerke performed production under license of the Swiss Company Adolph Saurer, which produced trucks and buses. Until 1938, the company employed approximately 1,000 people. By 1944, this number increased to about 5,000 including a high percentage of foreign forced laborers. In 1938, after Germany's *Anschluss* with Austria, the production site in Vienna-Simmering had been expanded, and a new factory building had been erected. Here, mainly armored reconnaissance vehicles, tank transporters, and tank engines were produced.

The camp was established on either August 20 or 21, 1944, with the arrival of the first 500 prisoners from Mauthausen. They had to erect the camp, which was established in a now-separated part of the camp for foreign forced laborers. Also, according to Bertrand Perz, they had to build the roll-call grounds and the work site for the inmates who were mainly

employed in the tank transporter production. For that purpose, they had to block the doors of Hall C to make sure that the concentration camp inmates remained as separate from the general workforce as possible.

On September 24, 1944, after the camp was finished, 850 more inmates arrived from Mauthausen. The company now employed prisoners exclusively. In February 1945, the number of inmates reached its peak, at 1,489. The majority of inmates were Poles, Soviets, Czechs, Yugoslavs, French, and Italians; about 150 inmates were considered Jews. According to Perz, in the course of the existence of the camp, 136 prisoners were transferred back to Mauthausen because they had become incapable of working; at least 35 died, and 12 inmates tried to escape. Hans Maršálek also states that several small groups of prisoners, comprising 3 to 5 prisoners each, managed to escape from the subcamp. Austrian prisoner Josef Lauscher succeeded in escaping with the assistance of an illegal prisoner organization, which had been operating in the Melk and Saurerwerke subcamps from the autumn of 1944 on. This illegal prisoner organization worked very efficiently—it was one of its largest successes to install Franz Kalteis, a Communist from Vienna, as the camp elder. Kalteis succeeded in establishing contacts with civilian workers at the company, individual members of the guard, and members of the resistance movement outside the camp.

The camp was guarded by members of the Wehrmacht who had been taken over by the SS and by members of the Austrian Home Guard (Landeschützen). Their number was about 130. The camp commander was Wehrmacht captain Johann Gärtner, then an SS-Hauptsturmführer.

The evacuation of the Saurerwerke subcamp began on April 2, 1945, when there were 1,466 inmates in the camp. The camp elder was able to convince Gärtner not to follow orders by the Mauthausen commander to kill all the inmates that were considered too ill to be evacuated. Thus, 190 prisoners were left behind at the Saurerwerke, to be liberated a few days later by the Red Army. The other inmates, together with prisoners from other Mauthausen subcamps such as St. Ägyd, Hirtenberg, Melk, and Amstetten, were evacuated and arrived on April 18, 1945, in the Gusen camp. From there they marched on to Steyr-Münichholz, where, on April 23, 1,076 survivors of the death march from the Saurerwerke were registered. Since 16 inmates had died during the march, and 25 had escaped, at least 157 inmates disappeared without a trace.

In 1949, the Landgericht (Regional Court) Wien put former camp commander Gärtner on trial. The former acting commandant, Wittkowski, a German, escaped trial in Austria in 1946 by fleeing to Germany.

**SOURCES** Bertrand Perz wrote the essay on Wien (Saurerwerke) in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 445–448. Hans Maršálek has documented the Wien (Saurerwerke) subcamp in *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna: Österreichische Lagergemeinschaft Mauthausen, 1995), pp. 76, 260 (escape of Josef Lauscher), 293, and 316

(international prisoners' organization). See also Herbert Exenberger, "2. April 1945—Evakuierung des KZ-Nebenlagers Saurer-Werke," MDÖW Folge 171 (April 2005), pp. 5–8. For information on the Saurerwerke, see Franz Mathis, *Big Business in Österreich. Österreichische Grossunternehmen in Kurzdarstellungen* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1987), 1: 252–253; and Norbert Schausberger, *Rüstung in Österreich 1938–1945* (Vienna: Hollinek, 1987), p. 204. This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:189; and "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBL* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1849. For trials at the LG Vienna, see LG Vienna, Vg GE Vr 2156/49 (Härtner) and Vg 3c Vr 1626/45 (Wittkowski).

The AG-M contains documents on the Wien (Saurerwerke) subcamp under references V/03/45 (Interviews and Häftlingsberichte: Bericht des Franz Kalteis, ehemaliger Häftling im Konzentrationslager Mauthausen sowie im Nebenlager Saurerwerke, September 15, 1969); and B/38/03 (Nebenlager Wien-Saurerwerke: Evakuierungsliste von Wien-Saurerwerke nach KL Steyr, 1282 Namen, April 2, 1945–April 23, 1945), B 38/04 (Bericht Kalteis), and B 38/6 (Evakuierungslisten).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## WIENER NEUDORF

The founding of the subcamp Wiener Neudorf is directly related to the increasing demand of the aircraft industry in the German Reich as a consequence of the emerging defeat in the aerial warfare against Britain. Special importance was given to the construction and further development of aircraft engines. These were to be produced in a modern assembly line and with the use of special machine tools, in the mode of production developed by Henry Ford. The Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark were founded as an enterprise of the Reich Air Ministry and the Junkers Flugzeug- und Motorenwerke AG (Junkers Aircraft and Motor Works, Inc., JFM) in April 1941 as a license factory for the production of the Junkers aircraft engine (Jumo 222). Another factory for injection pumps in Brünn (Brno) and a propeller factory in Marburg on the River Drau (Maribor) were to be built next to the main factory in Wiener Neudorf. The choice for the location was supposedly explained by the protected location of Wiener Neudorf from Allied air raids. The construction of the factory was to be carried out in the shortest possible period of time in accordance with the so-called Göring Program. The goal of this program was the quadrupling of the armament production for the German Luftwaffe. The production of 500, later of 1,000, engines a month was planned to commence by March 1943.

Because it soon became obvious that the Junkers engine Jumo 222 had not reached the point where it could be manufactured by serial production, the plans were switched to a li-

cense production of Daimler-Benz (DB) engines initially of the type DB-603, later of the type DB-605, at the end of the year 1943. The further construction of the plant and, as a result, also the production of aircraft engines were to be carried out, because of a growing lack of workers, by foreign prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian forced laborers. However, the assignment of workers did not fulfill the high demands of the planning for the construction of the Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark. The lack of labor was responsible for the fact that the construction works fell behind the given time schedule. As a consequence, there were changes in the management personnel at the Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark in August 1943. The general director of Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP), Georg Meindl, was named the new managing director.

Meindl's good personal relationship to high-ranking SS officials was also probably behind the decision for the setting up of a concentration camp in Wiener Neudorf. He asked Heinrich Himmler in a personal letter dated July 14, 1943, for about 2,000 concentration camp prisoners for the further construction and operation of the Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark.<sup>1</sup> This request was granted immediately by Himmler. A first transport of 201 prisoners from the Mauthausen concentration camp arrived on August 2, 1943.<sup>2</sup> The prisoners' task was to remodel a former hut camp for construction workers into a concentration camp for future prisoners. The production of aircraft engines finally began at the end of 1943, and the number of concentration camp prisoners in Wiener Neudorf grew close to 2,000 by January 1944. The subcamp arrived at its maximum capacity in November 1944 with almost 3,000 prisoners. The majority of the people imprisoned in the camp were Poles; other larger national groups included prisoners from the Soviet Union, France, Yugoslavia, Italy, Germany, and Austria.

The Wiener Neudorf subcamp was first located in the village of Guntramsdorf (a few kilometers south of Vienna) and consisted of 17 huts for the housing of the prisoners, 2 infirmary huts, and 9 administrative huts. As was common for subcamps set up for the armament industry, the guarding of Wiener Neudorf was taken over by that branch of the Wehrmacht that benefited from the respective production. That is why, to a large extent, the guard force included soldiers from the Luftwaffe subordinated to a smaller permanent staff of the SS guard force. The camp leader was SS-Hauptsturmführer Kurt Schmutzler. The function of Rapportführer was assigned to SS-Scharführer Rudolf Lamm. Hauptmann Ludwig Stier was the commander of the Luftwaffe soldiers.

Several cases of torture and deliberate killings of prisoners are detailed in the eyewitness report of the former prisoners' physician, Dr. Rudolf Busch-Waldeck.<sup>3</sup> They were performed and ordered by different members of the SS and the Luftwaffe guard. It is believed that a total of about 400 to 450 prisoners died in the Wiener Neudorf subcamp as a result of undernourishment, illness, and ill-treatment.

The Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark became more and more the target of Allied air raids, starting in the early summer of 1944. The subcamp was hit and mostly destroyed during one of these raids on July 26, 1944. A total of 31 prisoners were



supposedly killed.<sup>4</sup> The surviving prisoners were transferred the following day to a new camp in the village of Wiener Neudorf (Mitterfeld) because of the wide destruction of the subcamp.

Due to the intensified Allied air raids on strategically important factories of the armament industry, the decision was made in November 1943 to decentralize and move sections of the Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark underground. The partial transfer of the production from Wiener Neudorf to an underground factory in Dubnica, Slovakia, started in the summer of 1944. In spite of the reduced production, the Wiener Neudorf subcamp continued to operate.

The subcamp was evacuated on April 2, 1945, before the approaching Soviet troops. At this point, 2,517 prisoners were in the Wiener Neudorf subcamp.<sup>5</sup> Supposedly 38 prisoners who were unable to march were left behind in the camp and murdered. The remaining prisoners were sent on a 13-day march in the direction of the Mauthausen main camp. The report of Busch-Waldeck mentions 243 deaths; other sources cite almost 150 deaths during the march.<sup>6</sup> A minimum of 70 prisoners must have managed to flee during the march.<sup>7</sup> The survivors finally arrived at the Mauthausen concentration camp on April 14, 1945.

The persons responsible for the violent crimes committed in the Wiener Neudorf subcamp were called to account in several trials. A few members of the SS guard as well as the captain of the Luftwaffe unit sat on the bench before a U.S. military court in Dachau in June 1947.<sup>8</sup> The trial ended with the death penalty for the camp leader, Kurt Schmutzler; the captain of the Luftwaffe guard, Ludwig Stier; and the block leader, Alois Höllriegl. The executions took place in Landsberg. Another member of the guard unit, Franz Doppelreiter, was sentenced to death in 1946 before the Vienna state court.<sup>9</sup> This sentence was then changed to lifetime imprisonment. Doppelreiter was granted amnesty in 1955. The block leader, Karl Lehnert, was sentenced to death in Poland in 1947. The last known trial concerning Wiener Neudorf took place before the Duisburg regional court in 1993. Accused were the SS canine officers Bruno Blach and Dominik Gleba. Blach, who had emigrated earlier to the United States and had been expelled after his real identity became known, was acquitted because of lack of evidence. Gleba was sentenced to two years of limited confinement.

**SOURCES** From the literature on the Wiener Neudorf subcamp, one can point especially to the articles published by Bertrand Perz: “Die Errichtung eines Konzentrationslagers in Wiener Neudorf. Zum Zusammenhang von Rüstungsexpansion und Zwangsarbeit von KZ-Häftlingen,” *JDÖW* (1988): 89–116; and “Der Todesmarsch von Wiener Neudorf nach Mauthausen. Eine Dokumentation,” *JDÖW* (1988): 117–137. The publication of the Neu-Guntramsdorf parish about the history of the camp is interesting from the point of view of local history: André Grossberger, *Das ehemalige Konzentrationslager in Guntramsdorf 1943/44* (Pfarre Neu-Guntramsdorf, 1995). Christian Bernadac, too, dedicates a larger chapter to the Wiener Neudorf subcamp in *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976).

A 180-page report from personal experience comes from the former prisoners’ physician in the infirmary, Dr. Rudolf Busch-Waldeck. The typewritten original can be found in the DÖW. Other scattered accounts on Wiener Neudorf can be found, among other places, in AG-M, where interviews with survivors are also available, as well as at the IPN. NARA, RG 153, Records of the US Army War Crimes Trials holds the trial against Mauthausen/Wiener Neudorf personnel. Extensive resource material on the construction of the Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark can be found in BA-MA.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Mihaela Pittman

## NOTES

1. Letter from Meindl to Himmler, AG-M, B/49/7.
2. Transport list from August 2, 1943, AG-M, B/49/5.
3. AG-M, B/49/1 and 2.
4. See also the report of Dr. Rudolf Busch-Waldeck, AG-M, B/49/1 and 2.
5. The number of prisoners in the subcamps, list from April 9, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.
6. The number of 150 would coincide also with the information that can be gathered from the list of the prisoners’ movements in KLM in the month of April 1945 (AG-M, E/6/7).
7. Changes of status report from April 12, 1945, IPN, KZ Mauthausen 24 k. 79–80.
8. NARA, RG 153, Case 000-50-5-2, *USA v. Ernst Dura, et al.*
9. Proceedings against Franz Doppelreiter, LG Vienna, Vg l e Vr 1140/49.

## WIENER NEUSTADT

Following the annexation of Austria by Germany in March 1938, the German company Henschel & Sohn took over the Austrian company Wiener Neustädter Lokomotivfabrik and manufactured up to 1943 mostly locomotive tenders. In 1942, the factory was given a new name, Rax-Werke Wiener Neustadt (Rax Factory Wiener Neustadt) and was restructured as an independent subsidiary of Henschel GmbH. Plans to expand production to include armaments (initially flak guns) made necessary an expansion of the factory. The Army High Command (OKH) gave a factory to the Rax-Werke that had been seized during the Balkan campaign in Kraljevo, Yugoslavia, dismantled, and rebuilt in Wiener Neustadt. This factory was known as the Serbenhalle.

Plans for the production of flak guns by the Rax-Werke were abandoned, and in April 1943, the Special Committee A4, established a short time before by the Reich Ministry for Armaments and Munitions to accelerate the production of rockets, chose the Rax-Werke as one of three locations (the others being the testing grounds at Peenemünde and the Zeppelin factory at Friedrichshafen—later there was also the Deutsche Maschinenfabrik AG [Demag] at Falkensee, Berlin) for the mass production of the A4 (Aggregat 4, otherwise known as V-2) rockets.



The decision to use concentration camp prisoners in the A4 project had been made as early as the spring of 1943. A camp was built on the Rax-Werke site to hold prisoners from the Mauthausen concentration camp. The first transport of approximately 500 prisoners arrived on June 20, 1943. The prisoners were first used to complete the assembly halls and to install the machines. Only later was it decided to involve the prisoners in the production of the rockets. On August 8, 1943, an additional 722 prisoners were transferred to Wiener Neustadt.<sup>1</sup>

During the first phase of the Wiener Neustadt subcamp, from June to November 1943, the prisoners were mostly Frenchmen. There were also large groups of Polish and Soviet prisoners. The number of prisoners reached a peak at 1,200. The majority of the prisoners were political prisoners.

During the first phase, it was planned to have about 70 SS men as guards under the command of the camp leader SS-Hauptsturmführer Anton Ganz, who later was to serve at Ebensee. As in some of the other camps that formed part of the armaments industry, the treatment of the prisoners in the Wiener Neustadt subcamp was relatively good. Nevertheless, there are several reported cases of mistreatment. There was a minimum of medical care in the infirmary. The infirmary was under the control of the Sanitätsdienstgrad (SDG) Gottlieb Muzikant, who served also in Melk and Grossraming as well as in the Mauthausen main camp. During the first period of the camp (June–November 1943), 30 prisoners died.

The Rax-Werke was bombed for the first time on August 13, 1943, and the subcamp was also hit. As the serial production sites of the A4 were the target of such raids, the decision was made in August 1943 to separate the production of the rockets from their development and to establish a central subterranean production plant, namely “Mittelwerke” in Nordhausen in Thuringia, which resulted in the establishment of the concentration camp at Mittelbau.

At the end of August 1943, the facilities for the production of fuel and examination of the propulsion chambers were transferred from the Rax-Werke to the Redl-Zipf beer cellars in Upper Austria. This was the beginning of the step-by-step dissolution of the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt. A bombardment on November 2, 1943, so severely damaged the Rax-Werke that not even minimal production could continue. As a result, all equipment, building parts, machines, and the skilled workers were transferred to the Mittelwerk in Nordhausen. The prisoners were transferred in a number of transports to the newly established subcamps at Redl-Zipf (transport dates October 26, 1943,<sup>2</sup> and November 9, 1943)<sup>3</sup> and Ebensee (November 17, 1943).<sup>4</sup> The last transport left Wiener Neustadt on November 20, 1943. It headed to the Mittelbau main camp (Dora) via the Buchenwald main camp.

The Rax-Werke resumed the production of tenders after the relocation of the manufacture of rockets from Wiener Neustadt and the dissolution of the subcamp. Attempts to get back into the armaments business were soon successful. The Rax-Werke received an order to produce naval artillery barges (*Marine-Artillerie-Leichter*) as part of the naval construction program. Production began at the end of May 1944, and concentration

camp prisoners were requested as laborers. A new Mauthausen subcamp was thus established in Wiener Neustadt.

A transport of 300 prisoners arrived in Wiener Neustadt on July 5, 1944;<sup>5</sup> other transports followed on July 31, with 204 prisoners, on September 18, with 150, and on September 28, with 50 prisoners. All the transports originated in Mauthausen. On December 26, 1944, 150 prisoners were transferred to the subcamp at Floridsdorf in Vienna.<sup>6</sup> During the second phase of the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt, prisoner numbers fluctuated between around 500 and 700. Most of the prisoners were from Poland, the Soviet Union, and Italy. Between July 1944 and April 1945, 42 prisoners died in the subcamp. This number incorrectly distorts the death rate, as there were a number of transports of prisoners who were no longer capable of working or who were seriously ill back to the main camp.

As was common with subcamps established for the armaments industry in Wiener Neustadt during this phase, security was provided by that branch of the Wehrmacht that benefited from the production. During the second period of the subcamp's existence, from July 1944 to April 1945, the majority of the 120 to 140 guards were naval soldiers under the command of the camp leader Prchal.

On April 1, 1945, the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt was finally dissolved in the face of advancing Soviet troops. The prisoners were first marched in the direction of the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp. According to the camp records, 25 prisoners died on the march, and 10 went missing.<sup>7</sup> On April 6, 1945, 496 of the former Wiener Neustadt work detachment reached the Steyr subcamp as their first destination.<sup>8</sup> On April 10, 1945, 494 prisoners presumably arrived at the Mauthausen concentration camp.

After the war, indictments were laid against several SS members at the Wiener Neustadt subcamp. The first Lagerführer, Anton Ganz, was only sentenced by a Memmingen court in the 1970s to life imprisonment for crimes committed at the Ebensee subcamp.<sup>9</sup> The Rapportführer during the first phase, Hans Bühner, was sentenced to death by a French military court for crimes committed in Hinterbrühl and Ebensee. He was executed.<sup>10</sup> His successor, Heinz Bollhorst, was sentenced by a U.S. military court to life imprisonment.<sup>11</sup> The SDG, Gottlieb Muzikant, who saw service in several other subcamps, was arrested in the 1960s and received 21 life sentences from a court in Fulda in Germany, especially for crimes committed in Melk, Lower Austria.

The Rapportführer from August 1944, SS-Scharführer Paul Tremmel, was convicted by a U.S. military court in Dachau for crimes committed on the evacuation march to Steyr. He was also sentenced to death.<sup>12</sup> Prchal, the camp leader during the second phase, disappeared after the war. Proceedings commenced in the 1970s but soon stopped.<sup>13</sup>

**SOURCES** The most detailed work on the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt is by Florian Freund and Bertrand Perz: *Das KZ in der Serbenballe: Zur Kriegsindustrie in Wiener Neustadt* (Vienna, 1987). Further details can be found in the works by Freund on the planned rocket industry in Ebensee,

*Arbeitslager Zement: Das Konzentrationslager Ebensee und die Raketenrüstung* (Vienna, 1989); as well as the use of concentration camp prisoners in rocket production, “Die Entscheidung zum Einsatz von KZ-Häftlingen in der Raketenrüstung,” in *Zwangsarbeit und die unterirdische Verlagerung von Rüstungsindustrie*, ed. Torsten Hess (Berlin, 1994), pp. 20–35.

There are scattered original sources of the camp administration such as transport lists or variation reports. They are held in the APMO, IPN, and the AG-M. The latter archive also holds some survivors’ reports. Material on the postwar trials of the camp’s SS members is located in NARA, ZdL (now BA-L), and LG Vienna.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Variation Report, August 8, 1943, AG-M, B/50/4.
2. Variation Report, October 26, 1943, IPN, KZ Mauthausen 36.
3. Transport List, November 9, 1943, AG-M, B/50/2 and B/50/6.
4. Variation Report, November 17, 1943, AG-M, B/50/5.
5. Transport List, July 5, 1944, AG-M, B/50/5.
6. All details are from the Roll Call Book Mauthausen Concentration Camp, AG-M, E/6/11.
7. List of the Camp Record Office re Prisoners’ Movements following the Evacuation of the Subcamps of April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/13.
8. List of the Camp Record Office re Prisoners’ Movements following the Evacuation of the Subcamps of April 9, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.
9. BA-L, ZdL, AZ 419 AR-Z 4/64.
10. LG Vienna, AZ 20 Vr 3625/75 (Gogl) Bd.1, fl. 375.
11. NARA, RG 338, *USA v. Heinz Bollhorst*, Case 000-50-5-48.
12. NARA, RG 338, *USA v. Paul Tremmel*, Case 000-50-5-44.
13. BA-L, ZdL, AZ 419 AR 48/79.

## WIEN-FLORIDSDORF AND JEDLESEE

### [AKA FLORIDSDORF I AND II]

The history of the two subcamps in Wien-Floridsdorf is closely connected with the Schwechat work detachment. The subcamp at Schwechat was closed and evacuated on July 13, 1944, following a heavy aerial bombardment that resulted in the destruction of the camp. The prisoners were at first taken to Wien-Floridsdorf; later, many went on to the subcamps at Hinterbrühl and Santa I, II, and III near Schwechat. The prisoners who remained in Floridsdorf were distributed to two detachments, one at Hofherr & Schrantz or Akkumulatoren Fabrik AG (AFA) and one at Jedlesee. The prisoners from the first detachment were accommodated in a subcamp in Shuttleworthstrasse on the site of Hofherr & Schrantz, which served as a production site for AFA, while the prisoners of the Jedlesee detachment were accommodated in what is the present-day Hopfengasse. The detachment Floridsdorf I

(Hofherr & Schrantz) operated as the command for the large Wien-Floridsdorf complex, which included the Jedlesee detachment and the Hinterbrühl subcamp. The Jedlesee camp was established on July 13, 1944, and the Floridsdorf I camp on July 14, 1944.

The history of the subcamps at Wien-Floridsdorf has generally not been the subject of research and in part still lies in the dark. What is known is that the prisoners in Floridsdorf, as in Schwechat, were used to produce parts for various types of Heinkel (He) aircraft. During the years 1942 and 1943, the Ernst-Heinkel-Werke had relocated large parts of its production and eventually its management from Rostock to Schwechat. Due to the increasing labor shortage, concentration camp prisoners were made available for the production of several aircraft types, among them the He 219 and He 280. Following the aerial bombardment of Schwechat, part of this production was relocated to Jedlesee in the 21st Viennese district (Floridsdorf) and continued there. The detachment AFA (or Hofherr & Schrantz, respectively) has to be seen separately from Heinkel. Before the war, Hofherr & Schrantz had specialized in the manufacture of agricultural machinery. During the war, it produced armaments. It has been suggested that its operation in Floridsdorf produced directional components for the A4 (Aggregat 4) rockets, but the possibility has not been verified. Originally based in Hagen, Germany, AFA was a specialized battery producer that during the war supplied batteries for different types of submarines. After bombardments of the AFA fabric in Hagen, the production had been relocated to Vienna and was accommodated in the facilities of the company Hofherr & Schrantz.

As in the other subcamps at the various Heinkel factories, it can be assumed that, as in Schwechat, the guards were at least in part members of the Luftwaffe.

It is difficult to determine how many prisoners were actually held in the Floridsdorf subcamps, how many died there, and how many were transferred to other subcamps in Vienna. The difficulty with the empirical data is that Floridsdorf was a camp complex comprising several subcamps. When the Schwechat subcamp was closed, the prisoners were distributed among several new camps, all of which were under the command of the former Schwechat camp leader Anton Streitwieser. He moved his headquarters from Schwechat to Floridsdorf, and it was from here that he commanded the camps at Floridsdorf, Jedlesee, Hinterbrühl, Schwechat (the remainder of the original subcamp at Schwechat), and the work detachments Santa I, II, and III. All these work detachments are classified in the documents of the Mauthausen main camp administration under “Floridsdorf,” thus making it almost impossible to separate out data about the individual detachments.

The Floridsdorf detachment reported on July 14, 1944, the day that it was established, that it had 1,993 prisoners. Over the succeeding months, the prisoner numbers remained more or less constant. The peak for the whole Floridsdorf complex was reached in the final months. In January 1945, there were more than 2,700 prisoners.<sup>1</sup> The majority of them were from Poland and the Soviet Union. There were other large groups

from Italy and France. When the Floridsdorf complex was dissolved, there were 829 prisoners alone in Floridsdorf I and Floridsdorf II,<sup>2</sup> of whom about 450 were in Floridsdorf I and the rest in Floridsdorf II.<sup>3</sup>

Both Floridsdorf subcamps were evacuated on April 1, 1945. The prisoners were not evacuated via the subcamp at Hinterbrühl, which was used as a collecting point for several other detachments in the area around Vienna, but via the subcamp of Steyr. The evacuation march reached the Mauthausen concentration camp on April 11, 1945. According to a list prepared by the camp clerk, 121 prisoners were killed on the march; 22 were reported as missing or as having escaped. Floridsdorf I reported 45 dead and 12 missing or escaped prisoners; Floridsdorf II had 76 dead and 10 reported as missing or escaped.<sup>4</sup>

The Lagerführer of the Vienna-Floridsdorf camp complex, Streitwieser, was initially held captive by the Americans. He was able to escape and assumed a false identity. In 1953, he was officially declared dead. However, he was subsequently identified and was arrested for the first time in 1956. Streitwieser was arrested and released several times again, but in 1967 he was sentenced by the Cologne state court to life imprisonment.<sup>5</sup> He died in prison.

**SOURCES** The publications on the subcamps at Wien-Floridsdorf reflect the state of research—there are scarcely any. Worth mentioning is a local history of Floridsdorf by the youth branch of the SPÖ, *Junge Generation Floridsdorf*, ed., *Braune Jahre in Floridsdorf 1938–1945: Eine Broschüre der JG Floridsdorf* (Vienna, 1988). Christian Bernadac's book *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976) devotes one large chapter to the subcamps at the Heinkel factories, including Floridsdorf and Jedlesee.

Some source material on Floridsdorf is to be found in AG-M. Interviews with survivors are also held here, as in the IPN. Sources on the Ernst Heinkel factories are to be found in the BA-MA.

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trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. The prisoner numbers are from the Roll Call Book, AG-M, E/6/11.

2. Reports from the Camp Record Office on Prisoner Movements during the Evacuation Marches from April 9, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.

3. Reports from the Camp Record Office on Prisoner Movements during the Evacuation Marches from April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/13.

4. Ibid.

5. LG Cologne, 24 Ks 1/66 (Z) 40-9/65 Lg.

## WIEN-HINTERBRÜHL ("LISA")

The history of the subcamp at Hinterbrühl, near Mödling, is closely connected with that of the work detachments at Schwechat and Floridsdorf. The subcamp at Schwechat was closed and evacuated on July 13, 1944, following the de-

struction of the camp caused by Allied bombing raids. As a result, the Ernst Heinkel factory relocated parts of its aircraft production facilities underground, first to Floridsdorf and later also to Hinterbrühl and to the brewery cellars at Schwechat.

The so-called Sea Grotto in Hinterbrühl was an ideal underground location for the Heinkel operation. The cave system, which is a present-day tourist attraction, was a former gypsum mine, which had been closed in 1912 after groundwater had flooded the mine. In the early 1930s the mine, which was still partly submerged, became a tourist attraction and was developed as such.

Once the Armaments Inspectorate became aware of the grotto, it was requisitioned for the Ernst Heinkel group. This was in May 1944, before the evacuation of the Schwechat subcamp. Expansion of the grotto started to allow for the subterranean production of the Heinkel (He) 162 aircraft known as the People's Fighter (*Volksjäger*). As the grotto was affected by groundwater, it was necessary to install a permanent pumping system to keep the underground area dry. A heavy Allied air raid on the Sea Grotto on May 24, 1944, during the construction period, also hit the village of Hinterbrühl and killed several civilians.

The decision to establish a Mauthausen subcamp at Hinterbrühl was probably made shortly after the Sea Grotto had been requisitioned for the Heinkel factory. Nevertheless, the camp was only established later. The first prisoner transport is said to have arrived at the camp in September 1944.

The subcamp at Hinterbrühl was part of the camp system administered from Wien-Floridsdorf that comprised several camps for Heinkel factories in the area around Vienna. Once the Schwechat subcamp was closed, its prisoners were distributed among several newly erected camps, all of which remained under the command of the former Lagerführer at Schwechat, Anton Streitwieser. He had moved his headquarters from Schwechat to Floridsdorf, and from there he commanded the following camps: Floridsdorf, Jedlesee, Hinterbrühl, and Schwechat (what was left of the former subcamp at Schwechat) and the work detachments Santa I, II, and III. As in the other subcamps at the various Heinkel factories, the guards at the subcamp at Hinterbrühl were at least in part members of the Luftwaffe.

The documents of the Mauthausen main camp administration group all the subcamps of the Wien-Floridsdorf camp complex together using the term "Floridsdorf." It is nearly impossible, therefore, to analyze the sources by reference to each individual work detachment. Verified statements regarding the prisoner demographics can be made only for the whole camp complex. When considering the average prisoner numbers in the subcamp at Hinterbrühl, it is only possible to rely on statements by prisoners. Marian Siczynski, a Polish survivor of the subcamp at Hinterbrühl, refers to an average number of 800 prisoners.<sup>1</sup> The majority of the prisoners came from Poland and the Soviet Union. There were also large groups of Italians and French prisoners.

The total number of prisoners in the Floridsdorf complex varied only slightly during the period in which the subcamp



at Hinterbrühl was established.<sup>2</sup> One can, therefore, assume that the majority of prisoners from Floridsdorf and Jedlesee were transferred to Hinterbrühl. At least one transport of prisoners came from the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt in the middle of December 1944.<sup>3</sup>

The camp was given the code name “Lisa.” It was only a few meters away from a vertical pit through which the prisoners passed daily to their work in the underground production area. During the first weeks, before production started, the prisoners were involved in excavating the underground production facility and in constructing the subcamp. Mass production began in November. The underground factory was known as Lobster (*Languste*). The grotto had two levels, which were divided into a number of sections. In these sections, parts for the fuselage of the aircraft He 162 were produced. The prisoners worked in two shifts each of 12 hours. Once the fuselage had been assembled and fitted out with the complete technical equipment, it was shipped from the Hinterbrühl Sea Grotto to Schwechat, where the final assembly of the aircraft took place.

In comparison with the working conditions in other underground armaments production sites, the conditions for the prisoners in Hinterbrühl were presumably somewhat better. There was an existing cave system that did not, as in St. Georgen, Melk, Ebensee, or Peggau, require excavation. Nevertheless, the 12-hour shifts and the lack of rest and nutrition made the conditions difficult. In addition, there are documented cases of torture, mistreatment, and murder of the prisoners carried out by the SS, in particular by camp leader Anton Streitwieser and Rapportführer Hans Bühner. The documented treatment of the subcamps in the Wien-Floridsdorf complex, mentioned above, makes it impossible to determine how many prisoners died in Hinterbrühl. One can assume that repeatedly sick prisoners and those incapable of working were transferred back to the main camp, with the result that the number of victims of this subcamp exceeds the number of those who actually died in Hinterbrühl. Some of the prisoners who died in Hinterbrühl were cremated in the Vienna city crematorium.

The order to evacuate all camps within the greater Vienna area was given at the end of March 1945 as the Red Army approached the city. The subcamp at Hinterbrühl functioned as a collection camp for prisoners from the Schwechat-Heidfeld detachments and presumably also for those from the Santa I, II, and III detachments in Schwechat. On March 31, 1945, 1,884 prisoners from these detachments<sup>4</sup> were concentrated in the Hinterbrühl subcamp. On April 1, 1945, the prisoners were sent in the direction of Mauthausen.

The day before the march to Mauthausen began, there was one of the largest mass killings of prisoners in the various subcamps: on the order of Streitwieser, the Lagerführer, a list was prepared of all prisoners in the infirmary who could not walk. There were originally 80 names on the list. The SS intended to kill them with an injection to the heart; 51 prisoners were actually murdered and their remains buried in a mass grave on the camp grounds; 1 prisoner was shot by Bühner.

According to the former prisoner doctor, Josef Krakowski, the remaining 29 prisoners from the infirmary were saved at that occasion but died later on the evacuation march to Mauthausen.<sup>5</sup> The prisoners’ corpses were exhumed in 1946 and reinterred at the Vienna central cemetery.<sup>6</sup>

The evacuation march that left Hinterbrühl on April 1, 1945, reached the Mauthausen main camp on April 7. In addition to the 52 prisoners who were murdered the day before the march started, another 152 died on the march, and 56 were reported as either missing or escaped.<sup>7</sup>

After the war, Lagerführer Streitwieser was held by the Americans as a prisoner of war (POW). He was able to escape. He assumed a false identity, and in 1953, he was officially declared dead. His real identity was later discovered, and he was arrested again in 1956. After being arrested and released several more times, he was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Cologne state court in 1967.<sup>8</sup> He died in prison. Rapportführer Bühner was sentenced to death by a French military court for crimes committed in Hinterbrühl and Ebensee and executed.<sup>9</sup> SS-Rottenführer Willy Brünning, SS-Unterscharführer Franz Huber, and the Kapo in the infirmary, Georg Gössl, were convicted by a U.S. military court in the first Mauthausen trial held at Dachau.<sup>10</sup> The former orderly Karl Sasko and the Kapo Franz Dieplinger were tried before the Vienna state court.<sup>11</sup> Sasko was accused of the murder of 51 prisoners in the infirmary and died during the trial. Dieplinger was sentenced to six months in jail for mistreating prisoners.

**SOURCES** There are only a few references to Hinterbrühl in the literature, such as in Christian Bernadac, *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976); or in the essay by Werner Eichbauer, Florian Freund, and Bertrand Perz, “Die Aussenlager des KZ Mauthausen in Niederösterreich,” in *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Niederösterreich*, ed. DÖW (Vienna, 1987), 3: 602–608. Alfred Hiller, who has written on the history of the development of the He 162, also refers to the subcamp at Hinterbrühl in *Heinkel He 162 “Volksjäger”: Entwicklung, Produktion, Einsatz* (Vienna, 1984). Finally, reference should be made to two articles that are the result of a school oral history project on Hinterbrühl: Karin Eichberger, Andreas Freisinger, Monika Halbritter, John Morrissey, and Christian Rauscher, “‘Vergangenheitsbewältigung’: Die Hinterbrühler Seegrotte 1944/45 als KZ-Nebenlager und Flugzeugwerk, Teil I,” *BzFdd* 3 (1987): 1–6; and Eichberger, Freisinger, Halbritter, Morrissey, and Rauscher: “‘... dann soll er zu einem Psychiater oder sonst wo hingehen!’ ‘Vergangenheitsbewältigung’: Die Hinterbrühler Seegrotte 1944/45 als KZ-Nebenlager und Flugzeugwerk, Teil II,” *Beiträge zur Fachdidaktik* 2 (1988): 1–6.

There are some documents on Hinterbrühl in the AG-M, including the memoirs of former prisoner Marcello Martini as well as survivor interviews. The trial files of Anton Streitwieser are held by the LG Cologne. Those of the trial against Hans Bühner are held by LG Vienna. The files to the first Mauthausen trial held at Dachau, which include the Hinterbrühl perpetrators, are held in NARA, RG 338. Files on the Ernst-Heinkel-Werke are in BA-MA.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini



## NOTES

1. AG-M, B/16/13.
2. See Roll Call Book Subcamps, AG-M, E/6/11.
3. See the memoirs of former prisoner Marcello Martini, AG-M, B/16/11.
4. Report of the Camp Record Office on Prisoner Movements during the Evacuation Marches, April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/13.
5. Statement by Dr. Josef Krakowski, AG-M, B/16/7.
6. Correspondence between Anton Mayer and Hans Maršálek, AG-M, B/16/5.
7. Report of the Camp Record Office on Prisoner Movements during the Evacuation Marches, April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/13.
8. LG Cologne, 24 Ks 1/66 (Z) 40-9/65 Lg.
9. LG Vienna, AZ 20 Vr 3625/75 (Gogl), vol.1, p. 1375.
10. NARA, RG 338, *USA v. Hans Altfuldisch, et al.*, Case 000-50-5; see also the statement by Rudolf Halaba to LG Vienna available at AG-M, B/16/7.
11. LG Vienna, Vg 8e Vr 781/55.

## WIEN-SCHÖNBRUNN

[AKA SONDERKOMMANDO WIEN]

The establishment of the Schönbrunn subcamp, also known as the Sonderkommando Wien (Vienna Special Detachment), is connected to the hopeless situation of Hitler's Germany and the utopia of "miracle weapons" that were to turn Germany's impending defeat into victory. The Austrian forester Viktor Schauberger, who since the 1920s had been a researcher of the optimal use of kinetic energy (*Bewegungsenergie*), presumably met Hitler in 1934 in Berlin in an attempt to convince Hitler of the benefits of his plans for an alternative source of energy.

The looming defeat of Germany and the belief in a turn of the course of events through miracle weapons gave even esoteric projects such as those promoted by Schauberger a chance that they would not otherwise have had. The motive behind that was the desperate hope to change the course of the war in Germany's favor. In the late summer of 1944, Schauberger was given an opportunity to undertake physical experiments at the Mauthausen concentration camp. Although his records do not explain what they exactly involved, Schauberger talked about "implosion," and various sources refer to the development of alternative methods of propulsion. Schauberger himself has referred to "flying submarines." Schauberger was first given five prisoners (two Czechs, two Germans, and one Pole) who had technical skills for the experiments. Originally, the experiments took place at Mauthausen. However, at Schauberger's insistence, the detachment was transferred to Wien-Schönbrunn on September 28, 1944.<sup>1</sup> The detachment was accommodated in a separated room at the SS-Kraftfahrtechnischen Lehranstalt (Motor Vehicle Technical Education Institute), located within the area of present-day Maria-Theresien-Kaserne. The date that the Schönbrunn subcamp was established is the date of the transfer.

As early as October 28, 1944, one of the prisoners was transferred back to Mauthausen. The prisoner was replaced the next day, October 29, by a prisoner from the main camp.<sup>2</sup> There is one reported case where a prisoner guarded by one SS man slept overnight at his wife's apartment. As punishment, he was transferred back to Mauthausen in January 1945.<sup>3</sup> It is likely that in January 1945 another prisoner was sent back to the main camp. As a result, the detachment only consisted of three prisoners. During its existence, there were a total of six prisoners (two Germans, two Czechs, one Pole, and one Austrian). The treatment of the prisoners was relatively good. According to the report of one former prisoner, he and his comrades were not exposed to any mistreatment.<sup>4</sup> On Sundays it was even possible occasionally to leave the barracks accompanied by one of the SS guards.

The head of the SS-Kraftfahrtechnischen Lehranstalt, also known as the SS-Engineer's School, where the detachment Wien-Schwechat was accommodated, was SS-Sturmabführer Dr. Hermann Schröder. Military supervision was under the command of Hauptsturmführer Lindner. Schauberger was the scientific head of the detachment. According to his own statements, he had to pay a use fee to the SS for the prisoners.

The SS barracks in Schönbrunn were bombed several times. As a result, the remainder of the detachment, three prisoners, was transferred to a requisitioned scythe factory at Leonstein in Upper Austria. The experiments continued there until early May 1945.<sup>5</sup> The detachment is said to have been dissolved shortly before the liberation of the Mauthausen main camp, and the remaining three prisoners were sent back to Mauthausen. All six prisoners of the Wien-Schönbrunn subcamp are said to have survived imprisonment.

Proceedings against unnamed perpetrators suspected of National Socialist crimes carried out in the Wien-Schwechat subcamp began at the Vienna state criminal court in the 1960s but ceased after a short time.

**SOURCES** It is Viktor Schauberger's memoirs and various biographical studies that are focused on his life and his scientific work, which largely provide the details of the history of the detachment at Schönbrunn. The biography by Siegbert Lattacher should also be mentioned: *Viktor Schauberger, Auf den Spuren des legendären Naturforschers* (Steyr, 1999); as should the magazine *Implosion* 113 (1995), which published Schauberger's memoirs.

Variation reports and the transcription of an interview with a former prisoner are held in the AG-M.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Variation Report, September 28, 1944, AG-M, B/39/1.
2. Variation Reports, October 28–29, 1944, AG-M, B/39/2.
3. Transcription of an interview with Anton Cerny, AG-M, B/39/3.
4. Ibid.
5. A list of movements in the Mauthausen main camp during April 1945 (AG-M, E/6/7) refers to three prisoners from the detachment "Kraftfahrtechnischen Lehranstalt" on April 29.

## WIEN-SCHWECHAT-HEIDFELD

In the summer of 1942, the Ernst Heinkel factory, following a series of massive Allied air raids, relocated part of its aircraft production from Rostock in northern Germany to the air base at Schwechat, close to Vienna. A delegation from the factory inspected the site in June 1942, whereupon the fighter training school based at Schwechat was relocated and the air base was handed over to the Heinkel factory. Initially, only the departments for construction, plans, and samples were transferred to Schwechat. Civilian forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) were used to construct a runway, assembly halls, and administrative buildings. In the late spring of 1943, the Heinkel main office was transferred to Schwechat.

The growing labor shortage and increasing Allied air superiority, which accelerated the production of fighters, resulted in an increasing use by the armaments industry of concentration camp prisoners as labor. In August 1943, a subcamp of the Mauthausen concentration camp was erected at Schwechat next to the existing forced labor and POW camps. The prisoners were to produce different types of Heinkel (He) fighter aircraft.

The first verifiable transport of 92 skilled workers from the Mauthausen main camp, the majority of whom were Republican Spaniards, arrived at Schwechat on August 30, 1943.<sup>1</sup> Successive transports quickly increased the numbers of prisoners. One of the largest transports consisting of 600 prisoners from the main camp arrived at Schwechat on September 19.<sup>2</sup> In April 1944, there were 2,600 prisoners in the camp, the maximum that would be reached.<sup>3</sup> Poles were the largest national group, followed by Soviet prisoners. Italians were also a large percentage of the prison population.

The guards in Schwechat, as in most subcamps that were connected with armaments production, were from the section of the Wehrmacht that profited most from the production. The majority of the guards were Luftwaffe soldiers commanded by a small group of SS. The first camp leader was SS-Obersturmführer Erich Engelhardt. He died during a bombing raid on the camp on April 23, 1944. His successor was SS-Untersturmführer Anton Streitwieser. Other than for a few short breaks, Streitwieser had served at the Mauthausen concentration camp since 1938. He had been work leader and a roll-call leader at the Gusen subcamp and third detention camp leader at the main camp. Between March and April 1944, he was Lagerführer at Melk. He then assumed command in Schwechat. One of the roll-call leaders was Rapportführer Hans Bühner, who had seen service at Wiener Neustadt.

The prisoners' living conditions in Schwechat, as in many of the other subcamps that served the armaments industry, were relatively good. However, there are indications that the camp was overcrowded from the spring of 1944, which must have made the conditions worse. There are also numerous documented cases of torture and murder by the guards. A particularly gruesome form of torture and murder practiced

at Schwechat was to lock a prisoner in a wooden box, hammer long nails into the box, and then roll the box for several hours around the roll-call square. Lagerführer Streitwieser and Bühner often set their dogs on the prisoners who were severely injured and in several cases died.<sup>4</sup>

It can be assumed that more than 200 prisoners died at the Schwechat subcamp, the majority during Allied air raids on the Ernst-Heinkel-Werke. As small groups of prisoners or individual prisoners were constantly being sent back to the main camp at Mauthausen,<sup>5</sup> it can be assumed that the ill and those who were no longer capable of working were sent back to Mauthausen to die and were replaced by healthier prisoners.

Beginning in the spring of 1944, the Heinkel factory at Schwechat was subject to repeated Allied bombing raids. One of the heaviest was on April 23, 1944. At least 47 concentration camp prisoners died during this raid, together with 16 guards and the camp commander Engelhardt. There was another raid on the factory on June 26, 1944, which again hit the camp and killed 140 prisoners.<sup>6</sup> The Heinkel factory was completely destroyed. The Schwechat subcamp was therefore evacuated on July 13, 1944, and the prisoners were transferred to the camps at Wien-Floridsdorf or Jedlese. Later they were transferred to Hinterbrühl, where they resumed work for Ernst Heinkel in manufacturing aircraft. The camp command was also transferred from Schwechat to Floridsdorf.

From this point, the history of the Schwechat subcamp is less clear. It is not completely certain that all the prisoners were evacuated on July 13, 1944, only later to be brought back to Schwechat, or whether some remained in Schwechat. What is certain is that from July there was a small work detachment in Schwechat that was under the command of the camp administration now based in Floridsdorf. There are also indications that on August 15, 1944, 350 prisoners from the detachments Santa I, II, and III based in the brewery cellars at Schwechat were sent back to the Schwechat camp.<sup>7</sup> The prisoners who remained in Schwechat worked on the final assembly of the He 162 jet fighter. The fuselages for these aircraft were delivered from the Hinterbrühl subcamp.

The remaining prisoners of the Schwechat detachment were marched on March 31, 1945, to the Hinterbrühl subcamp and then evacuated to Mauthausen. On April 1, 1945, 1,884 prisoners from the detachments at Hinterbrühl and Schwechat (possibly also the inmates of the camps Santa I, II, and III) marched from Hinterbrühl in the direction of the Mauthausen main camp. On April 7, 1945, 1,624 prisoners reached Mauthausen.<sup>8</sup> On the march, 204 prisoners were killed, and 59 escaped.<sup>9</sup>

Lagerführer Streitwieser was captured by the Americans but was able to escape. He assumed a false identity and was officially declared dead in 1953. However, Streitwieser's cover identity was detected. He was arrested again in 1956 (the first of several arrests), released several times, and in 1967 sentenced by the state court in Cologne to life imprisonment.<sup>10</sup>

He died in prison. Rapportführer Bühner was sentenced by a French military court to death for crimes committed at Hinterbrühl and Ebensee. He was executed.<sup>11</sup> Former Kapo Franz Dieplinger was tried before the Vienna state court.<sup>12</sup> Dieplinger was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for mistreating prisoners.

**SOURCES** The Schwechat subcamp is still one of the least-researched Mauthausen subcamps. There is hardly any published material on the camp. Christian Bernadac's *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976) devotes a large chapter to the Schwechat work detachment. The ASt-Schw published a collection of documents on the subcamp: Adolf Ezsöl, "Das KLM-Arbeitslager Wien-Schwechat 2," *Schw ANach* 2 (1995).

Adolf Ezsöl has collected a considerable number of source documents for the ASt-Schw. The AG-M also holds a collection on Schwechat, including interviews with survivors. There is also a collection in the IPN. Source material on the Ernst Heinkel group and the construction of the factory at Schwechat are kept by the BA-MA. Some documents involving Schwechat may be found in DÖW, ed., *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Niederösterreich, 1933–45: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1987).

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Transport List, August 30, 1943, AG-M, B/53/2.
2. Variation Report, September 19, 1943, AG-M, Y/49b.
3. Subcamp Roll Call Book, AG-M, E/6/11.
4. See the documents on the subcamp at Schwechat in DÖW, ed., *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Niederösterreich 1934–45: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1987), 3:620–623.
5. Various Variation Reports, AG-M, Y/45.
6. List of Prisoners Killed during the Bombing Raid on June 26, 1944, AG-M, B/53/4.
7. Report by Marian Kryszak, AG-M, B/53/3.
8. List of the Evacuation Transports from the Subcamps, AG-M, B/60/11.
9. List of Prisoners' Movements during the Evacuation, AG-M, B/60/13.
10. LG Cologne 24 Ks 1/66 (Z) 40-9/65 Lg.
11. LG Vienna, AZ 20 Vr 3625/75 (Gogl), vol. 1, 375.
12. LG Vienna, Vg 8e Vr 781/55.

## WIEN-SCHWECHAT – “SANTA” KOMMANDOS

The work detachments Santa I, II, and III, which were located in the cellars of the brewery in Schwechat, a village a few kilometers east of Vienna, are some of the least researched subcamps of the Mauthausen concentration camp. For that reason, there is scarcely any reliable information on these camps. However, the history of these work detachments is presumably closely connected with the history of the work detachments at Schwechat-Heidfeld and Floridsdorf. The Schwechat-Heidfeld subcamp was heavily damaged during an Allied air raid on July 13, 1944. As a result, the camp was

closed and evacuated, and parts of the Ernst Heinkel factory producing airplanes were relocated underground first to Floridsdorf and later to Hinterbrühl and also to the brewery's cellars in Schwechat. The entire complex of camps was referred to as Wien-Floridsdorf.

A report by former Polish prisoner Marian Kryszak refers to the detachments known under the code name “Santa.”<sup>1</sup> Kryszak mentions the bombing and the following transfer of the detachment Schwechat-Heidfeld to Floridsdorf. Some of the prisoners transferred to Floridsdorf, according to Kryszak, were transferred partly to the subcamp at Hinterbrühl and partly to the work detachments Santa I, II, and III at Schwechat.

Different dates are given for the establishment of the Santa detachments. The former camp recorder Hans Maršálek states in his book on Mauthausen, the standard work on the camp, that the detachments were formed in December 1944. Some hints given by Kryszak, on the other hand, allow the conclusion to be drawn that prisoners were allocated to the Santa I, II, and III detachments even before August 15, 1944.

The discrepancies presumably are a result of the confusion of the various detachments. This is the result of the imprecise and contradictory recording of the subcamp names in the camp administration records. For example, the International Tracing Service (ITS) lists Wien-Floridsdorf II and III with the code names Santa, whereas some camp administration documents, when referring to Floridsdorf I and II, are obviously referring to the detachments at Floridsdorf and Jedlese.

The prisoners were presumably involved in the manufacture of aircraft parts for the Ernst Heinkel group. However, there are suggestions that the Santa detachments were connected somehow to the Flugmotorenwerke (Aircraft Motor Works) Ostmark, which was located in Wiener Neudorf. It is very likely that the detachments Santa I, II, and III were part of the Wien-Floridsdorf camp complex and were under the direction of its commander Anton Streitwieser.

At the end of March 1945, when the Red Army was getting close to Vienna, the order was given to evacuate all camps from the Vienna region. There is no direct evidence when the Santa detachments were evacuated or the manner of their evacuation. Reports on prisoner movements suggest that it is most likely that these detachments were evacuated on March 31, 1945, via the subcamp at Hinterbrühl to Mauthausen.<sup>2</sup> Hinterbrühl served as a collecting point. On April 1, 1945, 1,884 prisoners were sent from Hinterbrühl on a death march in the direction of Mauthausen; 204 prisoners died on this march, and 56 were reported as either missing or having escaped.<sup>3</sup>

**SOURCES** There is no concrete information on the Santa I, II, and III detachments in the literature. Christian Bernadac's book *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976) devotes a chapter to the Mauthausen subcamps established for the Ernst Heinkel group.

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There are hardly any archival sources that explicitly refer to the Santa I, II, and III detachments. Marian Kryszak's report and some survivor interviews are held in the AG-M. The ASt-Schw also holds a few documents referring to these detachments.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

### NOTES

1. AG-M, B/53/3.
2. List of the Evacuation Transports from the Subcamps, AG-M, B/60/11.
3. Reports from the Camp Record Office on Prisoner Movements during the Evacuation Marches from April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/13.



# MITTELBAU



Camouflaged entrance to the underground rocket factory at Mittelbau concentration camp, April 12, 1945.

USHMM WS #66285, COURTESY OF NARA

## MITTELBAU MAIN CAMP [AKA DORA]

The Mittelbau (Central Construction) concentration camp was the last main camp created by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) and the only one not named after a specific place. It officially came into being on October 28, 1944, but its origins stretched back to the founding of a subcamp of Buchenwald, code-named “Dora,” on August 28, 1943. On that date, the SS trucked 107 Buchenwald prisoners to tunnels in the southern Harz Mountains, near the small central German city of Nordhausen. These unlucky individuals were to pave the way for the thousands of their comrades tasked with converting a central petroleum reserve for the Reich into a secret factory for the A4 (*Aggregat 4*) ballistic missile, later christened the Vengeance Weapon (*Vergeltungswaffe*) 2, or V-2. While Dora was far from the first location where prisoners were sent out of a main camp to be used in the armaments industry, rather than exploited in SS camp industries, it also proved to be highly influential—a model for the many new and often grotesquely unrealistic underground projects that the Nazi leadership ordered into existence in response to the Anglo-American strategic bombing offensive. The Nordhausen region got a number of such projects, and Mittelbau emerged as the camp system that embodied in its purest form the final phase of the SS concentration camps: that of large-scale exploitation of prisoners for work in the war economy.

In the end, Mittelbau proved true to its name. In a system of up to 40 subcamps attached to Dora, most of the prisoners worked in the construction of underground and aboveground facilities under murderous conditions. Other than the V-2, and later V-1, missiles that came out of the underground plant, very few weapons were actually produced in Mittelbau camps. Thus, the emphasis on Mittelbau as a weapons production complex in much of the historiography is certainly exaggerated, as German scholar Jens-Christian Wagner has pointed out. In fact, out of the approximately 40,000 prisoners in Mittelbau in March 1945 (of whom approximately 16,000 were in the main camp), under 6,000 at the main camp and those at a few small subcamps were actually employed in production. The majority were construction workers and miners, supplemented by thousands of utterly ill and exhausted survivors of the evacuations of Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen since the beginning of the year.

The first seven months of Dora’s existence were devoted entirely to the conversion into a V-2 factory of tunnels owned by the Wifo (Wirtschaftliche Forschungsgesellschaft mbH, Economic Research Co., Ltd.), a state-owned enterprise devoted to strategic underground war reserves. A British air raid against the German Army rocket research center at Peenemünde on the Baltic on August 17–18, 1943, had provoked precipitate action on the part of Adolf Hitler, Albert Speer, and



Mittelbau prisoners work on the tail assembly of the V2 rocket, possibly in Hall 35, 1944.

USHMM WS #31596, COURTESY OF ULLSTEIN BILD

Heinrich Himmler to evacuate rocket production to an underground site. The assembly-line machinery had to be moved to the Nordhausen region from Peenemünde and also from two other unfinished V-2 assembly plants at Friedrichshafen and Wiener Neustadt. Along with them eventually came the SS prisoners who had been in subcamps at Peenemünde and the Rax-Werke in Wiener Neustadt, along with civilian personnel. On September 21, Speer’s Armaments Ministry created a state-owned firm, Mittelwerk GmbH (Central Works Ltd.—a veiled reference to the geographic location) to assemble the missiles and, together with the army, struggled to maintain the upper hand vis-à-vis the SS. During the discussions at Führer headquarters immediately after the Peenemünde raid, Himmler had named as his key man SS-Brigadeführer Dr.-Ing. Hans Kammler, the head of WVHA Amtsgruppe C, Construction. Kammler was an exceedingly energetic, ambi-

tious, and ruthless man. While the Mittelwerk company would never formally leave the control of Speer's ministry, and the camp reported to Buchenwald and later directly to the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL), WVHA Amtsgruppe D, Kammler would be the decisive personality throughout the history of Mittelbau.

Camp commandant throughout most of the short history of Dora and Mittelbau was SS-Sturmbannführer Otto Förchner, who had served in subsidiary positions at Buchenwald since February 1942, after service on the Eastern Front. Förchner was a noncommissioned officer (NCO) in the Reichswehr before transferring to the SS in 1934 as a military instructor. He was thus not of the cadre of long-serving camp SS officers schooled at Dachau and elsewhere and was not noted for particular cruelty—but neither did he care much about the horrendous suffering at Dora in the early months. On the Buchenwald model, he relied on “red triangle” German political prisoners in non-SS administrative positions, notably Communists like Albert Kuntz, who supervised camp construction; Georg Thomas; and Ludwig Szymczak, the camp elder (*Lagerältester*). When the latter two refused to carry out an execution of a prisoner in March 1944, they were removed from their posts and thrown in the Bunker, and a “green triangle” criminal prisoner, Willi Zwiener, was briefly put in their place. But Thomas and Szymczak were released back to the barracks, and Förchner put other political prisoners, notably Christian Beham, into the position of *Lagerälteste* again in the summer and fall of 1944.

During the first phase of Dora, Kammler placed little emphasis on the aboveground camp on the south side of Kohnstein Mountain, next to the tunnel exits, because it diverted labor from the building of the infrastructure and the conversion of the tunnels, both subcontracted through the local Wifo office. Thus, the unfortunate inmates of Dora were forced to sleep and live underground, in some cases, not to see daylight for months. Early arrivals from Buchenwald lived in tents near the entrance to main tunnel B, but by the end of September 1943, the ever-growing number of prisoners were bedded on straw on the bare rock of cross-tunnel 39 until wooden bunks four levels high were built into dead-end tunnels 43 to 46 at the south end of main tunnel A. (The tunnel system formed a ladderlike network connecting the north and south sides of the mountain, with 46 cross-tunnels between the two main tunnels.) Tunnel A had not been completed when Mittelwerk took over, so mining and blasting operations to break through to the south side of the Kohnstein continued right next to the “sleeping tunnels” (*Schlafstollen*).

The noise, dust, and noxious gases from the blasting and from trains hauling rock exacerbated an already catastrophic health situation for the prisoners. Water was in short supply; the only toilets were oil barrels cut in half with boards over them, but they were too few in number; many relieved themselves in the tunnels. The stench became intolerable, and disease and vermin proliferated. Soon cases of pneumonia, tuberculosis, typhoid, and dysentery took a dreadful toll, combined with total exhaustion inflicted by 12-hour days of

backbreaking labor with poor sleep and minimal equipment. Registered deaths shot up from 5 in September 1943 to 669 in January 1944. By the end of January, there were 12,682 registered prisoners, the highest total in the early history of Dora; and 8,000 to 10,000 of them still lived underground. The catastrophic death rate continued in February and March 1944, and three transports, each of 1,000 extremely ill and dying prisoners—to Lublin-Majdanek on January 15 and February 6, and to Bergen-Belsen on March 27—raised the de facto death toll to nearly 6,000 by the beginning of April. The camp population in these months was all male and non-Jewish; the predominant prisoner groups in order of size were Soviet, Polish, French, German, Belgian, and Italian.

From the standpoint of Kammler, Speer, and others, however, the catastrophic working conditions of the winter of 1943–1944 served their purpose: V-2 assembly began in late December. But production numbers only rose slowly in the spring, and quality was poor. “Sabotage” inevitably became a great concern; prisoners were hanged for it, often with little proof. It appears, however, that the mostly individual attempts at sabotage do not explain the frequent failures of the V-2s, which were riddled with technical problems.

With the arrival of better weather, the evacuation of the remaining prisoners from the tunnels into the barracks camp, and the beginnings of V-2 production in the Mittelwerk, the situation in Dora much improved; the death rate fell dramatically. At the same time, Kammler's many new underground projects in the Harz region necessitated the creation of new subcamps, the largest of which were Ellrich (“Erich”) and Harzungen (“Hans”). Although subordinate to Buchenwald, they increasingly came under the control of Dora, to which they were closely tied, in part because they gave Förchner a new mechanism for ridding Dora of exhausted and unskilled inmates. The best educated and technically qualified prisoners, primarily from Western Europe, were selected to serve on the missile assembly line, while the others were put on the harsher outdoor, transport, and construction Kommandos. In the words of Wagner, the SS in Mittelbau-Dora developed a system of “mobile selection,” where inmates who were worn out or less valuable were transferred to Kommandos, subcamps, infirmaries, or “death blocks” of increasing harshness, so that the weakest died off.

In this system, the best-treated inmates, other than the mostly German and Czech “reds” and “greens” in administrative and Kapo positions, were the assembly-line workers for the Mittelwerk company, which employed between 5,000 and 6,000 prisoners (and 2,000 to 3,000 German civil workers) on two 12-hour shifts, six days a week. (A roughly equal number of Dora prisoners worked on Wifo construction projects.) In an effort to secure better labor, Mittelwerk supplied shoes and other items to the SS camp and instituted a premium wage system, where chits could be earned for use in the camp canteen. Yet however much the factory came to resemble a modern high-technology enterprise, as demonstrated in color propaganda photos from mid-1944, it remained a fundamentally barbaric production site. In June, the company



Table 1

Prisoner Population and Deaths in Mittelbau-Dora August 1943 to March 1945

Month	Number of Dora Prisoners	Deaths in Dora	Number of Sub-Camp Prisoners	Deaths in Sub-Camps
Aug. 1943	107	0	0	0
Sep. 1943	3394	5	0	0
Oct. 1943	6918	22	0	0
Nov. 1943	9887	170	0	0
Dec. 1943	10475	630	0	0
Jan. 1944	12682	669	0	0
Feb. 1944	12242	570	0	0
Mar. 1944	12263	721	200	0
Apr. 1944	10948	240	1663	10
May 1944	12386	136	4787	21
June 1944	11757	101	8161	18
July 1944	11804	89	9349	38
Aug. 1944	12537	54	14387	105
Sep. 1944	14643	56	15729	56
Oct. 1944	13816	160	18659	120
Nov. 1944	14226	48	19067	235
Dec. 1944	14959	64	18838	507
Jan. 1945	14867	129	16144	634
Feb. 1945	19360	306	22714	1035
Mar. 1945	18398	300	20280	2250

Source: Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes: Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2001), Anlage 5, p. 647, based on sources in Yad Vashem, National Archives microfilm M-1079, Hauptstaatsarchiv Düsseldorf/Zweigarchiv Kalkum, and Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar. Prisoner numbers are totals at the end of the month.

directors found it necessary to issue a confidential decree to the German civilian workers forbidding them from beating the prisoners and even stabbing them “with sharp instruments”!<sup>1</sup> Cold, hunger, accusations of sabotage, and the threat of violence were constant companions for the Mittelwerk prisoner workforce.

As time went on, and subassembly production was evacuated into the tunnels because of Allied air attacks, the number of prisoners working for companies other than Mittelwerk GmbH increased to several hundred in number. Askania was among the firms with Kommandos. V-2 production was disrupted, however, by political interventions because of the slowness of the weapon to develop technically and also by a takeover of 40 percent of the tunnel area by the state-owned Junkers Aircraft Co., which set up the Nordwerk (North Works) aircraft engine plant in the northern part of the tunnel system in late spring. With a tiny number of exceptions, Junkers did not employ SS prisoners but, rather, moved its civilian forced laborers to the Nordhausen area. Mittelwerk

then consolidated its V-2 production line into tunnels 21 to 42 and, in August 1944, accepted a contract for production of the V-1 cruise missile. The former “sleeping tunnels” (43 to 46) were outfitted for this purpose, and 300 skilled Hungarian Jewish SS prisoners were transferred from the Volkswagen company, which ultimately lost the V-1 lead contractor role to Mittelwerk in October. Earlier in the summer, Dora got 1,000 other Hungarian Jews from Auschwitz via Buchenwald, but these Jews were employed primarily in the worst construction jobs in Dora, Harzungen, and Ellrich.

The creation of the Junkers Nordwerk and the rise of the Mittelbau subcamps beginning in March 1944 were provoked by the same phenomenon: near panic in the Nazi leadership as a result of American daylight assaults on the aircraft industry in late February. On March 1, Speer created a “Fighter Staff,” led by the Armaments and Air ministries, with its primary goal the rapid increase in fighter production for air defense. This gave powerful backing to plans already under way to transfer aircraft production underground; SS-General



Hans Kammler thus came to play a central role through his new position as Sonderstab Kammler (Special Staff Kammler). He supervised a number of underground projects given “A” or “B” numbers, as well as some of the SS-Construction Brigades (Baubrigaden) that were transferred to the region beginning in May 1944 for various road and railroad-building projects. The prisoners of the Baubrigaden were subordinated to Dora/Mittelbau until January 1945, at which time they were put under the jurisdiction of Sachsenhausen. The largest and most important underground projects in the Nordhausen region were on either side of the valley on the northeast side of the Kohnstein, especially B3, near Woffleben, and B11 and B12, on the other side of the existing Mittelwerk tunnels. On April 1, 1944, the SS founded Harzungen, which supplied laborers to B3 and later also to B11. It was originally built as a civilian labor camp and was thus better outfitted; the SS guard force was also supplemented with transfers from the Luftwaffe, which lessened the brutality but certainly did not eliminate it. The main camp for B3, however, was founded on May 2 at the town of Ellrich in the Juliushütte, an abandoned gypsum factory that had processed the anhydrite rock mined from the original tunnels. The conditions in this camp were especially disastrous and the treatment of the prisoners especially brutal. Further subcamps in the region proliferated to the end of the war, for the Mittelwerk and for the Geilenberg program of underground oil production but mostly for Kammler’s various projects.

The formal subordination of these new camps to Buchenwald did not prevent the growing centralization of authority under commandant Förschner in Dora in order to save resources and gain flexibility. On June 8, the main camp received the designation “Mittelbau I,” while Harzungen and Ellrich-Juliushütte were grouped as “Mittelbau II”; in mid-July the SS guard force at the various subcamps in the region was unified into one Mittelbau Kommando under the supervision of the Buchenwald Death’s Head Unit. On September 10, Förschner renamed Ellrich “Mittelbau II” and Harzungen “Mittelbau III” and reorganized the subordination of various Kommandos. The official WVHA order creating Mittelbau, which was made on September 30 and which came into effect on October 28, 1944, was thus almost a formality. On November 1, the SS counted 32,471 prisoners in the system, of which 13,738 were in the main camp still informally known as Dora; over half were Russian or Polish.

During the last phase of Mittelbau’s existence, the production lines in Mittelwerk continued to run smoothly almost to the last day before evacuation, but the persecution and suffering of the prisoners in the main camp, not to mention the subcamps, dramatically increased. Although Mittelwerk never reached its specified output of 900 V-2s per month, beginning in September it produced between 600 and 700 monthly—over 20 complicated ballistic missiles per day. Between November and March, the company also assembled 6,000 much simpler V-1s, about equivalent to its total production of V-2s during the war. The death toll in Dora did not begin climbing again until after the beginning of the year, when large num-

bers of evacuated prisoners from Auschwitz, Gross-Rosen, and other eastern camps began arriving, but November marked a significant change in atmosphere. An alleged plot among the Soviet prisoners to stage an armed uprising on the anniversary of the October Revolution provoked the Gestapo not only to arrest alleged ringleaders but also to smash the informal resistance leadership in the camp, which included the German Communists Thomas, Kuntz, Szymczak, and Beham, as well as prominent French prisoners. Those arrested were thrown in the Mittelbau-Dora Bunker and other local Gestapo prisons and tortured. The pace of executions increased. Förschner and his SS subordinates now permanently installed “green” criminal prisoners in positions of responsibility, including Roman Drung as Lagerältester.

The repression was ratcheted up yet further when on February 1, 1945, Himmler replaced Mittelbau commandant Otto Förschner with Richard Baer, the last commandant of Auschwitz. The Gestapo-SD security apparatus had criticized Förschner for his reliance on Albert Kuntz and other “Reds” who turned out to be resistance leaders, but the last straw was the discovery that he failed to report a 10,000 Reichsmark (RM) bonus he had received from Mittelwerk. The evacuation of Auschwitz in late January left many hardened SS camp officers without posts, and Baer promptly installed his former subordinates throughout the Mittelbau hierarchy. Yet the great increase in executions in February and especially in March, including a number of mass hangings in the camps and in the tunnels, was largely the responsibility of SS-Obersturmbannführer Helmut Bischoff, the head of security for Mittelwerk and the V-weapons program. Effectively Bischoff reported directly to Kammler. The executions reached grotesque proportions after an attempted breakout of about 20 Soviet prisoners in the Mittelbau-Dora Bunker on the night of March 9. Two days later, 57 Soviets were hanged, and on March 21 and 22, 30 again each day. The German Communist leaders who had survived torture were shot in the last days of the camp.

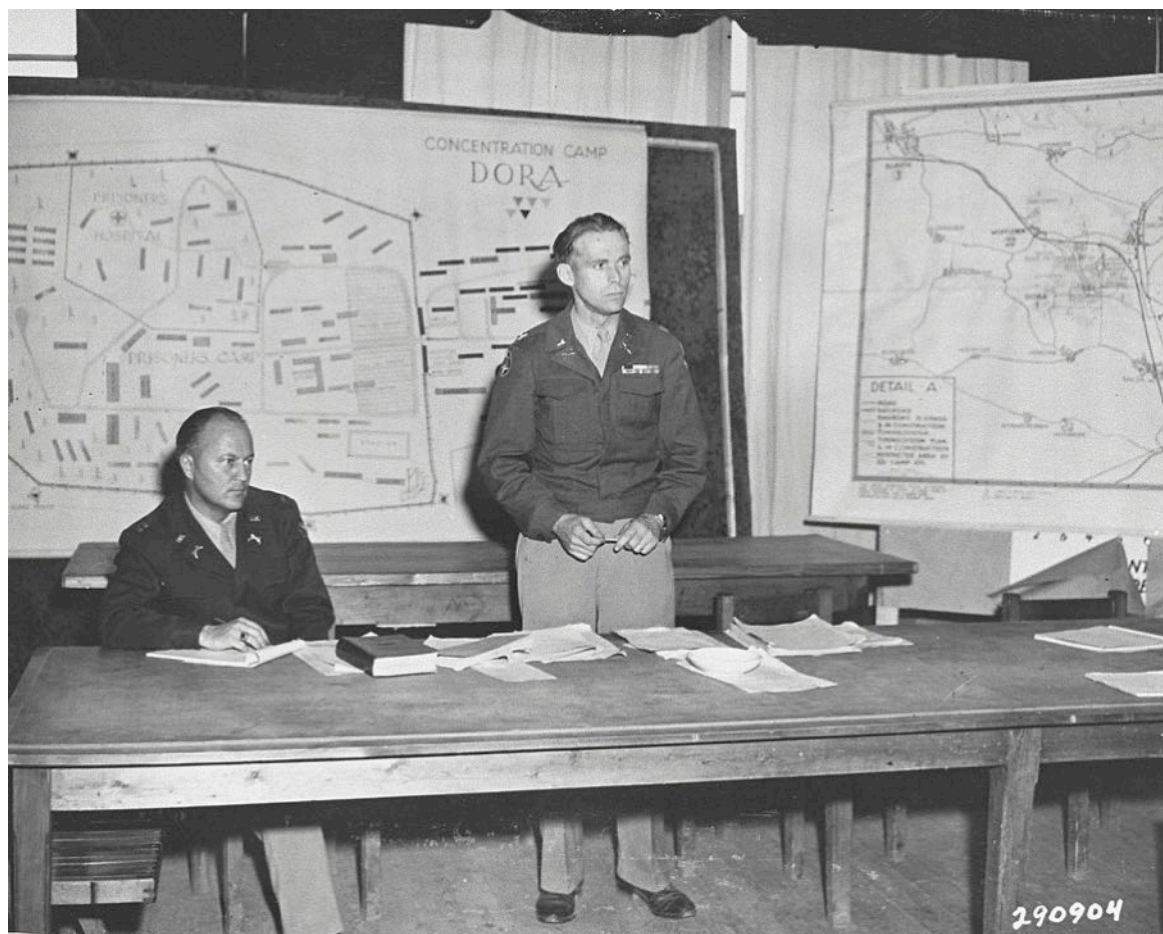
At about the same time as Baer became commandant, evacuation trains began arriving from Auschwitz and later from Gross-Rosen, which had the most profound impact on the Mittelbau camp system of all events of the last few months. Over 16,000 inmates, many in disastrous condition, were dumped into the Mittelbau system by the end of March, 10,000 of them from Gross-Rosen alone and a large percentage of them Jewish. These trains also had many dead who were not even registered; the corpses were piled up, and when the crematoria could not handle the load, they were burned outside. Dora’s population temporarily shot up from 14,000 to 21,000 in February, before many were transported to Ellrich-Juliushütte and other subcamps, including a new location for mass suffering, the former Luftwaffe base in Nordhausen, Boelcke-Kaserne. The seriously ill were dumped onto straw laid out in the airplane hangers and left to die. Even before the final evacuation, 2,250 from there and Ellrich were shipped off to Bergen-Belsen in an “annihilation transport.”<sup>2</sup>

The end came at the beginning of April. On April 1, work stopped in Mittelwerk. On April 3 and 4, the Royal Air Force burned down much of Nordhausen in two raids that also killed up to 1,500 at Boelcke-Kaserne. Baer and the camp leadership began the evacuation on April 4 by train and foot, abandoning only several hundred seriously ill in Dora and Boelcke-Kaserne. The ensuing death marches and trains had the same catastrophic and senseless pattern seen elsewhere; surviving Mittelbau inmates ended up at Bergen-Belsen, Ravensbrück, and many other places as far away as Austria, with a death toll in the thousands. The most infamous crime of the evacuation took place at the village of Gardelegen, where 1,016 marchers from Mittelbau and Neuengamme subcamps were locked in a barn and burned alive or shot if they tried to escape. Only 20 to 25 prisoners survived. Wagner estimates that over 8,000 died during the evacuations, raising the final Mittelbau toll to over 20,000.

On April 11, 1945, elements of the U.S. 3rd Armored and 104th Infantry Divisions reached Nordhausen and discovered the horrific situation at Boelcke-Kaserne, where sick and dying survivors lay with the corpses of the prisoners burned in

the air raids. Not much later, the liberators also found the Mittelwerk tunnels and Dora. The scene in Nordhausen provoked outrage among the occupiers; the U.S. Army made a propaganda film that made the name of the city briefly infamous. But soon afterward came a different set of U.S. Army personnel who were only interested in the technology. Before the Soviets could move forward into their prescribed occupation zone, U.S. forces removed large numbers of missile parts and personnel. The operation to exploit German science and technology that came to be known as Operation Paperclip had one of its most important origins here. After the Soviets moved forward on July 5, they too were eager to grab the fruits of German rocket and missile technology and used some Mittelwerk facilities to assemble and refurbish some V-2s and later sent many German engineers and technicians to the USSR.

The first SS functionaries from the camp to be tried were 12 charged by the British in the Bergen-Belsen trial of fall 1945; 3 were hanged, including the last Mittelbau Schutzhaft-lagerführer, Franz Hössler, better known for his role at Auschwitz. The longtime commandant, Otto Förchner, was



US prosecutors Captains John J. Ryan and William F. McGarry listen to testimony during the Nordhausen trial, September 19, 1947. In the background is a map of Mittelbau-Dora.  
USHMM WS #43067, COURTESY OF NARA

executed in May 1946 by the U.S. Army for his actions in the Dachau subcamps at the end of the war. At Dachau in late 1947, the army also held the only dedicated Allied trials for Dora/Mittelbau; of the 18 SS members and 5 Kapos tried, 1 was executed, and 18 received prison terms. Also tried was the general director of Mittelwerk from May 1944 to the end, Georg Rickhey, but he was acquitted because of the narrow focus on individual mistreatment of prisoners. In the Soviet Zone and German Democratic Republic (GDR), 1 SS officer was sentenced to 20 years, another executed, but during most of the 1950s, little further interest was paid to the issue on either side of the border. After the founding in 1958 of a central authority in West Germany for investigating war crimes, however, renewed investigations were made into Mittelbau. Ultimately, they led to the “Dora Trial” in Essen from 1967 to 1970. Richard Baer had earlier been discovered living under an assumed name during the investigations for the Auschwitz Trial, and he committed suicide in prison in 1963. So the court tried Helmut Bischoff, security chief of the Mittelbau region; Erwin Busta, an infamous SS guard; and Ernst Sander, a Gestapo officer. Just before the announcement of the sentencing on May 8, 1970, Bischoff was released on grounds of poor health (yet somehow lived to 1991); Busta and Sander got terms of 7.5 and 8.5 years, respectively, but also were allowed on health grounds to avoid further imprisonment.

Thus ended the last trials on this subject, but the name Dora has lived on because of its connection to the group of German rocket engineers around Dr. Wernher von Braun who became so prominent in the U.S. space program. The case of Arthur Rudolph, a close subordinate of von Braun and a key figure in the Apollo lunar landing project, attracted particular attention; he left the United States in 1984 rather than fight a denaturalization hearing initiated by the Justice Department for his role as production manager for Mittelwerk. Rudolph settled in Hamburg, but the German prosecutor decided that there was no longer sufficient evidence to make a case; he died at the beginning of 1996. One thing definitely came of the Rudolph case: the story of Mittelbau-Dora can no longer be left out of the history of the German rocket program, as it was for much of the Cold War.

**SOURCES** The first person to take a scholarly interest in the Mittelbau camp was a native of the Nordhausen region, Manfred Bornemann. His article with Martin Broszat, “Das KL Dora-Mittelbau,” in *Studien zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager*, ed. Martin Broszat (Stuttgart: Deutsche-Verlags-Anstalt, 1970), pp. 154–198, and his book *Geheimprojekt Mittelbau* (1971; repr., Bonn: Bernhard & Graefe, 1994) focus on the underground plant, V-2 production, and Dora, the primary emphasis of most historians until recently. The lit-

erature on the rocket program is large; see especially Michael J. Neufeld, *The Rocket and the Reich* (New York: Free Press, 1995). For V-1 production in the Mittelwerk, see the relevant sections in Hans Mommsen and Manfred Grieger, *Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf: ECON, 1996). Recently discovered stunning color photographs of the underground plant and French prisoner art from Dora are featured in the exhibition catalog of Yves Le Maner and André Sellier, *Images de Dora 1943–1945* (St. Omer: La Coupole, 1999). Recently three new histories of the camp and camp system have ushered in a new era of scholarly work on Mittelbau. Joachim Neander’s *Das Konzentrationslager “Mittelbau” in der Endphase der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur*. (Clausthal-Zellerfeld: Papierflieger, 1997) is strongest for the evacuation of the camps. A French survivor of Mittelbau-Dora, André Sellier, has published *Histoire du camp de Dora* (Paris: Éditions la découverte, 1998), which emphasizes the experience of French workers in the Mittelwerk. In English, it is available as *A History of the Dora Camp*, trans. Steven Wright and Susan Taponier, foreword by Michael J. Neufeld, afterword by Jens-Christian Wagner (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, published in association with USHMM, 2003). But the standard scholarly work on the camp is that of Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes: Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 2001), which is superbly researched and for the first time sets the whole Mittelbau camp system in balanced perspective. This book is based upon the author’s dissertation, “Verlagerungswahn und Tod: Die Fiktion eines Rüstungszentrum und der KZ-Komplex Mittelbau-Dora 1943” (Ph.D. diss., Göttingen, 1999).

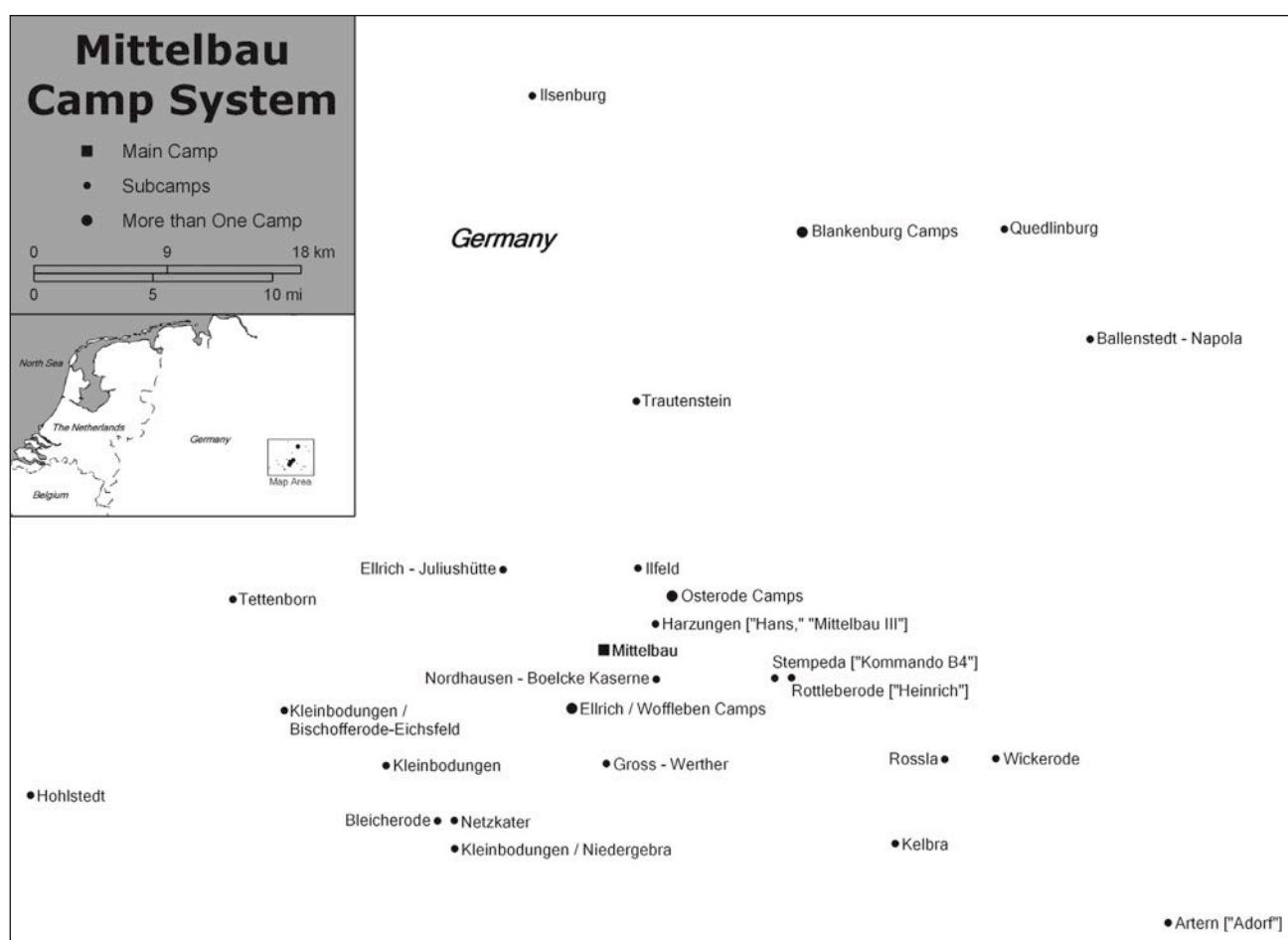
Only remnants of KL Mittelbau and Mittelwerk GmbH records survive, most notably in the BA-BL in RG NS 4 Anhang but also in R 121, Industriebeteiligungsgesellschaft, which includes Mittelwerk GmbH, and R 125, Wifo. There are also Mittelbau-Dora records in the THStA-W, RG NS 4/Bu, in the Buchenwald records. For the Nordhausen trial at Dachau in 1947, see NARA, *United States of America vs. Kurt Andrae, et al.*, Microfilm Publication M-1079, 16 Reels (originals in RG 238, NARA); and for the Essen trial of 1967 to 1970, NWHStA-(D), Zweigarchiv Kalkum, Gerichte Rep. 299; duplicates of the latter are in the ZdL (now BA-L). Also useful are the Peenemünde correspondence with Mittelwerk GmbH, in the DMM, Peenemünde records, File GD 638.8.2, and ITS records on Buchenwald and Mittelbau in the YVA, Microfilms BD3-Bu19-44 and BD11-Do1-6.

Michael J. Neufeld

## NOTES

1. Rickhey and Kettler, “Sonder-Direktions-Anweisung,” June 22, 1944, BA-BL, NS 4 Anh./3.

2. Jens-Christian Wagner, “Verlagerungswahn und Tod: Die Fiktion eines Rüstungszentrum und der KZ-Komplex Mittelbau-Dora 1943” (Ph.D. diss., Göttingen, 1999), p. 223.





## MITTELBAU SUBCAMP SYSTEM

The Mittelbau concentration camp is regarded as the last National Socialist main concentration camp. It was established in the autumn of 1944 from a dense system of Buchenwald subcamps in the area around Nordhausen, the center of which was the Dora camp. This camp was established in the late summer of 1943 for the purpose of expanding the subterranean Mittelwerk. Rocket production began in January 1944. The Mittelbau concentration camp was known to the public as a rocket concentration camp (Raketen KZ). The establishment of the majority of the other camps in the Mittelbau complex was only indirectly connected with the assembly of rockets. Using the subterranean rocket factory as a model, countless new underground facilities were to be established for Junkers, which was to relocate its various factories underground, and for the development of subterranean facilities for the oil industry. The SS, whose construction arm was under the command of SS-General Dr.-Ing. Hans Kammler, gathered tens of thousands of concentration camp prisoners, for which subcamps would be established close to the planned subterranean facilities. The name of this gigantic construction project was formulated in March 1944 at the headquarters of the Junkers company: Unternehmen Mittelbau. In October 1944, it became the name for a concentration camp complex independent of Buchenwald. Dora, on the other hand, was the name of a Buchenwald subcamp that later became the main camp of the Mittelbau concentration camp (the name "Mittelbau-Dora" encompasses both phases of the camp's development: the Dora subcamp and the independent Mittelbau concentration camp).

From March 1944, as part of the relocation of the Junkers sites, several Buchenwald subcamps were established in the vicinity of the Dora camp. The camp at Rottleberode (code name "Heinrich" or "Kommando A5") was established in the middle of March 1944. There followed at the beginning of April the Harzungen camp (code name "Hans") and, at the beginning of May 1944, the Ellrich-Juliushütte camp (code name "Erich"). The latter was the largest and most feared camp in the subcamp complex. Here, on the site of an unused gypsum factory, an average of 8,000 prisoners labored under catastrophic conditions, packed together very tightly, until they were evacuated at the beginning of April 1945. In Harzungen there was an average of 4,000 prisoners, and in Rottleberode, around 1,000 prisoners.

The camps established after April 1944 were a little smaller in size. Their inmates were used on construction work to improve the infrastructure for the armaments center that was being established in the Nordhausen area, for example, the construction of the Helmetalbahn (the railway at Helme Valley). Along this planned railway line, which was to improve the connection from Nordhausen to northwestern Germany, there arose in the summer and autumn of 1944 several smaller subcamps, whose inmates were the 1,000 prisoners that were

assigned to the SS-Baubrigaden (Construction Brigades) III and IV.

Although the newly established camps were part of the Buchenwald main camp, there was from the very beginning a tendency to centralize administrative matters in the Dora camp. This was especially so for the Ellrich-Juliushütte and Harzungen camps, whose prisoners were used to excavate the shafts for the new underground facilities close to the Mittelwerk. The Labor Deployment (Arbeitseinsatz) Office in the Dora camp made the decision to send newly arriving prisoners or prisoners who had been in the Dora camp for a longer period of time and who, because of their physical constitution or lack of skills, did not seem usable in the rocket production that had begun in January 1944 to the surrounding camps. In the seven months from April 1944 to the time when the Mittelbau-Dora complex became an independent concentration camp, more than 17,000 prisoners were transferred in this way to the camps at Ellrich, Harzungen, and Rottleberode. The Arbeitseinsatz office in Dora was given extra tasks, which if the guidelines of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WHVA) had been followed should have been allocated to the Arbeitseinsatz office in the main concentration camp. The WVHA took this development into account when in the summer of 1944, at the insistence of the camp commandant Förchner, it assigned to the Dora camp SS-Untersturmführer Alois Kurz, from Auschwitz, as Arbeitseinsatzführer.<sup>1</sup>

Gradually, the Dora camp took over other administrative areas of the main camp. For the SS this was a saving in time and cost, as it could forego the establishment of facilities in the new subcamps, as they were already in the Dora camp. Seriously ill prisoners were treated, if they were treated at all, not in the subcamps but in the Dora camp's infirmary or they were transferred back to the main Buchenwald camp. Here were located arrest cells in which prisoners from the subcamps were incarcerated. From no later than the autumn of 1944 the administration at the Dora camp took over the distribution of food and clothing. Altogether there were countless cases of interdependence and interplay between the Dora camp and the other subcamps in the region.

It was not only functional factors that prompted the Südharz (south Harz) subcamps to strive for independence but the fact that the SS camp leadership, despite its formal connection to the Buchenwald concentration camp, was under the direct command of SS-Gruppenführer Kammler. This meant that as early as June 1944 there was an organizational shift. The Dora camp was named "Mittelbau I," and the surrounding camps were all named "Mittelbau II." This change was of short duration, as the strong growth of the Ellrich and Harzungen camps meant that the Mittelbau complex was again reorganized on September 10, 1944: the Dora camp was known as "Mittelbau I," the camps in Ellrich and Harzungen were now known as "Mittelbau II" and

“Mittelbau III.”<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the guards from the SS and the Luftwaffe in the Mittelbau garrison were put under the command of the five companies of the SS-Wachkommando of the Standortführung Mittelbau, which included the guards for the camp of the Baubrigaden III and IV in Wieda, Nüxei, Mackenrode-Tettenborn, Osterhagen, and Ellrich. A little later the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade I in Berga and the SS-Baubrigade I in Sollstedt became part of the Mittelbau garrison.<sup>3</sup>

The independence of the Mittelbau concentration camp in October 1944 was therefore a purely formal act. In addition to the already mentioned camps, on October 28, 1944, the Buchenwald subcamps of Klosterwerke Blankenburg, the camp at the company Curt Heber in Osterode, the Heinrich camp in Rottleberode, and the SS-Baubrigade V were transferred to the Mittelbau concentration camp.<sup>4</sup>

After Mittelbau became an independent concentration camp, it established other subcamps, many of them as part of subterranean construction projects, for example, the camps “Dachs IV” near Osterode (November 1944) and Regenstein near Blankenburg (February 1945), which with 400 to 900 inmates were part of the medium-sized Mittelbau camps. Other camps were much smaller. The first camp established in March 1945, Ilsenburg, whose inmates had to construct a high-voltage power line, had only 15 Italian military internees (IMIs). When the SS, at the beginning of April 1945, evacuated the Mittelbau camps in the face of the approaching U.S. troops, the Mittelbau concentration camp with its 40 subcamps had more than 40,000 inmates. This includes the SS-Baubrigaden stationed in the Nordhausen region, which in January 1945 were formally under the command of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. They remained based at their garrisons even though functionally they were part of the Mittelbau concentration camp.

The SS established its most horrid Mittelbau camp in January 1945 in the Nordhäuser Boelcke-Kaserne. Initially planned as accommodations for prisoner detachments at the Nordhäuser armaments manufacturers, it developed into the main sick and death camp for the Mittelbau concentration camp. This development occurred no later than after the arrival of the evacuation transports from the dissolved Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen concentration camps at the end of January 1945. At the end of March 1945, there were almost 6,000 prisoners in the camp. During its three-month existence, it was the place of death for almost 3,000 people.

The subcamp at Boelcke-Kaserne reflects the character of the Mittelbau concentration camp as a system. Contrary to most other main concentration camps, the Mittelbau concentration camp was a camp system that was given specific functions within the overall camp system. It was the totality of camps that made the Mittelbau concentration camp, a camp that stretched over the whole of the Harz. The towns and villages in the region, in one sense, formed islands of civilian life in a dense landscape of concentration camps.

**SOURCES** The first academic publication to deal with the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp subcamp system was by Manfred Bornemann and Martin Broszat in *Studien zur Ge-*

*schichte der Konzentrationslager* (Stuttgart: DVA, 1970), pp. 154–198. The most important of the more recent studies of the whole Dora concentration camp, including the development of Mittelbau concentration camp, include works by Joachim Neander, *Das Konzentrationslager Mittelbau in der Endphase der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur: Zur Geschichte des letzten im “Dritten Reich” gegründeten selbständigen Konzentrationslagers unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Auflösungsphase* (Clausthal-Zellerfeld: Papierflieger, 1997); André Sellier, *Histoire du camp de Dora* (Paris: Éditions la découverte, 1998); and Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes. Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 2001). The latter has contributed the only work that focuses solely on the subcamp system: “Das Aussenlagersystem des KL Mittelbau-Dora,” in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 1998), pp. 707–729. The work by Erhard Pachaly and Kurt Pelly, *Konzentrationslager Mittelbau-Dora: Zum antifaschistischen Widerstandskampf im KZ Dora 1943–1945* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1990), contains long passages on the genesis of the subcamp system but is not recommended due to trade defects and factual errors.

The most important source on the prisoner transports to the Mittelbau concentration camp and individual camps within the system are the Veränderungsmeldungen der Lagerverwaltung as well as transport lists and prisoner lists from the Mittelbau camps (*Transportliste* and *Häftlingsaufstellungen*), which are, however, only fragmentary and held in a variety of archives (including the ITS: Mittelbau-Ordner und Sachdokumentenarchiv; THStA-W: Bestände, NS 4 Bu, and KZ und Haftanstalten Buchenwald; YVA: Microfilms BD3-Bu19-BD3-Bu44 and BD11-Do1-BD11-Do6). An important documentary collection is the files from the U.S. military trial of those responsible for the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp that took place in Dachau in 1947 (NARA, RG 238, Microfilm Publication M-1079, United States Army Investigation and Trial Records of War Criminals, *USA v. Kurt Andrae, et al.*, 16 Reels).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. NARA, M-1079, Roll 12, frame 239, *USA v. Kurt Andrae, et al.*, Interrogation of Wilhelm Simon (former SS member in the Dora camp Arbeitseinsatzbüro).

2. The final reorganization of the camp was ordered in a “Sonderbefehl der SS-Standortführung Mittelbau,” September 10, 1944, AG-MD, 50.1.4.3/3.

3. Schreiben der “Zentralverwaltung der SS-Kantinen im Standortbereich Mittelbau” an die Standortkantine Buchenwald, September 30, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Bu/229.

4. Verfügung des SS-Wirtschaftsverwaltungs-Hauptamtes zur Vervollständigung des KZ Mittelbau, October 28, 1944, StA-N, NO-2317. As with the subordination of the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigaden VII and VIII, the incorporation of SS-Baubrigade V, based in Stuttgart, was of a purely formal nature. Functionally, there was no connection between these mobile prisoner detachments deployed in parts of Germany and the German-occupied areas in the autumn of 1944 and the Mittelbau concentration camp.

## ARTERN [AKA ADORF, REBSTOCK NEU]

As part of the underground relocation of rocket production in the autumn of 1943, the steel construction firm Gollnow und Sohn, originally based in Stettin, commenced production in an unused railway tunnel near Dernau in Ahrtal (Rheinland-Pfalz). The underground facility was used to produce the ground-based mounts for the A4 (Aggregat 4) rocket. Formally, the facility, called “Rebstock” or “Vorwerk West,” was owned by the Mittelwerk GmbH. From the end of August 1944, Gollnow und Sohn used a few hundred concentration camp prisoners from the nearby Buchenwald Rebstock subcamp, established to support the underground production facilities.

The Rebstock camp did not last long. In the face of an advancing front, the Gollnow company relocated its machines and personnel in stages in the autumn of 1944 to Artern, about 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) southeast of Nordhausen. It recommenced production, under the code name Fa. Geyer und Sohn, in facilities confiscated from the Kyffhäuserhütte and the Malzfabrik “Goldene Aue” AG. Even though the relocation of the machines had begun in October 1944, the production of A4 ground facilities in Artern did not get beyond the initial phases by the end of the war.

The Gollnow/Geyer firm relocated not only its machines from Ahrtal to Thüringen but also its personnel, including the concentration camp prisoners in the Rebstock camp. At the end of November 1944, the first transport left Dernau with just 100 prisoners. With the transfer of the remaining 199 prisoners to Artern, the SS finally closed the Rebstock camp in December 1944. At the same time, the Artern camp (also known as “Adorf” or “Rebstock neu”) was then under the control of the Mittelbau concentration camp. On November 20, 1944, 30 prisoners and, five days later, 20 prisoners were sent from Mittelbau to Artern as an advance work detachment.

The Gollnow or Geyer civilian employees were quartered in a number of private dwellings. The SS initially accommodated the prisoners in temporary facilities in a gymnasium. Later, they were transferred to a newly established barracks camp close to the Malzfabrik (malt factory), which had a barbed-wire fence and guard towers.

For the prisoners, the relocation to Artern meant a dramatic reduction in the quality of their living conditions. They were no longer used primarily in production but in the physically draining work of construction and transport in building the production halls. In addition, the sanitary conditions in the gymnasium and later in the incomplete barracks camp were extremely poor, and the prisoners were crammed into the barracks. At the beginning of 1945, there were around 350 male prisoners in the camp, who had been transferred to Artern from Dernau and the Mittelbau camps at Dora and Kleinbodungen. Overwhelmingly, the prisoners were Polish, French, and Russian. The number of prisoners decreased in the middle of January 1945, when around 80 prisoners were transferred to Mittelbau, but increased a month later when more than 100, mostly Jewish, prisoners, some of whom were severely injured, were taken into the camp from a rail trans-

port. The prisoners had left Buchenwald in the middle of February 1945. They were moving in the direction of Halberstadt when, while close to Artern, they were attacked from the air. The SS left a few of the injured in the Mittelbau infirmary. At least 18 died in Artern, where there was scarcely any chance of medical care for the injured.

The SS recorded 30 deaths in the camp for February and March 1945. They were victims not only of inadequate medical care but also of the poor sanitary conditions in the camp and mistreatment by SS members and Kapos. The camp leader, SS-Hauptscharführer Karl Schmidt, was feared by the prisoners. From 1943–1944, he had been in command of the infamous Buchenwald subcamp “Laura.” His deputy, SS-Unterscharführer Hans Klerch, who had arrived in Artern in January 1945 from Auschwitz, was also feared. The SS installed as prisoner-functionaries mostly German prisoners who wore the green triangle of the “criminals.” The camp elder was Gustav Hartmann. An exception was the camp recorder, Dr. Hans Wolff, a political prisoner.

At the beginning of April 1945, both camp leaders ordered the evacuation of the camp in the face of the approaching U.S. Army. Around 100 prisoners left the camp by rail in the first days of April in the direction of Bergen-Belsen. On April 5, 1945, the remaining prisoners in Artern were forced by the SS to march in two columns from the camp. They marched for three days to the Buchenwald subcamp at Rehmsdorf (Tröglitz). A few days later, they were loaded into open goods wagons. Thus began a journey by rail that lasted for a week, as they wandered through Saxony and Czechoslovakia. The journey ended on May 8, 1945, when the survivors were freed by Czech partisans close to the Austrian border.

After the war, the Gollnow und Sohn firm relocated to West Germany, where it was later taken over by Rheinmetall. None of the SS perpetrators in the Artern camp were tried. Several investigations that took place in the 1970s and 1980s into members of the SS, including the former camp leader Schmidt, were discontinued. However, the statements by former prisoners and Gollnow civilian employees, which were taken as part of the investigation, today form the basic source for the camp’s history.

**SOURCES** Uli Jungbluth published the most comprehensive history of the Artern camp, *Wunderwaffen im KZ “Rebstock”: Zwangsarbeit in Dernau/Rheinland-Pfalz und Artern/Thüringen im Dienste der V-Waffen* (Briedel: Rhein-Mosel-Verlag, 2000). A former German Gollnow civilian employee published in a local magazine a documentary report on the company and the Artern camp: Willi Bleisteiner, “Zur Geschichte der ‘Geyerfirma,’” *Aratora* 5 (1995): 88–92. A few years later, the same magazine published a short article by Joachim Neander on the camp’s evacuation, “Dreiunddreissig Tage ‘auf Transport’: Die Evakuierung des Konzentrationslagers ‘Adorf,’” *Aratora: Zeitschrift des Vereins für Heimatkunde, Geschichte und Schutz von Artern e.V.* 8 (1998): 137–148. Finally, there are references to the Artern camp in a study by Frank Baranowski, *Die verdrängte Vergangenheit: Rüstungsproduktion und Zwangsarbeit in Nordthüringen* (Duderstadt: Mecke Druck und Verlag, 2000);



and the Mittelbau monograph by Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes. Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 2001).

The most important source for prisoner transports to and from Artern are the Mittelbau-Dora Veränderungsmeldungen (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395). Extensive collections of the investigation files on the history of the Rebstock and Artern camps are held at the ZdL (now BA-L), which has file 429 AR-Z 191/72; and the Sta. Koblenz, which has Aktenzeichen 101 4 Js 268/86. Files on the Kyffhäuserhütte and Malzfabrik “Goldene Aue” are held in the postwar Demontageakten in the LHSA-Ma (Rep. K 6 MW, Nr. 5951).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## **BALLENSTEDT (NAPOLA)**

Very little information is available on the Ballenstedt subcamp established on March 17, 1945, in the building of the Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalt (Institution of National Political-Education, Napola) on the Ziegenberg near Ballenstedt. Its purpose, the date it was closed, and the fate of its inmates remain to be uncovered.

According to a former Napola student, the camp’s almost 60 inmates were accommodated in the assembly hall of the main Napola building. The assembly hall was separated from the rest of the building.<sup>1</sup> The SS guards were accommodated elsewhere on the Napola grounds. A few prisoners are said to have worked on constructing a pond for firefighting on the Napola grounds. It is possible that the camp was established for the Junker firm’s construction department, which for air-raid protection reasons had been based in Ballenstedt since 1944, where it administered the Junkers construction projects of the Mittelbau firm.

**SOURCES** There is no published research on the history of the Ballenstedt camp, and there are no known prisoner memoirs. The establishment date of the Ballenstedt camp is based on the Mittelbau concentration camp strength reports (*Veränderungsmeldungen*) that are held in the THStA-W (KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395). Eyewitness reports are held in the collection on the Ballenstedt camp located in AG-MD.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## **NOTE**

1. Bericht Ulrich G., Mai 2003, AG-MD, Materialsammlung Ballenstedt.

## **BLANKENBURG-OESIG [“KLOSTERWERKE”]**

The two camps close to Blankenberg, “Klosterwerke” and “Turmalin,” were an exception within the Mittelbau complex:

unlike most of the other Mittelbau camps, they were not in Südharz. These subcamps were located about 50 kilometers (31 miles) to the north of Nordhausen on the northern edge of the Harz Mountains, and their inmates did not have to work on the Kammler Staff construction sites but were employed by the Organisation Todt (OT). However, their labor was used exactly the same: the prisoners had to excavate underground caverns for the construction of planned subterranean factories.

Planning for both of the Blankenburg underground projects began in March 1944 when representatives of a number of Magdeburg armaments manufacturers traveled with geologist Professor Fritz Dahlgrün from the Reichsamt für Bodenforschung (Reich Office for Soil Research, RABF) to the north Harz to inspect sites that could be suitable for relocating armaments factories underground. They were successful in Blankenburg and other areas, particularly in the sandstone area at Regenstein and in the area around the ore-processing plant at Braunesumpf. After the trip, the representatives of the Magdeburg firms Krupp-Gruson and Schäffer und Budenberg announced that they wished to commence with excavation for underground factories. Shaft work began in May 1944 for the Blankenburg projects “Porphyrt” (also known by the code name “Klosterwerke”) and “Turmalin” (also known by the code name “Odawerke”).

The files that have survived do not clearly reveal for which company the “Porphyrt” caverns, excavated on the mine shaft entrance of the Braunesumpf mine under Michaelstein Mountain, were excavated. It was probably for the Krupp factory in Hamburg-Glinde, which planned to relocate the manufacture of crank shafts into the caverns, but it could also have been the Magdeburg Krupp-Gruson-Werk, which in the spring of 1944 planned to relocate its production facilities to another underground facility in nearby Hoppelberg near Halberstadt (subcamp Langenstein-Zwieberge).

German and civilian workers were first employed on the site, and later 60 Italian penal prisoners were used in construction. Concentration camp prisoners were not allocated to the construction site despite repeated requests to the SS. It was only in the summer of 1944 when the labor shortage increasingly hindered construction that the SS gave into the demands of the OT. On August 24, 1944, the SS transferred around 500 concentration camp prisoners from Buchenwald to Blankenburg, where they were accommodated in the newly established “Klosterwerke” subcamp close to the Blankenburg suburb of Oesig. Around three-quarters of the camp’s inmates were from Belgium. They had only recently been deported from Belgian prisons to Buchenwald in the face of the advancing Allies. Initially, the new subcamp was under the control of the Buchenwald concentration camp, but on October 28, 1944, it was transferred to the Mittelbau concentration camp.

As often happened when subcamps were first established, the prisoners initially had improvised accommodations. Albert van Hoey, who arrived with the first 500 prisoners in Blankenburg at the end of August 1944, later described the



camp as a "desolate place, secured with a three-meter [almost ten feet] high barbed-wire fence and high guard towers. There was a wooden barracks for the SS and forty-two Hitler Youth tents. Twelve prisoners slept in each tent. We slept on straw with our heads facing out and our feet to the middle."<sup>1</sup> A prisoner detachment of which van Hoey was a member had the task to construct barracks for the prisoners in the following months. The first barracks was occupied in October 1944, but it had no doors or windows. The other five accommodation barracks as well as a kitchen and infirmary barracks were ready by the winter.

All prisoners, with the exception of the functionaries and those constructing the camp or engaged in transport duties, were forced to work on the Porphyr construction site, either above or below ground. Another work detachment was for a time involved in the construction of the nearby Gestapo camp for "Half Jews and Jewish Relatives." Those prisoners were also forced to work on the OT construction site at the Porphyr project.

Many prisoners quickly fell ill due to the harsh working conditions, chronic hunger, and the completely inadequate sanitary conditions in the Klosterwerke camp. There were no bathing or shower facilities. From the autumn of 1944, the death rate in the camp increased. Initially, the corpses were taken to the Quedlinburg city crematorium for cremation. Later, the SS had the corpses hurriedly buried in a trough outside the camp fence. After the end of the war, local citizens were ordered by U.S. soldiers to exhume the corpses and reinter them in the Blankenburg cemetery.

By the winter of 1944–1945, the number of prisoners had not increased in the Klosterwerke camp, initially controlled by Buchenwald and from the end of October 1944 by Mittelbau. In February and March 1945, the SS transferred more than 100 prisoners from the main camp and Boelcke-Kaserne to Blankenburg. Included in the transfer were many Polish Jews who shortly before had arrived in Nordhausen from Auschwitz. They, in particular, suffered from the terror and mistreatment by the SS and Kapos.

The treatment was to get worse when, in March 1945, the camp leader, SS-Oberscharführer Dieterich, was replaced by SS-Oberscharführer Hans Mirbeth from Auschwitz. The end of the Klosterwerke camp began on April 4, 1945, when 48 sick prisoners were transferred to the main camp. Two days later, the remainder of the camp's inmates, as well as the inmates from the nearby camp at Turmalin, were forced to set forth on foot under SS supervision toward the Elbe River. The survivors of both camps (dozens of exhausted prisoners had been shot by the SS along the way) were loaded onto a river barge to the north of Magdeburg. The barge took them to Lübeck. From there the prisoners of the Klosterwerke subcamp began a march on April 13, 1945, in a northwesterly direction toward the Glasau Manor. Upon their arrival, they were put in a barn while the SS guards under the command of Mirbeth established themselves in the manor house. Around two weeks later, on April 30, 1945, the West European prisoners, who were the majority, were liberated. They were taken

away by truck by the Swedish Red Cross to Lübeck and then were taken by ship to Sweden. All the remaining prisoners, including the Polish Jews, were taken on the same day by the SS on foot in the direction of Neustadt on the Baltic, where they were put onto two ships, already laden with thousands of Neuengamme concentration camp prisoners that were at anchor in the bight. One of the ships, the *Cap Arcona*, sank a few days later when attacked during a British air raid and became the tomb for an unknown number of prisoners from the Klosterwerke subcamp.

There has never been a judicial investigation into the Klosterwerke camp and the crimes committed on the death marches. The last camp leader, Mirbeth, was sentenced by the Bremen Landgericht (Regional Court) in 1953 to six years in prison, but only for crimes he committed in Auschwitz.

**SOURCES** Details on the camp and the Porphyr construction project are to be found in the Mittelbau monograph by Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes: Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen, 2001).

Besides the relevant files left behind by the SS, and which are held in microfilm in the YVA (Microfilms BD11-Do1-6, ITS records on Mittelbau), there are documents on forced labor held in the collection of the ASt-BIb. The judgment of the Bremen Landgericht on the camp leader Hans Mirbeth of November 27, 1953, has been published in the documents contained in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen: Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen* (Amsterdam, 1974), 11:497–658. The memoir by a surviving prisoner, Albert van Hoey, "Todesmarsch und Befreiung," is included in Gerhard Hoch and Rolf Schwarz, eds., *Verschleppt zur Sklavenarbeit: Kriegsgefangene und Zwangsarbeiter in Schleswig Holstein* (Alveshohe, 1988), pp. 7–12. Van Hoey published a second memoir: "Das Aussenlager 'Klosterwerk'—Blankenburg/Harz," in *Erinnern: Aufgabe, Chance, Herausforderung* (Magdeburg, 2002), pp. 12–18.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. Albert van Hoey, "Todesmarsch und Befreiung," in *Verschleppt zur Sklavenarbeit: Kriegsgefangene und Zwangsarbeiter in Schleswig Holstein*, ed. Gerhard Hoch and Rolf Schwarz (Alveshohe, 1988), p. 9.

## BLANKENBURG-REGENSTEIN ("TURMALIN")

At the end of October 1944, the "Klosterwerke" camp in Blankenburg, established two months earlier, was put under the control of the Mittelbau concentration camp. At the beginning of February 1945, a second subcamp was established in Blankenburg, "Turmalin."

The Turmalin project was the excavation of a subterranean facility under the Regenstein Mountain, a unique rock formation and popular excursion destination to the east of Blankenburg. Measuring devices were to be manufactured

here for the Magdeburg armaments producer Schäffer und Budenberg GmbH under the code name “Odawerk.” These were probably manometers for the A4 (Aggregat 4) rockets, which the company Schäffer und Budenberg had long been delivering to the Mittelwerk. This would probably explain why in February 1945 a Mittelbau subcamp was established close to the construction site.

The 400 prisoners in the camp, together with around 500 German and 300 foreign laborers, which at times included 200 Italian penal prisoners, were to excavate the caverns and construct the external facilities. The Turmalin project began in the spring of 1944 but was not completed by the end of the war. However, according to an American Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee (CIOS) team, the production of measuring devices did begin in part of the facility shortly before the arrival of U.S. military forces in April 1945. There were around 120 people producing the devices.<sup>1</sup>

An essential reason for the slow progress in construction was the labor shortage. In the summer of 1944, the Grossdeutsche Schachtbau AG, which had been contracted by the construction department of the Armaments Ministry to excavate the cavern system, repeatedly demanded additional labor from the Einsatzgruppe IV of the Organisation Todt (OT), whose construction management oversaw the project. The construction firm was particularly keen in being allocated forced laborers. However, except for the 200 Italian penal prisoners, which were obtained through the firm Schäffer und Budenberg in July 1944 and who worked temporarily on the construction site, hardly any forced laborers were allocated to the site. It remains unclear why, unlike many other construction sites in the region, no concentration camp prisoners were used. For example, in the caverns only a few kilometers away at the Malchit underground project, several thousand prisoners from the Buchenwald subcamp at Langenstein-Zwieberge were used, and a few armaments firms in the Blankenburg area had used concentration camp prisoners since the spring of 1943—in Halberstadt and Wernigerode. That the OT Turmalin project was not allocated prisoners for a long time can only be put down to rivalry between the OT and the SS construction organization under SS-Gruppenführer Hans Kammler.

It was only at the beginning of 1945 when thousands of prisoners arrived in Nordhausen from the evacuated concentration camps at Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen that the SS acceded to the demands of the OT. On February 1, 1945, it relocated 400 prisoners, mostly Jews from the dissolved Auschwitz subcamp at Fürstengrube with their SS and Wehrmacht guards, from the main camp to Blankenburg. Here they occupied an OT barracks camp in a forested area at the foot of the Regenstein Mountain. The camp had been used by the OT, but it had never been finished. It was close to the so-called Lessingplatz and about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the Blankenburg suburb Heers. For this reason, the camp was called by the local population the “Lessing camp.” As was customary with the establishment of a new subcamp, the SS camp command had the prisoners put a fence around the

camp and erect guard towers. After that, most of the camp inmates were used at the nearby construction site for project Turmalin in excavating the caverns.

The Mittelbau concentration camp appointed SS-Oberscharführer Max Schmidt as camp leader. He had previously been in command of the camp at Fürstengrube, working closely with German political prisoner Hermann Joseph, the camp elder. Schmidt led the evacuation of the camp, which began on the morning of April 6, 1945. With the exception of the inmates in the infirmary, who presumably were left in the camp, the SS drove the prisoners by foot past Magdeburg, where the survivors—a few dozen exhausted prisoners had been shot by the guards along the way—together with inmates from the second Blankenburg Mittelbau subcamp, Klosterwerke, were loaded onto a river barge on April 8. After the barge arrived in Lübeck, Schmidt marched the prisoners to the small village of Siblin, where the majority were crammed into a barn. Around 20 privileged prisoners, including members of the Fürstengrube camp orchestra, were taken by Schmidt to his parents' nearby farm. Schmidt's prisoners remained in the Siblin barn and on the farm between April 13 and 30. They were then marched to Neustadt on the Baltic, where, with the exception of West European and Czech prisoners who were put under the care of the International Red Cross, they were loaded onto ships, including the *Cap Arcona*. The *Cap Arcona* was attacked by British fighters on May 3, 1945, and became the tomb for more than 4,000 prisoners from the Neuengamme and Mittelbau concentration camps.

It is scarcely possible to determine how many prisoners survived the deportation from the Turmalin camp and the evacuation to the Baltic. What is certain is that many prisoners died in Blankenburg while suffering from the harsh working conditions in excavating the caverns. Finally, for many prisoners, their stay in Blankenburg was a murderous interlude on a monthlong death march from Fürstengrube to the Baltic, where many drowned with the sinking of the *Cap Arcona*.

The crimes committed in Fürstengrube, in Blankenburg, and on the death march to the Baltic were the subject of at least two proceedings. In 1948, the Ansbach Landgericht (Regional Court) sentenced former camp elder Hermann Joseph to several years' imprisonment. Former camp leader Max Schmidt lived at first undetected on his parents' farm near Siblin. In 1964, the Kiel state prosecutor commenced investigations into his wartime activities, but they were discontinued in 1973 without any convictions.

**SOURCES** Important passages on the history of the Turmalin camp are contained in a publication by Gerhard Hoch on the long death march of the prisoners from Auschwitz/Fürstengrube via Blankenburg to Schleswig-Holstein: *Von Auschwitz nach Holstein: Der Leidensweg der 1200 Häftlinge von Fürstengrube* (Hamburg, 1990). Joachim Neander summarized the most recent research in a short essay, “Die Aussenlager ‘Turmalin’ (Regenstein), Quedlinburg und Trautenstein des KZ Mittelbau-Dora,” in *Erinnern: Aufgabe, Chance, Herausforderung* (Magdeburg, 2000), pp. 1–11. Details on the camp and

the Turmalin construction project are to be found in the Mittelbau monograph by Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes: Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen, 2001).

The relevant sources left by the SS have been microfilmed and are held in YVA (Microfilm BD11-Do1-6, ITS records on Mittelbau). There are other documents relating to forced labor in the collection of the ASt-Blb. Details on the Turmalin Relocation Project are contained in a report prepared by Allied experts after the war: CIOS, "Report on Underground Project Turmalin, 1945," Report No. XXXIII-38.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

#### NOTE

1. CIOS, "Report on Underground Project Turmalin, 1945," Report No. XXXIII-38, p. 49.

### **BLEICHERODE**

From the autumn of 1944, prisoners from the Mittelbau concentration camp were forced to construct power lines in Bleicherode. Initially, they were not accommodated in Bleicherode but in the main camp. At the end of each shift, the SS brought them back to the camp. In October 1944, the SS established a small labor detachment of 15 inmates in the cellar of the Bürgerhaus Hotel (the present-day city cultural center), all of whom were Italian military internees (IMIs). They worked for the construction and excavation firm Ohl & Vattrodt. There are contradictory statements about the nature of their work; it is possible that the Italians felled timber and transported materials, but they also could have been used to construct the power line from Frose to Bleicherode. The latter possibility is supported by the fact that in other sectors IMIs were forced to work on overland power lines (see Mittelbau/Trautenberg) but also because of the allocation of the camp to the SS-Baustab B-13, which coordinated all important infrastructure projects for the Mittelbau enterprise (Unternehmen Mittelbau).

There are no records of any deaths in the camp. The last time the camp is mentioned is in a surviving SS file from March 5, 1945; the camp most likely was in operation until April 1945. Its inmates were probably not evacuated by the SS but liberated by the Americans when they entered Bleicherode on April 10, 1945.

**SOURCES** The AG-MD holds a few reports on the Bleicherode camp.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

### **ELLRICH ("ERICH," "MITTELBAU II") [AKA ELLRICH-JULIUSHÜTTE]**

Founded May 1 or 2, 1944, Ellrich began as a subcamp of Buchenwald but was always intimately linked to the Dora subcamp in the southern Harz Mountains near the city of

Nordhausen. On October 28, 1944, Dora became the Mittelbau main camp. Ellrich was officially named "Erich" and later "Mittelbau II," designations that were scarcely used outside SS correspondence. It has also been called Ellrich-Juliushütte by later historians to distinguish it from other, much smaller camps in and around the town that gave it its name. It quickly became the largest subcamp of Mittelbau—and its most infamous. Health conditions were disastrous in the abandoned gypsum factory, the Juliushütte, that provided the main buildings for the camp, and the suffering caused by the exhausting construction work and long hours getting to and from the main work sites were further compounded by a particularly callous SS camp leadership.

The SS founded the camp to absorb part of the rapidly growing number of forced laborers needed for its many new underground projects in the region, which were created in the wake of great concern in the Nazi leadership over the Anglo-American bomber offensive. A particularly concentrated series of attacks on the German aircraft industry in late February 1944 led Armaments Minister Albert Speer to create a joint government-industry "Fighter Staff" on March 1 to promote a rapid buildup in fighter production. On the model of the Mittelwerk, the underground V-2 rocket factory moved to Dora, where much of this production was to be evacuated to tunnels, retrofitted or dug out by concentration camp prisoners, with construction leadership given to SS-Gruppenführer Hans Kammler, chief of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Amtsgruppe C (Construction). Kammler initiated a number of new tunnel projects in the soft anhydrite rock of the Harz Mountains near Dora, the most prominent being B-3, between the towns of Ellrich and Woffleben, and B-11 and B-12, on either side of the Mittelwerk tunnels. After taking over a camp intended for civilians, creating subcamp Harzungen ("Hans") on April 1, and a large estate house at Bischofferode, where a small camp, "Anna," was set up at about the same time, the SS decided to make use of the Juliushütte buildings for another large camp. But these facilities were in such poor condition that they had to be repaired for some weeks in April. Even so, when the first 300 prisoners arrived on May 1, 1944, from "Anna," there were not even roofs over some blocks housed in the abandoned factory, and the washroom and toilet facilities were disastrously inadequate.

Ellrich's first commandant was SS-Untersturmführer Hans Joachim Ritz, but he is little mentioned in survivor accounts. In about August, he was replaced by SS-Untersturmführer Karl Fritzsche, an infamous sadist who had served as the first Schutzhaftlagerführer of Auschwitz from 1940 to 1942. After allegedly being removed from that position for incompetence at the behest of Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss, the SS sent Fritzsche to Flossenbürg and then Ellrich. Fritzsche, who was an early Nazi Party and SS member, had been trained in Theodor Eicke's school of terror as a camp guard in Dachau in mid-1933. Survivors stated that Fritzsche personally murdered and tortured prisoners and also harassed the guard force, which was largely drawn from the

Luftwaffe and officially transferred to the Waffen-SS only on September 1, 1944. At some point in the fall, Mittelbau commandant SS-Sturmbannführer Otto Förschner sent Fritzsch to the Eastern Front and replaced him with Wilhelm Stötzler, who, like Ritz, made little impression on the prisoners, in large part because shortly thereafter SS-Hauptscharführer Otto Brinkmann was transferred from Mittelbau as de facto Schutzhaftlagerführer. Brinkmann rapidly acquired a reputation for sadism and brutality as appalling as Fritzsch's. Stötzler and Brinkmann served until the dissolution of the camp on April 5, 1945. Also infamous for his indifference to the suffering of the prisoners and for the poor condition of the makeshift infirmary was the camp physician, Dr. Günther Schneeman, originally from the Luftwaffe. The vicious, arbitrary, and sometimes incompetent camp leadership was rounded out by a series of "green triangle" (criminal) prisoners who served in prisoner administrative positions; although Förschner ran Mittelbau on the Buchenwald model, using educated Communists, Ellrich became a dumping ground for both SS men and prisoners that Förschner did not want. Ellrich often received the most ill and exhausted prisoners from Mittelbau and other camps, apparently on the assumption that they would have low chances of survival.

The impact of the bad sanitary and living conditions on the prisoners' health was greatly exacerbated by the work in outdoor construction and tunneling at B-3, B-11, B-12, and other sites but also by the incredibly long hours of work, plus travel times by rail and foot and the roll calls that had to take place before and after each activity. A typical schedule in the summer and fall of 1944 was awakening at 3:30 A.M., "breakfast" and roll call, march to the train station at 5:10, and labor from 6:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M., with a one-hour break. With luck the train would come on time to return the exhausted prisoners to Ellrich, followed by another roll call and watery soup that passed for dinner. All that was left was about five hours for sleep, assuming that there were no lengthy delays with train transport and roll calls. Chief SS physician Professor Dr. Joachim Murgowsky, later hanged in 1948 after the Nuremberg "Doctors Trial" for his role in human experiments, warned Kammler that with this schedule "many prisoners [were dying] without any acute cause, only out of exhaustion. In no other camp does this appear so often."<sup>1</sup>

Ellrich's all-male prisoner population grew rapidly from 1,696 at the end of May 1944 to 4,104 at the end of July, to 6,187 at the end of August, and to 8,189 by the end of September. During the last months of 1944, it stabilized at around 8,000. The camp population paralleled that of Mittelbau, the predominant groups being Soviet, Polish, French, Belgian, and German, but Ellrich did receive a large number of the 1,000 "qualified" Hungarian Jews that arrived in Dora from Auschwitz at the end of May, many of them scarcely more than boys. Also in evidence were a number of Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), some of whom served in positions of authority. The SS registered only 17 deaths in Ellrich up to the end of August, in part because very ill prisoners were transferred to the Mittelbau and Harzungen infirmaries, but the situation then

deteriorated catastrophically, despite further transfers: 29 deaths in September, 107 in October, 144 in November, 381 in December, 498 in January 1945, 541 in February, and 1,021 in March.

A particularly appalling manifestation of the disastrous health and living conditions were the presence in late 1944 of over 1,000 "unclothed." With no wash facilities, either for inmates or their clothes, the Ellrich camp population soon became filthy, infested with lice, and dressed in rags. When an emergency delousing of uniforms was attempted in about October, many disintegrated, leaving a significant fraction of prisoners with nothing. The camp leadership showed its usual indifference and lack of initiative; the ample supplies of civilian clothes confiscated from prisoners were not touched until after new transports from Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen began arriving in January–February. Many of the "unclothed" had to spend the entire day in bed shivering under thin covers in filthy, unheated blocks, and some had to make outdoor roll calls in their underwear. Because these prisoners did not work, their rations were eventually cut in half, accelerating starvation and death. As the clothing situation improved in early 1945, the food situation deteriorated further to an episodic state of outright famine. There were even cases of cannibalism, and organized bands of prisoners stole from and terrorized the weak. As the transports from the east arrived with their utterly exhausted, mostly Jewish prisoners, overcrowding and disease only grew worse—hence the massive death toll in March. Yet this toll did not even include the 1,602 in bad condition who had been sent to the dumping ground of the Boelcke-Kaserne in Nordhausen on March 5.

As with the other Mittelbau camps, evacuation took place on April 4 to 5, 1945, with the approach of U.S. forces. Most of those evacuated were sent by rail in the direction of Bergen-Belsen. One survivor report stated that the last SS man shot a dozen sick prisoners in the head just before leaving, so that no one was liberated at Ellrich—the camp was empty when the U.S. 104th Infantry Division occupied the town on April 12. Soon thereafter the camp fell into almost complete obscurity; it straddled an old political boundary that became the demarcation line between West and East. Only the survivor groups remembered Ellrich, especially the French, who constituted a disproportionate fraction of the dead. Justice was also scarcely served. In the Mittelbau-Dora trial at Dachau in 1947, only 2 of the 17 convicted were singled out for their role in Ellrich: Otto Brinkmann, who received a life sentence, later commuted, and Richard Walenta, a camp elder (Lagerältester) noted for his collaboration with the SS in denunciations, who received a 20-year sentence, also later shortened. It was only with the increased attention paid to Mittelbau-Dora in the later 1980s, as a result of growing interest in rocket production in the Mittelwerk, that Ellrich finally began to be more widely remembered.

**SOURCES** Other than Manfred Bornemann's chronology, *Chronik des Lagers Ellrich 1944/45: Ein vergessenes Konzentrations-*



*tionslager wird neu entdeckt* (Nordhausen: Landratsamt Nordhausen, 1992), there are no significant secondary publications that focus exclusively on this subcamp. All scholarly work on the topic has taken place within the general studies of the Mittelbau camp system cited in the main camp bibliography, most notably Jens-Christian Wagner's *Produktion des Todes: Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen, 2001), which is based on his "Verlagerungswahn und Tod" (Ph.D. diss., Göttingen, 1999).

Similarly, what little is left of the Ellrich archival record must be sought in the Mittelbau records discussed above, especially those in Weimar and the ITS microfilms at YV. A Dutch memoir, Edgard Van de Castele, *Ellrich* (1946; bilingual ed., Bad Münstereifel: Westkreuz, 1997), is the only other significant publication.

Michael J. Neufeld

## NOTE

1. Murgowsky to Kammler, July 20, 1944, BA-BL, NS 48/26, quoted in Jens-Christian Wagner, "Verlagerungswahn und Tod" (Ph.D. diss., Göttingen, 1999), pp. 315–316.

## ELLRICH/WOFFLEBEN (LAGER B-12)

Woffleben was a spin-off of Ellrich, the largest subcamp of the Mittelbau concentration camp. On January 3, 1945, the SS moved 242 Ellrich prisoners from the night shift of tunnel project B-12 to a barracks outside the tunnel entrance, near the village of Woffleben. This project to dig out a new underground factory was just to the west of the north entrances of the Mittelwerk/Nordwerk underground complex, in which Junkers Aircraft assembled aircraft engines and parts in the north section using civilian forced laborers, and Mittelwerk GmbH assembled V-2 missiles in the south section using SS prisoners from the Mittelbau main camp. The new tunnels of B-12 were to be used by Junkers for the assembly of last-minute weapons such as the Heinkel (He) 162 fighter but were never finished, as was the case with virtually all of the new tunnel projects launched in the spring of 1944.

For the prisoners, the January 1945 move was an immediate improvement, as conditions in Ellrich had been catastrophically bad, and the long transport by train to and from the work site, with accompanying marches and roll calls, made life even more miserable and cut significantly into their time to sleep. A further transport of 102 prisoners from Ellrich on February 4 and 650 from the main camp on February 21 greatly enlarged the camp, ushering in a period of overcrowding in spite of the addition of new barracks. The camp fluctuated in size from about 800 to 900 prisoners through the end of March. The first camp commandant is unknown; in mid-March, SS-Oberscharführer Kleemann, a Waffen-SS veteran who had been transferred in 1941 to camp duty after a war injury, took over Woffleben. He had been camp commandant at Bismarckhütte, a subcamp of Auschwitz. The camp elder (Lagerältester), Bruno Brodniewicz, was also a veteran of Auschwitz, and both contributed to a further brutalization of prisoners in the camp. The death toll is unrecorded, as the

dead were sent to Ellrich for cremation; some severely ill were transported to the infirmaries at Ellrich and the Mittelbau main camp. On April 1, immediately before the evacuation of the camp, Mittelbau transferred around 700 very ill survivors of transports from Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen to the Woffleben subcamp, where they were scarcely able to work. The camp was dissolved on April 4 with an evacuation of prisoners by train in the direction of Bergen-Belsen. In 1951, Kleemann was tried in Itzehoe in Schleswig-Holstein for his barbaric behavior at Woffleben and during the evacuation but was set free because of insufficient evidence.

**SOURCES** Virtually nothing has been published on the Woffleben subcamp other than passages in Wagner's and Sellier's books (cited in the Mittelbau main camp bibliography) and a section in Manfred Bornemann's chronology *Chronik des Lagers Ellrich 1944/45* (Nordhausen: Landratsamt Nordhausen, 1992), pp. 63–68.

The trial of Kleemann is to be found in Adelheid L. Rüter-Ehlermann, H.H. Fuchs, and C.F. Rüter, eds., *Justiz und NS Verbrechen: Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1966* (Amsterdam: University Press of Amsterdam, 1972), 8: 333–350. Transports to and from Ellrich can be found in the YVA microfilm of ITS records (see the Mittelbau entry). See also the THStA-W Record Group NS 4/Bu., Buchenwald and Mittelbau records.

Michael J. Neufeld

## GROSSWERTHER

On Thursday, March 15, 1945, 294 women prisoners arrived at the Mittelbau-Dora main camp. They came from Morchenstern, a subcamp of Gross-Rosen, in the Sudetenland east of Gablonz. After registration, 290 of them were marched to the nearby village of Grosswerther. There, the SS had requisitioned the dance halls of two neighboring inns situated in the village center, Gaststätte Nolze and Zur Weintraube (aka Schönnemann), to set up a new concentration camp—Aussenkommando Grosswerther, a subcamp of Mittelbau. The women were divided into two groups of roughly equal size, and each took up quarters in one of the dance halls.

All the women were Jewish, and all had started their odyssey through the gamut of Nazi concentration camps at Auschwitz: 248 of the prisoners were from Hungary and had been arrested in the course of the *Judenaktionen* during the spring and summer of 1944; 44 were of Polish origin; 1 came from France; and 1 from the Soviet Union. Most of the women were between 20 and 25 years old, and many of them had worked in textile manufacturing before their arrest.

There is evidence that during the three weeks of Grosswerther camp's existence, only one single work detail of about 30 women was sent to a—still unidentified—factory at Nordhausen. No sooner had they begun work when they were interrupted by heavy air attacks of Nordhausen by Allied aircraft.

The Grosswerther camp's provisional character was clearly evident by both its appearance and the living conditions.

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From the outside, nothing particular indicated the existence of a concentration camp: no barbed wire, no watchtower, no people in the characteristic blue-and-gray-striped prisoner outfit. Both “blocks,” the former dance halls, were situated on the second floors of the inns, accessible to the prisoners only by the fire escapes, narrow flights of stairs that led into the courtyards, whose entrances were guarded by the SS.

The SS personnel were billeted in neighboring private homes and in the schoolhouse. These included SS-Oberscharführer Werner Beest, the camp leader (*Lagerführer*); 4 SS guards, elderly Wehrmacht soldiers who had been drafted into concentration camp service; and 18 SS wardresses, who were responsible for “garrison duty” (*Innendienst*). Only the men carried firearms; the SS women had sticks with which they occasionally beat the prisoners.

The detail leader and chief of the female SS was Erna Petermann. “She was a sympathetic but stern woman,” a survivor testified, “hated the Jews in particular, however, but never beat us,” quite in contrast to her alternate, Gertrud Sieber.<sup>1</sup> Villagers still tell stories about the orgies the SS women had with men from the neighborhood, probably SS men from the Mittelbau concentration camp.

The prisoners at the Grosswerther camp, however, had nothing to celebrate. In the halls there were neither beds nor even pallets. The women slept on the bare ground, wrapped in their blankets. The stage of one of the halls had been transformed into an infirmary, where a Ukrainian prisoner doctor took care of her sick comrades. Sanitary conditions were appalling. There was no water and no toilet upstairs. Provisional toilets had been installed on the edge of the manure pit, and water had to be pumped from a well in the courtyard, which did not yield enough for so many people.

There were also no cooking facilities for the prisoners. Every day around noon a truck would arrive from Boelcke-Kaserne, Nordhausen, one of the big subcamps of Mittelbau, and would bring food in large, uncovered tubs. “It was kind of slop in which only a few pieces of carrots, potatoes, or rutabagas were floating. If one of the Jewish prisoners would jump the line . . . she would be beaten on her hands by the female SS, her mess tin would be knocked out of her hands, and she would get nothing to eat.”<sup>2</sup> The thin soup that the German eyewitness remembered so precisely still 43 years later surely was the infamous *Judensuppe* (Jew’s soup), which was absent of any nutritive value toward the end of the war.

The poor living conditions, however, apparently did not undermine the prisoners’ morale. Eyewitnesses from the village reported that the women were busy knitting sweaters, gloves, socks, and similar articles, which they offered to the villagers in exchange for food—not at all an easy task, as it had to be done secretly, unseen by the SS. We have also read about prisoners, probably Polish, who used to sing melancholy Yiddish songs in the evening, alone or in a group. These tunes occasionally even touched an SS woman’s heart. As the weather was fine that spring, the prisoners were even granted a walk in the open air—under SS guard, of course.

On the morning of Wednesday, April 4, 1945, the evacuation order from the Mittelbau main camp arrived at Grosswerther, and in the afternoon, the entire Grosswerther camp, 290 prisoners together with their camp leader, SS guards, and SS wardresses, started marching westward. In the morning of April 6, 1945, at Bischofferode, the prisoners refused to march further. The SS guards called Wehrmacht soldiers for help. Together they rounded the women up at the village square. There, the prisoners collectively fell down on their knees and complained bitterly “that they could not go ahead because they had no food. . . . [T]hey were too weak and not able to go on any more.”<sup>3</sup> SS and soldiers gave in. They had the women stand up again. The Wehrmacht soldiers even arranged for a meal<sup>4</sup> and also for trucks, which brought the whole group to Herzberg, the next railway station. Some 35 women had taken advantage of the general confusion at Bischofferode and had managed to escape. Some of them were caught and arrested. Those who hid successfully—among them at least 1, who was hidden by a German farmer’s wife—were liberated by the Americans on April 10, 1945.

At Herzberg station the remaining 255 Grosswerther prisoners were crowded into three boxcars, which were connected to an evacuation transport of the Dora camp. On April 7, 1945, U.S. fighter bombers attacked the train. Some courageous German prisoners opened the women’s cars in defiance of the orders of the SS. They paid a high price for this humane act, because the SS fired on those prisoners: 1 was killed, another severely wounded.<sup>5</sup>

When the evacuation train had reached Austria, the cars with the Jewish women were disconnected and directed toward Mauthausen. Some 221 former Grosswerther prisoners were registered as “intakes” (*Zugänge*) for the women’s camp on April 15, 1945, 33 fewer than had been present at Herzberg. At least 1 of the missing had died in the air attack; the others had died en route or had managed to escape, as survivor testimonies suggest.

At Mauthausen, 44 women of the Grosswerther group still were put on work details. They were liberated by the Americans on May 5, 1945. Most of the former Grosswerther inmates, however, were marched off in a terrible death march toward Gunskirchen at the end of April 1945. The few survivors were liberated there also on May 5, by U.S. troops. No exact calculation can be made of the number of victims of the evacuation. If we estimate the number of dead until arrival at Mauthausen at 20, and the number of those who died in this camp, on the death march to Gunskirchen, and in that camp to half of the intake, we arrive at about 130 dead. This means that nearly every second woman who had left Grosswerther on April 4, 1945, was already dead four weeks later.

**SOURCES** On the Grosswerther camp, see Paul Lauerwald, “Das Aussenlager Grosswerther des Konzentrationslagers Mittelbau-Dora,” *BHSKN* 15 (1990): 26–31. The author, a local amateur historian, describes the living conditions in the camp, based above all on an interview with the daughter of one of the inns’ owners. Situating the Grosswerther camp within the framework of the forced labor concentration camps

of the last phase of World War II is Joachim Neander's "Auschwitz—Grosswerther—Gunskirchen: A Nine Month's Odyssey through Eight Nazi Concentration Camps," *YVS* 28 (2000): 287–310.

The main sources referring to the Grosswerther camp are the records of two war crimes trials: "The Belsen Trial," Lüneburg, September 17 to November 17, 1945: evidence of former female SS guards: Klara Oritz, Ilse Steinbusch, Hildegard Kahlbach, and Gertrud Naumann, PRO WO309/1699; excerpts in Raymond Phillips, ed., *Trial of Josef Kramer and Forty-Four Others (The Belsen Trial)* (London, 1949); and "The Nordhausen Case," Dachau, August 7 to December 30, 1947: Niederschrift der Vernehmung des Johann Demange (former SS guard), examination of Vira Gombosová [i.e. Vera Gombosová-Oravcová; former inmate (camp clerk)] by Major Fulton C. Vowell, War Crimes Investigating Team #6822, U.S. Army, April 18, 1945, at Nordhausen; and list of inmates of the Grosswerther camp, as given by Vera Gombosová-Oravcová; *USA vs. Kurt Andrae et al.*, NARA Microfilm Publication M 1079; and the testimonies of Hungarian survivors, kept in the *Magyar Auschwitz Alapítványi—Holocaust Dokumentációs Központ* (Budapest, n.d.). Other documents as well as sources referring to the evacuation train, the "Taifun-Express" from Dora to Fischbach, can be found in the trial transcripts of the Nordhausen Case, in AG-MD, and in Nuremberg document PS-2222. Survivor testimonies can also be found in the Stm.-MöWa.

Joachim Neander

## NOTES

1. NARA, M-1079, Examination of Vera Gombosová-Oravcová, War Crimes Investigating Team #6822, U.S. Army, April 18, 1945, p. 8.
2. Paul Lauerwald, "Das Aussenlager Grosswerther des Konzentrationslagers Mittelbau-Dora," *BHASKN* 15 (1990): 29.
3. Examination of Vera Gombosová-Oravcová, p. 8.
4. Testimony of Helena Halperin (née Helén Blobstein; former inmate) by Herbert J. Oswald, 1978, Stm.-MöWa.
5. Testimony of Oskar Büschler and Theo Webers, given before a U.S. commission on April 24, 1945, at Leipzig, Nuremberg Document PS-2222.

## GUT BISCHOFFERODE ("ANNA")

The history of the "Anna" subcamp at the Gut (Manor) Bischofferode near Woffleben (not to be confused with the Bischofferode/Eichsfeld subcamp) is closely connected with the history of the Ellrich-Juliushütte and Harzungen camps. These three camps were established in April–May 1944 to accommodate concentration camp prisoners who were to work in the nearby construction sites B-3a and B-3b in the villages of Woffleben and Niedersachswerfen. SS-Gruppenführer Hans Kammler's construction organization was in charge of the B-3 construction project, which envisaged the creation of a cavern system where, in underground aircraft factories, the Junkers company would produce aircraft. As with most of the other subterranean construction

projects run by Kammler's organization, the B-3 project was never completed.

The Anna camp was close to the B-3a construction site, at the foot of the Himmelsberg on the Bischofferode Manor. It was probably established on April 2, 1944. The approximately 300 male prisoners were held, according to surviving Czech prisoner Rotislav Ministr, in a barn.<sup>1</sup> It would appear that the camp from the beginning was regarded as a temporary camp, as it was dissolved on May 9, 1944, when the inmates were transferred to the newly established camp at Ellrich-Juliushütte.<sup>2</sup> The manor's buildings in Bischofferode from then on served as the base for Kammler's SS-Sonderinspektion II, which coordinated all the Mittelbau construction projects.

At times the prisoners were probably accommodated a few hundred meters away in the Mittelwerk civilian labor camp. This camp was located on the north edge of Woffleben and had not been completed in April 1944. It was intended that this camp would hold up to 2,500 prisoners while the Harzungen camp was being expanded. It is possible that this was the Anna camp.<sup>3</sup>

The SS operated the Anna camp together with the Ellrich-Juliushütte and Harzungen camps as "Arbeitslager B-3." The three camps had a common SS camp administration, which initially was headed by 21-year-old SS-Untersturmführer Hans Ritz. The trained bank officer had been transferred from the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) in the winter of 1943–1944 to Dora, where he served as adjutant to camp commandant Otto Förschner. In September 1944, he was removed as camp leader of the Ellrich-Juliushütte and Harzungen camps and transferred to the SS-Führerreserve at Bad Tölz.<sup>4</sup>

It can be assumed that the temporary camp scarcely differed from the horrendous accommodations and sanitary conditions at the infamous Ellrich-Juliushütte camp.

**SOURCES** No secondary literature is available that specifically deals with the Anna camp. The camp is mentioned in the chronicles of the Ellrich camp by Manfred Bornemann, *Chronik des Lagers Ellrich 1944/45: Ein vergessenes Konzentrationslager wird neu entdeckt* (Nordhausen: Landratsamt, 1992); and in Jens-Christian Wagner's Mittelbau monograph *Produktion des Todes: Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2001).

The establishment and dissolution of the Anna camp is referred to in the Veränderungsmeldungen des "Kommandos B 3," the original of which is held in the ITS (Mittelbau-Ordner 22). A microfilm copy is held in YVA (Microfilm BD11-Do2). A few additional documents are held in BA-B and BA-L.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Aussage R. Ministr, April 28, 1967, BStU, ZM 1625, Bd. 61, p. 219.
2. Veränderungsmeldungen der Lager Bischofferode und Ellrich, April 2–June 15, 1944, YVA, Microfilm BD11-Do2.

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3. Aktenvermerk Dr. Schiedlausky (Standortarzt KZ Buchenwald) about a “Besuch des Werkes B III” on April 8, 1944, AG-MD, 50.1.5; as well as Aktenvermerk Dr. Ding (SS-Sonderinspektion II) about a meeting in Ellrich on April 18, 1944, BA-B, NS 48/26, n.p.

4. Aussage Hans Ritz, April 2, 1963, BA-L, 429 AR-Z 224/72, fr. 554.

## HARZUNGEN (“HANS,” “MITTELBAU III”)

The history of the “Hans” subcamp in Harzungen, which initially was part of the Buchenwald concentration camp and later the Mittelbau concentration camp, is connected with the history of the camps at Ellrich-Juliushütte and Gut Bischofferode. The three camps were established in April–May 1944 to accommodate concentration camp prisoners who were to work on the nearby construction sites B-3a and B-3b near the villages of Woffleben and Niedersachswerfen.

The initials B-3a (code name “Anhydrit”) concealed a plan under which 5 drivable and 30 traversable tunnels would be excavated under the Himmelsberg Mountain. They would be excavated in accordance with the Mittelwerk model and used as a subterranean facility for the Junkers AG. The SS brought the first 40 concentration camp prisoners from the Dora camp to the construction site on March 1, 1944.<sup>1</sup> The numbers rapidly increased after commencement of the preparatory work: at the end of March, there were almost 1,000 prisoners, and by the end of May, just over 3,000 prisoners were working on the B-3a construction site. This number remained constant until the beginning of April 1945.<sup>2</sup> Two almost complete traversable tunnels were occupied by electronics firms in March 1945. They produced the steering mechanisms for the air defense rocket Hs 117. The facility, which was planned to have an area of 10,000 square meters (11,960 square yards), was never completed despite the extensive deployment of prisoner labor.<sup>3</sup>

The neighboring facility B-3b (code name “Anhydrit-Ost”) was even larger, with an area of 12,000 square meters (14,352 square yards). However, it was not until the end of July 1944 that the first shaft work began for what was most likely a Junkers AG underground facility in Mühlberg near Niedersachswerfen. Work stopped in November 1944. Although there were on average 700 prisoners from the Harzungen camp at work when the project ceased, only a few meters had been excavated at the entry into the cavern.<sup>4</sup>

The construction project manager, Wifo (Wirtschaftliche Forschungsgesellschaft mbH, or Economic Research Co., Ltd.), and Junkers AG planned to accommodate the prisoners working on the B-3 project close to the proposed underground factory. This was in accordance with the example set by the Dora camp on the northern edge of the Himmelsberg. A camp for at least 5,000 concentration camp inmates was planned, together with an adjoining SS camp. The plan was soon given up. Instead, the SS established on April 1, 1944, the Harzungen camp and a little later a small provisional camp at the Gut Bischofferode (“Anna”). At the beginning of

May 1944, the camp Ellrich-Juliushütte (“Erich”) was established.

The SS referred to the three camps initially as “Arbeitslager B-3.” There was one camp leader for the three camps, SS-Untersturmführer Hans Ritz. In the early summer of 1944, other projects—B-11, B-12, and B-13—were added to the overall plan. As a result, the SS administratively separated the camps and established for each camp its own camp administration. At first the camps were administered from the Buchenwald concentration camp. However, in the summer of 1944, the Dora camp and other camps in the area were combined together as the “SS-Standort Mittelbau,” and two Mittelbau subcamps became known as Mittelbau II (Ellrich) and Mittelbau III (Harzungen).

The concentration camp prisoners occupied an unfinished barrack camp in Harzungen that was originally planned as accommodation for 1,000 German Mittelwerk civilian workers. Dora prisoners had been constructing the camp from the autumn of 1943. Once the camp had been surrounded by guards’ towers and a 2.5-meter-high (8.2-foot-high) electrified fence, the SS transferred around 4,000 prisoners to the camp. At the beginning of 1945, there were about 5,000 prisoners. At first they worked on the B-3 construction project and later on the B-11 construction site, where they did excavation work for an underground facility in Kohnstein.<sup>5</sup>

In Harzungen, sanitary facilities for bathing and a second toilet block had to be constructed, but overall all the conditions were not so bad when compared to the other Mittelbau camps, especially the infamous Ellrich-Juliushütte camp. The SS also made sure, at least until February 1945, that the number of prisoners in Harzungen did not exceed the camp’s capacity.

The relatively good sanitary conditions in Harzungen also meant that the camp was less feared by the prisoners than most of the other construction camps in the Mittelbau concentration camp complex. The Harzungen prisoners, unlike their fellow sufferers in Ellrich, worked in three shifts a day of 8 hours each in the caverns of the B-3 project and not 12 hours a day. The SS construction managers had an obvious interest in preserving the prisoners, who had not yet quite wasted away, unlike in the Ellrich camp, where the prisoners, already very weakened, were literally worked to death.

Finally, the comparatively “humane” Harzungen camp administration had a favorable effect on camp conditions. The camp was initially commanded by SS members Ritz and Eduard Hinckelmann. They were followed for a short time by former Wehrmacht officers, and from the autumn of 1944, the camp was administered by a former Luftwaffe Hauptmann who had been transferred to the SS, SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Frohne. As Schutzhaftlagerführer he was assisted by a Luftwaffe sergeant who had been transferred to the SS, SS-Oberscharführer Josef Fuchsloch. According to reports by surviving prisoners, they both contributed to an improvement in the camp’s conditions.<sup>6</sup>

However, in evaluating prisoners’ reports on Frohne and Fuchsloch, there is an important problem to be addressed.



Fuchsloch was one of the accused in the Dachau Dora Trial and faced a heavy sentence. During the trial, his defense lawyers named a number of former German and Czech political prisoners as witnesses for the defense, all of whom had held the important prisoner-functionary positions during their time in Harzungen. Their reports, which had obviously been planned with the defense, dominated the trial and the subsequent history of the Harzungen camp. Former prisoner and camp elder Jupp Wortmann played a significant role, speaking out at the trial in defense of Fuchsloch.<sup>7</sup>

Another choice of witnesses could have put the conditions in the Harzungen camp in a totally different light. Reservations are also justified when the statements of Wortmann's group are considered. Notwithstanding this, it is correct to say that under Frohne and Fuchsloch, the treatment of prisoners in Harzungen was essentially better than the feared Mittelbau camps, Ellrich-Juliushütte and Rottleberode, which were under the command of the SS. This is at least correct for the political prisoners and, among these, for the Germans and Czechs who stood at the apex of the SS racial hierarchy.

The ethnic composition of the exclusively male prisoner population at Harzungen in essence corresponded with the composition of the Mittelbau concentration camp complex. Around 33 percent of all prisoners came from the Soviet Union, 25 percent from Poland, and 12 percent from France. Until February 1945, there was a disproportionately high number of Belgians, more than 18 percent. However, this number declined due to a high number of deaths and transfers in other camps. By the beginning of April 1945, it had been reduced to 6.5 percent.<sup>8</sup> There are features that distinguished the camp from other Mittelbau camps: the number of Roma and Sinti (Gypsies) in Harzungen, 10 percent of the entire camp population, was unusually high. The first large group of Gypsies, around 200 prisoners, was transferred in the middle of April 1944 from Buchenwald to Harzungen. In the middle of May 1944, a second larger Gypsy transport of 600 prisoners was transferred via Buchenwald and Dora to the camp.<sup>9</sup> Just about all of the prisoners from these two transports—including many children and youths—had been held in the Gypsy family camp (*Zigeuner-Familienlager*) in Birkenau before being transferred via Auschwitz to Buchenwald. There were also a few hundred Hungarian Jews who were transferred from Auschwitz to Buchenwald, before being transferred via Dora to Harzungen in May 1944.

For a long time, the Harzungen camp, with its 4,000 inmates, was not so tightly packed as most of the other Mittelbau camps. This changed at the end of February 1945, when the SS leadership, in the face of the arrival of evacuation transports from Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen, transferred countless sick and dying prisoners from the camps at Mittelbau and Ellrich-Juliushütte to Harzungen. Not only did the total number of prisoners increase (at the beginning of April 1944, the camp held more than 4,700 prisoners), but so did the death rate. According to SS files, 350 prisoners died in March 1945 in Harzungen alone. Altogether at least 600 prisoners did not survive the camp.

The camp was evacuated on April 4, 1945. The SS took around 4,500 prisoners in two rail transports to Bergen-Belsen, where they arrived a week later. Another 2,000 inmates were driven by the guards under the command of Frohnes and Fuchsloch by foot through the Harz Mountains to Blankenburg. Here the transport separated into several marching columns, the majority of which headed in the direction of Schönebeck an der Elbe, from where they headed along the Elbe in a southeasterly direction. The Americans liberated many survivors in the area of Schönebeck. The last 1,000 inmates in the Harzungen camp, who after a three-week march arrived in the Czech town of Rabenstein on April 26, were liberated by the Red Army on May 8, 1945.

The Dachau Dora Trial in 1947 included the accused Josef Fuchsloch, a central figure in the Harzungen camp administration. The exculpatory statements by former political prisoners from the camp administration helped in his acquittal. There have been no other proceedings against perpetrators in the Harzungen camp.

There is located in the Harzungen cemetery a grave in which 27 concentration camp prisoners are buried. They were discovered after the U.S. liberation in a grave on the site of the subcamp. Most of these prisoners were from France, Belgium, and Italy. They probably died shortly before the camp's evacuation as a result of the forced labor and of malnutrition but possibly also because they were killed by the SS as resistance members.

**SOURCES** André Sellier devotes a large part of his Mittelbau monograph to the Harzungen camp, *Histoire du camp de Dora* (Paris: Éditions la découverte, 1998); as does Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes: Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 2001). Joachim Neander describes the evacuation of the camp briefly in his Mittelbau study, *Das Konzentrationslager Mittelbau in der Endphase der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur: Zur Geschichte des letzten im "Dritten Reich" gegründeten selbständigen Konzentrationslagers unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Auflösungsphase* (Clausthal-Zellerfeld: Papierflieger, 1997).

The BA-K (Bestände NS 4 Anhang und R 121, Industriebeteiligungs-gesellschaft) holds documents on the construction projects on which the prisoners were forced to work. The archive also holds the remaining Mittelwerk files and those of the Mittelbau concentration camp. Also in the BA-K are the files of the Wifo (Bestand R 125), which contracted for the construction of the Harzungen camp. A useful source of information is the files of the U.S. Dora Trial in Dachau (NARA, *United States of America v. Kurt Andrae, et al.*; Microfilm Publication M-1079, 16 Reels. Originals in RG 238, NARA). Prisoners' reports on the Harzungen camp are mostly held in the AG-MD. The original files of the construction administration for the B-3 construction project are also held here. Other important SS camp files (Stärkemeldungen, Transportlisten, and others) are held in the collections NS 4/Bu in the THHStA-A and the microfilms BD3-Bu 19 to 44 and BD11-Do 1 to 6 in YVA (they are files microfilmed from ITS, which until recently was closed to researchers). A member of the Luftwaffe who had been transferred to the SS and was a guard at Harzungen published his memoirs after

the war. They were published after his death and give a detailed account of daily life in the camp from a guard's perspective. See Willy Mirbach, "*Damit du es später deinem Sohn einmal erzählen kannst . . .*": *Der autobiographische Bericht eines Luftwaffensoldaten aus dem KZ Mittelbau (August 1944–Juli 1945)*, ed. Gerd Halmann (Geldern: Verlag des Historischen Vereins für Geldern und Umgegend, 1997).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. KZ Buchenwald, Arbeitseinsatz-Bericht März 1944, Kostenstelle Anhydrit, ITS, Sachdokumenten-Ordner Buchenwald 52, p. 403.

2. Ibid.; as well as Arbeitseinsatzmeldungen KZ Buchenwald, 1944/45, THStA-W, NS 4 Bu/230.

3. Zusammenstellung der in der Entwicklungsgemeinschaft Mittelbau zusammengefassten Entwicklungsgruppen, March 16, 1945, BA-MA, RH 8/v.1265; Letter Dir. Wagner (Stab Dornberger) to v. Braun bez. "Stollenbelegung B" 3, 15.3.1945, *ibid.*

4. For the planning and cessation of work on project B-3b, see Protokoll einer Besprechung bei der Wifo Niedersachswerfen on April 21, 1944, AG-MD, 50.1.2.1; Schreiben Zentral-Arbeitseinsatz Mittelbau an Arbeitseinsatzführer Buchenwald, July 28, 1944, ITS, Sachdokumenten-Ordner Buchenwald 45, S. 263; Arge Woffleben, Baubericht 1944, February 20, 1945, AG-MD, 50.1.2.1, sowie KZ Buchenwald, Arbeitseinsatz-Bericht B 3b, Oktober 1944, ITS, Sachdokumenten-Ordner Buchenwald 54, p. 168.

5. Aktenvermerk Wifo Niedersachswerfen bez. Lager Harzungen, October 2, 1944, BA-B, R 125/241; as well as ITS-Material, AG-MD, 1.4.3./3.

6. Numerous former prisoners testified in favor of both camp leaders in the Dachau Dora Trial in 1947: Ludwig Schiller is representative of those prisoners.

7. Statement Jupp Wortmann, NARA, microfilm publication M-1079, Roll 10/7252.

8. Stärkemeldungen der Einzellager des KZ Mittelbau, November 1, 1944, and April 1, 1945, AG-MD, 1.4.3./3.

9. Veränderungsmeldungen KZ Mittelbau-Dora, THStA-W, KZ u. Hafta Buchenwald Nr. Dora Dok./K 395.

## ILFELD

There are sparse details on the short history of the Ilfeld camp. According to the existing SS files, the camp was established on January 9, 1945, when 4 prisoners were transferred from the Mittelbau main camp. By the end of March 1945, as a result of further transfers, the numbers had increased to more than 260.<sup>1</sup> According to an SS guard, there were between 350 and 400 prisoners in the camp.<sup>2</sup>

Concentration camp prisoners were part of daily life from the autumn of 1943 onward for the citizens of Ilfeld. Around 100 prisoners from the Dora camp, about eight kilometers (five miles) away, constructed a barracks camp on the so-called Schafswiese (sheep's field) between October 1943 and the

spring of 1944. The work was done for the Wifo (Wirtschaftliche Forschungsgesellschaft mbH, Economic Research Co., Ltd.) construction management firm in Niedersachswerfen. The Schafswiese was an unimproved parcel of land in the center of the village of 2,000 inhabitants. The barracks camp was initially for accommodation for around 450 Wehrmacht soldiers and another 450 German laborers and technicians who worked for the Mittelwerk GmbH. After a prisoner detachment from the Dora camp had put a barbed-wire fence around the camp, the German inmates of the community camp (*Gemeinschaftslager*) were replaced by foreign forced laborers, who worked in the "Nordwerk" in Kohnstein, where they assembled aircraft engines for the Junkers company.<sup>3</sup>

During the course of 1944, other prisoner detachments from the camps at Dora and Harzungen were forced to expand the Mittelwerk infrastructure in several locations in Ilfeld, including the laying of water pipes in the main street (Adolf-Hitler-Allee), the construction of air-raid shelters on the eastern edge of the village (Herzberg), and the construction of a waterworks (Kommando Rosensteg). There were to be other labor detachments, especially in Mittelwerk's tailor shop based in the Ilfeld Kloster school, which since the autumn of 1943 had been the seat of the Mittelwerk GmbH administration, and the Günther paper mill, where prisoners worked for the Mittelwerk in establishing an assembly hall for the "Volksjäger" (People's Fighter) He 162.<sup>4</sup>

Initially, the prisoner detachments working in Ilfeld marched daily from the Dora and Harzungen camps to their work sites. Later, they were transported on the Harz narrow gauge railway. However, because of the fuel shortage and the constant Allied air attacks, there were more and more disruptions to the train service in the winter of 1944–1945. For this reason, the SS established at the beginning of January a subcamp in Ilfeld, where all the prisoners from the various work detachments were gradually transferred.

The location of the subcamp cannot be exactly determined. The witness statements contradict each other. Several reports state that the prisoners were accommodated in part of the barracks on the Schafswiese. What is more likely is that the camp was located above the paper mill in an empty two-story storehouse of the former hotel Talbrauerei. The prisoners were housed on the first floor, while the guards' accommodation was on the ground floor. At the beginning of the 1940s, foreign forced laborers had been held here, and they were transferred to other camps before the concentration camp prisoners were transferred here.

Compared to other Mittelbau camps, the number of Jewish prisoners in Ilfeld was comparatively high. At the end of March 1945, there were around 60 Hungarian and Polish Jews in the camp. There were large groups of non-Jewish prisoners from the Soviet Union, Poland, and France. In all probability, the living and working conditions were no different from the catastrophic conditions in the other Mittelbau camps.

There are hardly any survivors' reports because the camp's inmates were the victims of the massacres that occurred dur-

ing the death marches of April 1945. As with most of the other Mittelbau camps, the Ilfeld subcamp was evacuated by the SS at the beginning of April 1945 in the face of the approaching U.S. forces. On either April 4 or 5, the prisoners were driven by their guards on foot to Niedersachswerfen and from there in a northwesterly direction. In Walkenried or Osterode in the Harz Mountains, the survivors of the march joined a railway transport of prisoners from the Rottleberode camp. This transport ended for many Ilfeld prisoners in the Gardelegen massacre. The SS shot others in the vicinity of Estedt and Jävenitz in the county of Salzwedel.

At the end of March 1945, there were around 30 members of the guard. For the few weeks prior to the dissolution of the camp, they were under the command of 47-year-old SS-Unterscharführer Werner Wachholz. He had been transferred in the summer of 1944 from the Wehrmacht to the SS. Wachholz commanded some of the guards from December 1944 to March 21, 1945, in the “Dachs IV” subcamp near Osterode in the Harz. Wachholz was questioned as a witness in the middle of the 1960s during a trial regarding the death of prisoners in the Dachs IV camp. He himself was never charged. It would seem that all the other members of the guard in Ilfeld were never tried.

**SOURCES** Manfred Bornemann from Ilfeld, in addition to his study on the Mittelbau concentration camp, *Geheimprojekt Mittelbau. Vom zentralen Öllager des Deutschen Reiches zur grössten Raketenfabrik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Bonn, 1994), has put together two works that deal explicitly with the war and Ilfeld: *Ilfeld 1940–1950: Beiträge zu einem Jahrzehnt Heimatgeschichte* (Hamburg, 1984); and “Zwanzig Tage im April: Die Kriegseignisse bei Ilfeld vor 50 Jahren—eine Chronik,” *BHSKN* 20 (1995): 107–130, which have sections that deal with the subcamp. Bornemann’s work is based on his own experiences and witness reports.

An Ilfeld Transport- und Arbeitskommandoliste, dated March 25, 1945, is held in the Mittelbau-Ordner 18 of the ITS (a copy is held in YVA, Microfilm BD11-Do2). References to the prisoner transport to the Ilfeld subcamp are to be found in the Veränderungsmeldungen des KZ Mittelbau (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395). The Ilfeld A/245 file in the AKr-N contains correspondence on the Schafswiese camp in Ilfeld from the years 1943 to 1945. The record of interview of the former SS camp leader Werner Wachhold is contained in the files of the trial against Gerhard Herdel, who replaced Wachhold as commander of the Dachs IV camp in Osterode before he was transferred to Ilfeld (Statements W. Wachholz, April 28, 1965, BA-L, 429 AR-Z 241/72, Bl. 4 ff., u. 16.8.1965, NHStA-H, Nds 721 Gö Acc. 99/81, Nr. 41, p. 24).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Veränderungsmeldung KZ Mittelbau, January 9, 1945, THStA-W, KZ u. Hafta Buchenwald Nr. Dora Dok./K 395, as well as Transportliste Ilfeld, March 25, 1945, YVA, Microfilm BD11-Do2.

2. Statement Wilhelm Syskowski, April 28, 1947, NARA, Microfilm Publication M-1079, Roll 3, fr. 20.

3. Wifo Niedersachswerfen, Bauunterlagen Gemeinschaftslager Ilfeld, 1943/44, BA-B, R 125/241; Bürgermeister Ilfeld, Korrespondenz zum Lager Schafswiese, 1943–1945, AKr-N, Ilfeld A/245.

4. Aktenvermerk Albin Sawatzki (Planungschef Mittelwerk GmbH) bez. Programm Schildkröte, October 19, 1944, BA-B, NS 4 Anh./31, p. 61.

## ILSENBURG

Little information is available about the history of the Ilsenburg subcamp in the North Harz Mountains. As with a number of other smaller Mittelbau subcamps, it was exclusively occupied by Italian military internees (IMIs). It was established on March 1, 1945, when 16 Italians were transferred from the Mittelbau main camp.<sup>1</sup> There are no records of other prisoner transports.

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), the prisoners worked in a paint and varnish factory run by the firm Drube. However, it is more likely that the prisoners had to do the same type of forced labor as the inmates of the camps at Trautenstein, Quedlinburg, and Wickerode, which also were camps that used IMI labor exclusively. There the prisoners had to construct electricity and gas lines that provided the energy supplies to the Mittelbau armaments complex.

**SOURCES** The reference to the Drube firm as the work location originates from a Lagerverzeichnis held by ITS; see *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), which in turn is probably based on information in the original documents held in ITS (but only recently opened to historians).

Except for an entry in the Mittelbau concentration camp Veränderungsmeldungen (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395), there is no known document that refers to the Ilsenburg camp.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. Veränderungsmeldung KZ Mittelbau, March 1, 1945, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395.

## KELBRA

The Kelbra camp was one of a number of smaller Mittelbau camps whose inmates were forced to work in branch factories of the Mittelwerk GmbH. From the autumn of 1944, Mittelwerk stored parts for the construction of the A4 (Aggregat 4) rocket, including fuel tanks, in the expansive cellars of the former Kelbra brewery. As in all other Mittelwerk branch factories, concentration camp prisoners were used here.



According to witnesses, a prisoner detachment was dispatched at first daily from the Rottleberode camp to work in Kelbra. On November 2, 1944, the SS established its own subcamp in the city. Eventually, around 60 mostly Soviet and Polish inmates from the Mittelbau main camp and Rossla subcamp would be transferred to Kelbra.<sup>1</sup> Finally, it should be mentioned that the Rossla camp was administratively responsible to the newly established Kelbra camp.

The prisoners were accommodated in the so-called *Sängerhalle*, a hotel with an assembly hall and dance room, about a kilometer (0.6 miles) from the brewery's cellars, where the prisoners worked. The dayrooms and the sleeping rooms for the prisoners were on the ground floor of the building. The hastily erected washing facilities and toilets were located in the fenced-in rear courtyard. The windows were covered with barbed wire, and at both doors stood armed guards.

The guards were also accommodated in the *Sängerhalle* in a separate room. There were around 15 Wehrmacht and SS members under the command of SS-Unterscharführer Walter Christoph. They guarded the prisoners while they were in their quarters and on the way to work. At work, German technicians and civilian employees of the Mittelwerk GmbH trained while the Kapos supervised their work.

Food for the prisoners and the guards was delivered from the Mittelbau main camp and prepared by the cooks in the *Sängerhalle*. Because the food was for prisoners who had to work on the production line, it was not as bad as in other camps where the prisoners had to work on construction sites. The improvised sanitary conditions in the former hotel were also not as bad as those in other Mittelbau camps, and the prisoners' survival chances were higher. It is thought that one prisoner died of malnutrition during the four months of the camp's existence.

As with most of the other Mittelbau camps, the SS evacuated the *Sängerhalle* at the beginning of April 1945 when U.S. forces approached from the west. Shortly before the evacuation, on the night of April 4–5, 1945, four Soviet prisoners managed to escape from the camp. On the morning of April 5, 1945, the camp leader Christoph gave the order to evacuate the camp. The prisoners were driven by the guards in a day-long march across the Harz Mountains to Blankenburg and from there to Wittenberge an der Elbe. Exhausted prisoners were shot or beaten to death by the guards. After they crossed the Elbe River, Christoph directed the march in a northerly direction to avoid the approaching Soviet troops. The Kelbra death march ended in the middle of April 1945 in the Wöbbelin subcamp in Mecklenburg, where the survivors were liberated by U.S. troops on May 2.

Christoph had to answer for the murders committed on the death march before a West German court in Krefeld in 1976. He was acquitted due to a lack of evidence. There were no other trials connected with the Kelbra subcamp.

**SOURCES** There is no single work devoted to the Kelbra camp. The camp is referred to in a work by Frank Baranowski, *Die verdrängte Vergangenheit: Rüstungsproduktion und Zwangsarbeit in Nordthüringen* (Duderstadt, 2000); and

in an older doctoral dissertation by Brigitte Müller, Eva-Maria Proske, and Günther Weick, a chapter in “Die Aussenkommandos des KZ Buchenwald im Bezirk Halle” (Ph. D. diss., University of Halle-Wittenberg, 1979), pp. 72–91: “Das ehemalige Aussenkommando des KZ Buchenwald in Kelbra.” However, the value of the latter is limited due to numerous factual errors (beginning with the title because the Kelbra camp was never part of the Buchenwald concentration camp).

The Mittelbau concentration camp *Veränderungsmeldungen* (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395) allow the reconstruction of the prisoner transports to and from Kelbra. There are no known prisoner reports on Kelbra. The only known eyewitness report is that of a German who lived in the area from 1997, which is located in the AG-MD (*Zeitzeugenbefragungsprojekt, Bericht 42: Bericht Fritz Rössler*). The verdict in the proceedings against Walter Christoph is to be published in a new publication: (*Justiz und NS-Verbrechen. Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen*, ed. von C.F. Rüter: Verfahren Nr. 837.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

#### NOTE

1. *Veränderungsmeldungen KZ Mittelbau*, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395.

### KLEINBODUNGEN (“EMMI”) [AKA WERK III]

The production areas in the underground Mittelwerk factory at Kohnstein were inadequate by far. As a result, the Mittelwerk managers established a branch factory in June 1944 in an unused potash factory in Kleinbodungen, about 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) west of Nordhausen. Defective rockets were stored and repaired in Kleinbodungen. At the beginning of October 1944, the repair factory, known as “Werk III,” commenced operations.<sup>1</sup> A little later the branch factory established its own branches in Bischofferode and Niedergera, where individual parts of the A4 (Aggregat 4) rockets were stored.

The SS and works' administration used concentration camp prisoners in expanding the repair works. Initially, a subcamp was not established. Instead, from June 1944 the SS transported to Kleinbodungen up to 140 prisoners daily by truck from the Ellrich-Juliushütte camp. It was only after the repair works began operations that the SS established on the factory grounds a Mittelbau subcamp, which had the code name “Emmi.” It was not for the prisoners from Ellrich—they had to work on other construction sites—but for 510 inmates from the Mittelbau main camp, who arrived on October 3, 1944, in Kleinbodungen. Until their arrival at Kleinbodungen, they had been working at the Zeppelin factory in Friedrichshafen on Lake Constance, from where they were deported to the South Harz Mountains.<sup>2</sup>

The prisoners had worked on the assembly of rockets at the Zeppelin factory. As skilled workers who could not be



easily replaced, the SS and works' administration in Kleinbodungen took care to ensure that their strength was preserved as much as possible. The reports by former prisoners state that the work and living conditions in the camp were markedly better than in most of the other Mittelbau camps. That the racial hierarchy of prisoner groups and the economic aims of forced labor often went hand in hand is shown by the ethnic composition of the prisoners in Kleinbodungen: German prisoners constituted more than 21 percent of the camp inmates—this included political as well as "criminal" prisoners—a percentage that was much higher than in other Mittelbau camps. Even higher were the proportions of Polish and Soviet prisoners—they each constituted about a third of the inmates. The remaining prisoners came from France, Czechoslovakia, and other German-occupied countries. Most of the foreign prisoners wore the red triangle of political prisoners. Two Hungarian inmates were classified as Jews.<sup>3</sup>

The approximately 650 prisoners in the camp were accommodated in two three-story buildings in the former potash factory, which were surrounded with an electrified barbed-wire fence. On the ground floor of both buildings there were sanitary facilities and the dayrooms. The prisoners' sleeping dormitories were on the two upper floors. The rocket repair factory was located in one of the two buildings, which was connected to the German railway. The proximity of the accommodation to the work sites may be another ground for the comparatively bearable prison conditions in Kleinbodungen, as in other camps the prisoners usually had a long and exhausting march to work.

Around 50 SS members, including many so-called Volk-deutsche, guarded the camp. The camp leader was SS-Hauptscharführer Franz Stärfl, who was born in 1915. His deputy was SS-Oberscharführer Wilhelm Dörr (born 1921).

The SS evacuated the camp on April 4, 1945. Driven on by the guards, the camp's inmates marched via Herzberg, Seesen, and Salzgitter to the Bergen-Belsen barracks camp. They arrived there on April 11. Of the original 610 prisoners who started out on the march, there were only around 570 alive when they reached Bergen-Belsen at midday on April 11. A few days later, on April 15–16, the survivors were liberated by British soldiers.

The camp leader Stärfl and his deputy Dörr were soon taken into British custody. They were both sentenced to death during the British Bergen-Belsen Trial, which took place in the autumn of 1945, for the crimes they committed in Kleinbodungen and on the death march to Bergen-Belsen. On December 13, 1945, they were hanged in Hameln. A third person accused, a member of the Kleinbodungen guards, SS member George Kraft, was acquitted by the court. During the 1960s, the West German state prosecutors conducted a number of investigations into former members of the SS guards at the Kleinbodungen camp. Each investigation ceased without any further action. However, in the German Democratic Republic in 1962 the Gera District Court (Bezirksgericht) convicted

the former camp elder, Max Lell, who had been a "criminal" prisoner in the concentration camp. He was sentenced to eight years in prison.

After the Americans occupied Kleinbodungen on April 10, 1945, they removed the rockets that had been left behind by the Germans. After their withdrawal, the Soviet Army in the summer of 1945 established a branch of the "Zentralwerk" on the site. German engineers under Soviet supervision rebuilt the V-2 rockets, whose blueprints had been taken by the Americans into the Western occupation zone or to the United States. In the autumn of 1946, the Soviet military relinquished the site and took its material and personnel to the Soviet Union.

**SOURCES** To date there is no single work devoted to the history of the Kleinbodungen subcamp. Frank Baranowski's *Die verdrängte Vergangenheit: Rüstungsproduktion und Zwangsarbeit in Nordthüringen* (Duderstadt: Mecke Druck und Verlag, 2000) contains a number of longer passages on the camp. Important details on the evacuation of the camp are contained in documents published by Raymond Philipps on the Bergen-Belsen Trial, *Trial of Joseph Kramer and Forty-Four Others [The Belsen Trial]* (London: William Hodge & Co, 1949). Mathias Uhls' study on the transfer of German rocket technology to the Soviet Union contains important details on the use of the Kleinbodungen production facilities in 1945–1946, *Stalins V-2: Der Technologietransfer der deutschen Fernlenkwaffentechnik in die UdSSR und der Aufbau der sowjetischen Rakettenindustrie 1945 bis 1959* (Bonn: Bernard & Graefe, 2001). Joachim Bornschein's brochure *Raketenschmieden und KZ-Aussenkommandos im Eichsfeld und Südbarz 1944–1945* (Weimar, 2003) is not recommended because it lacks academic rigor and contains numerous factual errors.

Prisoner lists of individual labor detachments and the total composition of the Kleinbodungen camp are held in the ITS (YVA, Microfilm BD11-Do2 ([ITS, Mittelbau-Ordner 20]). References to prisoner transports to and from Kleinbodungen are contained in the Mittelbau concentration camp Veränderungsmeldungen (Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395). Statements by former prisoners and German civilian workers are held in the AG-MD and in the files of the U.S. Dora Trial in Dachau (NARA, Microfilm Publication M-1079, Roll 4, fr. 166, Statement Günther Haukohl, October 14, 1947); as well as in the collections of the ZdL (BA-L, 429 AR-Z 216/72, Bl. 196 ff., Aussage Emil B., June 13, 1973) and the PRO (WO 309/423, Statement Otto Tempelmann, April 28, 1945).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Statement by Günther Haukohl (former engineer in Peenemünde and Kleinbodungen), October 14, 1947, NARA, Microfilm Publication M-1079, Roll 4, fr. 166.

2. Häftlingsliste Kdo. "Emmi," n.d. (probably October 21, 1944), YVA, Microfilm BD11-Do2 (ITS, Mittelbau-Ordner 20).

3. Ibid.

## **KLEINBODUNGEN/BISCHOFFERODE-EICHSFELD**

Established at the beginning of November 1944, the Bischofferode-Eichsfeld subcamp was about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) to the west of the Mittelbau main camp, on the Bischofferode manor near Woffleben. It should not be confused with the Woffleben subcamp. There were about 60 inmates who were probably held in a tent camp close to the Bischofferode railway station and worked in a Mittelwerk factory that used forced laborers. The factory stored defective A4 (Aggregat 4) rockets and repaired them ("Kommando 48a").

The branch factory in Bischofferode was part of the Mittelwerk "Werk III," which was based in Kleinbodungen about 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) away. Mirroring the company structure, the Bischofferode subcamp was a subcamp of the Kleinbodungen subcamp (also known as "Emmi"), which in turn was controlled by the Mittelbau main camp.

It is possible that the Bischofferode prisoners were forced to work not only in the above-mentioned Mittelwerk branch factory but also in a stores depot of the SS-Sonderinspektion II, which was established in the autumn of 1944 on the grounds of the nearby Wintershall AG potash factory. The Elektromechanische Werke Karlshagen, which specialized in the development of rockets, had been evacuated from Peenemünde at the beginning of March 1945. It had a weapons depot and assembly-line facilities in Bischofferode. It is possible that the prisoners from the local concentration camp worked there.

The few surviving sources provide no details on whether there were any deaths in Bischofferode. The Mittelbau concentration camp files refer to the camp for the last time on March 23, 1945. Its inmates were probably evacuated on April 4, 1945, with other prisoners from the Emmi camp in Kleinbodungen in the direction of Bergen-Belsen.

There were no postwar trials involving Bischofferode-Eichsfeld personnel.

**SOURCES** The history of the camp was considered for the first time in the 1980s by Paul Lauerwald in a short essay, "Das Arbeitskommando Bischofferode/Eichsfeld des Konzentrationslagers Mittelbau-Dora," *EfHb* 25 (1985): 225–231.

The most important source for prisoner transports to and from the camp are the Mittelbau concentration camp Veränderungsmeldungen (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395). The camp's prisoner lists are held in ITS (Mittelbau-Ordner 20); and as microfilm copies in YVA (Microfilm BD11-Do2).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## **KLEINBODUNGEN/NIEDERGEGBRA ("KOMMANDO 48A")**

From the beginning of November 1944, around 40 Polish, Soviet, and Dutch concentration camp prisoners were held in a forced labor camp on the site of the Fiesel factory, which had

been relocated to Kassel. The SS files name the camp as "Kommando 48a." It was administered by the Kleinbodungen camp, which repaired defective A4 (Aggregat 4) rockets.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore likely that the inmates were used to maintain and repair stored A4 rocket parts for the Mittelwerk GmbH. On the other hand, Frank Baranowski suspects that the prisoners were forced to work on the Fiesel factory's aircraft production line.

It is possible that the Niedergebra prisoners, together with the inmates of the Kleinbodungen camp, were sent on the evacuation march on April 5, 1945, in the direction of Bergen-Belsen.

**SOURCES** The Niedergebra subcamp is scarcely mentioned in the literature. It is only Frank Baranowski, *Die verdrängte Vergangenheit: Rüstungsproduktion und Zwangsarbeit in Nordthüringen* (Duderstadt: Mecke Druck und Verlag, 2000), p. 116, who devotes a few lines to the camp.

The Niedergebra subcamp is mentioned in lists of work detachments of the Kleinbodungen subcamp file (Kommando "Emmi"), which are held in ITS. Microfilmed copies of these documents are held in YVA (Microfilm BD11-Do2).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

### **NOTE**

1. Unterlagen zum Kdo. Emmi (Kleinbodungen), ITS, Mittelbau-Ordner 20.

## **NORDHAUSEN (BOELCKE-KASERNE)**

American soldiers made a gruesome discovery when they entered the Thüringen city of Nordhausen on April 11, 1945. In the ruins of the Luftwaffe barracks, destroyed during a British air raid, they found the corpses of more than 1,000 emaciated concentration camp prisoners and forced laborers. A few hundred lay dying among the corpses. For these people, help had come too late. In the following weeks and months the photographs and film that were taken in the courtyard of the barracks of the dead laid out in rows (they included many young children and babies) went around the world. In many places they became the defining image of National Socialist camp terror.

The barracks (*Kaserne*) in which the dead were found was named after a fighter pilot, Oswald Boelcke. The dead came from a number of forced labor camps and prison camps that had been established on the barracks grounds during the last year of the war. The Boelcke-Kaserne showed in microcosm the varied hierarchy of the National Socialist camp system: SS labor camps (*Arbeitslager*) directly adjoined Gestapo special camps (*Sonderlager*) and forced labor camps for local industry and relocated industries. Altogether, there were at the beginning of 1945 more than 10,000 forced laborers and prisoners of various categories held on the expansive barrack grounds. The gruesome kernel of this National Socialist camp system was the Mittelbau subcamp, a death zone.



Post-liberation view of the Boelcke-Kaserne (Nordhausen) subcamp of Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp, April 11–20, 1945.

USHMM WS #13384, COURTESY OF NANCY AND MICHAEL KRZYZANOWSKI

The Boelcke-Kaserne subcamp was established on January 8, 1945 and lasted for only three months. It was originally planned as a collection camp (*Sammellager*) for prisoner detachments, which had to work on the B-11 construction site near Niedersachswerfen and in more than 20 Nordhausen factories. They had been previously held in the Mittelbau main camp.<sup>1</sup> From the end of January 1945, countless transports with exhausted, sick, and dead concentration camp prisoners arrived from the dissolved Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen concentration camps in the South Harz Mountains. At the same time the number of sick in the Mittelbau camps dramatically increased. As a result, the SS administration changed the function of the camp to become the central Mittelbau camp for the sick and the dying. In the middle of February 1945, more than 3,500 totally exhausted and emaciated prisoners arrived from the Gross-Rosen concentration camp. With this arrival, increasingly large numbers of inmates could not be used for labor, even according to SS standards. In the end, the camp held thousands of dying prisoners who were provided no amenities. Dozens died daily, and toward the end, they died in the hundreds.

The “accommodation” in the Boelcke-Kaserne was, even according to concentration camp standards, completely inadequate. It consisted of two long two-story garages on the northern edge of the barracks area, which were bordered by an electrified fence. The first garage held Blocks 1 to 4 and the kitchen. The prisoners who could “work” were held here in comparatively bearable conditions, at least when compared to the conditions in the second garage. The second garage, isolated from the rest of the camp by a second barbed-wire fence, was the location for the infamous Blocks 6 and 7 on the ground floor. They held the ill and the dying. The first floor held the infirmary and Block 5, which from March 1945 became the central infirmary for those prisoners from the main camp and other Mittelbau subcamps who were suffering from

tuberculosis. Death occurred by organized neglect. Those classified as incapable of working were regarded as useless and were allowed to die.

It is difficult to describe in words the conditions in this building. At times the SS forced more than 3,000 dying prisoners into Blocks 6 and 7, which together had an area of not even 1,800 square meters (2,153 square yards). There were no beds in these blocks. Instead, the prisoners were forced to lie one next to the other on the concrete floor on which there was a thin layer of sawdust. There was a toilet area, but it could not be used because there was no water. In any event, many of the weakened prisoners, because of their condition, would not have been able to get to the toilets. The dying lay on the concrete floor. Every now and then, they would be hosed down to clean them from the worst of the human excrement.

According to the SS files 1,662 prisoners died in this camp between January 8 and April 2, 1945.<sup>2</sup> An additional unknown number of deaths must be added to this official record as well as the 2,250 sick and dying prisoners who were transferred from Bergen-Belsen to the Boelcke-Kaserne around March 8, 1945.<sup>3</sup>

The Boelcke-Kaserne subcamp had the largest proportion of Jewish prisoners in the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp system. The reason for this was because a large number of exhausted Jewish prisoners arrived in Mittelbau in January 1945 from Gross-Rosen and Auschwitz. The exception to this was the Gross-Werther camp, which held only Jewish women. However, while there are no exact numbers, it can be assumed that the large majority of Polish prisoners, who from April 1, 1945, accounted for more than 40 percent of the total numbers in the camp, were Jews. There were also relatively large numbers of Russian and French prisoners as well as Hungarian Jews.<sup>4</sup>

As the camp only lasted for three months, the survivors were able to report little on the behavior of the SS camp administration. The camp leader was 50-year-old SS-Obersturmführer Heinrich Josten, who had arrived in Nordhausen from Auschwitz. His deputy was SS-Hauptscharführer Josef Kestel, who had been the Rapportführer in the Dora main camp.<sup>5</sup> Both men do not figure in survivors’ memoirs, which is hardly surprising, as the SS scarcely entered the camp. This also applied to SS-Obersturmführer Dr. Heinrich Schmidt, who was the camp doctor for a few weeks. His presence is most noted for his inactivity. The catastrophic conditions in the Boelcke-Kaserne subcamp can largely be attributed to him. The SS installed mostly German prisoners as prisoner-functionaries in Boelcke-Kaserne. They wore the green triangle of the “criminals.” Their appointment worsened the conditions in the camp.

There were around 5,700 inmates in the camp on April 1, 1945. The camp’s dissolution began on April 2–3, 1945, when around 3,000 prisoners were transferred to the camps at Mittelbau and Ellrich-Juliushütte. British bomber squadrons attacked Nordhausen on the afternoon of April 3 and on the following day. The garages in Boelcke-Kaserne were heavily damaged. Although a prisoner infirmary, it had not been



marked with a Red Cross symbol. The garage that held Blocks 6 and 7 suffered heavy damage and was almost completely destroyed. The guards had sought refuge in the air-raid shelters, but the prisoners were left where they were to the mercy of the bombs. On April 3, there were 450 dead during the first attack in the afternoon in the block for those suffering from tuberculosis.<sup>6</sup>

The SS evacuated Nordhausen after the air raid, leaving the survivors behind, most of whom were more dead than alive. Hundreds lay dying in the rubble in the garages; no one cared for them. Some prisoners had managed to escape during the air raids, hiding in the rubble of Nordhausen and the nearby forests until they were liberated by the Americans on April 11, 1945.

The Americans immediately established a hospital after they entered Nordhausen. They brought in additional medical units, who treated the sick and injured in the barracks. For more than 1,300 prisoners, this help came too late. Many of those who survived the air raids died in the days that followed from starvation and exhaustion. On April 16, 1945, five days after liberation, the U.S. military administration had the Nordhausen local population bury the corpses from Boelcke-Kaserne, including women and children, in the city's main cemetery.

At the same time, the U.S. Army began investigations into those responsible for the crimes committed in the Mittelbau concentration camp. The former camp doctor, Dr. Schmidt, was tried in the 1947 Dachau Dora Trial, as was one other SS member from Boelcke-Kaserne. Schmidt was acquitted for lack of evidence. Likewise, he was acquitted for lack of evidence in the 1979 Majdanek Trial in Düsseldorf. There were no other trials regarding crimes committed in the Boelcke-Kaserne subcamp.

**SOURCES** Jens-Christian Wagner has written two essays on the history of the Boelcke-Kaserne subcamp: "Die Apotheose des Lagerterrors: Die Boelcke-Kaserne in Nordhausen (1944/45)," *SOWI* 29 (2000): 152–158; and "Gesteuertes Sterben: Die Boelcke-Kaserne als zentrales Sterbelager des KZ

Mittelbau," *DaHe* 20 (2004): 127–138. Brigitte d'Hainault and Christine Somerhausen refer to prisoner accounts of Boelcke-Kaserne in their complete history *Dora 1943–1945: 2500 prisonniers politiques belges fabriquent dans l'usine souterraine de la mort, annexe du camp de concentration de Buchenwald, les premiers missiles de l'histoire pour Hitler*, (Brussels, 1991); as does André Sellier in *Histoire du camp de Dora* (Paris: Éditions la découverte, 1998). In Manfred Schröter's local study on the last months of the war in Nordhausen, there are a number of references to events in Boelcke-Kaserne: *Die Zerstörung Nordhausens und das Kriegsende im Kreis Grafschaft Hohenstein 1945* (Nordhausen, 1988).

The most important sources on the prisoner transports to Boelcke-Kaserne are the camp administration's Veränderungsmeldungen as well as individual Mittelbau Transportliste and Häftlingsaufstellungen. However, they are incomplete and held in various archives (including ITS: Mittelbau-Ordner und Sachdokumentenarchiv; THStA-W: Bestände "NS 4 Bu" und "KZ und Haftanstalten Buchenwald"; YVA: Microfilms BD3-Bu19-BD3-Bu44 and BD11-Do1-BD11-Do6). An important source is the files from the U.S. military trial against those responsible for the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp that took place in Dachau in 1947 (NARA: *United States of America vs. Kurt Andrae, et al.*, Microfilm Publication M-1079, 16 Reels; originals in RG 238, NARA). Several survivors after the war wrote about their imprisonment in National Socialist concentration camps. The Boelcke-Kaserne is referred to in only a few passages in these accounts. See Léon-E. Halkin, *À l'ombre de la mort* (Brussels: Pauli, 1965), p. 168; Emile Samyn, *Mijn naam was een nummer* (Izegem: Uitgeverij Hochepeid, 1995), pp. 95–109; and Jules Hofstein, "D'évacuation à évacuation," in *De l'Université aux Camps de Concentration. Témoignages Strasbourgeois* (Paris, 1947), pp. 511–518.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Befehl SS-Hauptsturmführer Staupendahl (Führer des SS-Totenkopfsturmbanns Mittelbau), January 4, 1945, reproduced in Manfred Bornemann, *Geheimprojekt Mittelbau. Vom zentralen Öllager des Deutschen Reiches zur größten Raketenfabrik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Bonn, 1994), p. 217.

2. NARA, M-1079, Roll 11, p. 627, Prosecution Exhibit P-81A.

3. Veränderungsmeldungen KZ Mittelbau-Dora, March 8, 1945, and March 13, 1945, THStA-W, KZ u. Hafta Buchenwald Nr. Dora Dok./K 395.

4. Übersicht über die Zusammensetzung der Lagerbelegschaften in den Lagern des KZ Mittelbau, April 1, 1945, AG-MD, 1.4.3./3 (files from ITS).

5. Josten was sentenced to death in 1947 in the Polish Auschwitz Trial in Kraków and executed on January 24, 1948—see Einstellungsverfügung Zentrale Stelle Köln, April 29, 1964, NWHStA-(D), ZA-K, Gerichte Rep. 299/26, p. 6255. Kestel was tried in 1947 in the U.S. Buchenwald Trial in Dachau and executed on November 19, 1948, in Landsberg—see Harry Stein, ed., *Konzentrationslager Buchenwald 1937–1945: Begleitband zur ständigen historischen Ausstellung* (Göttingen, 1999), p. 308.



US troops view corpses at the Nordhausen Boelcke-Kaserne subcamp of Mittelbau-Dora, April 11–15, 1945.

USHMM WS #04544, COURTESY OF DONALD S. ROBINSON



6. See the report by former prisoner doctor Jules Hofstein, "D'évacuation à évacuation," in *De l'Université aux Camps de Concentration. Témoignages Strasbourgeois* (Paris, 1947), pp. 511–518.

## OSTERODE-FREIHEIT (FIRMA CURT HEBER)

The suburb of Freiheit in the Harz district city of Osterode was the site of a subcamp for the company Curt Heber. In retrospect, in many ways it represents a unique type of Mittelbau subcamp. It was, for a start, around 50 kilometers (31 miles) away from the Mittelbau main camp, outside the core area of the Mittelbau camps. On the other hand, its inmates did not have to work on construction sites but in a working factory that had nothing to do with the production of rockets for the Mittelwerk. The most important products produced by the Heber company were bomb-release devices. A section of the company from 1944 was working on the development of a cannon for fighter aircraft, including the jet fighter Messerschmitt (Me) 262, whose engines were produced in Nordwerk, which was not far from the Mittelwerk. The development of this weapon and the fact that the head of the company, Curt Heber, had close connections to the Reich Air Ministry could have led to the establishment of a Mittelbau camp.

September 25, 1944, is regarded as the date the camp was established. On this day, 10 prisoners from Buchenwald were sent as an advance detachment to Osterode.<sup>1</sup> In October, another 300 prisoners from the Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen concentration camps arrived in Osterode.<sup>2</sup> In order to accommodate the prisoners, the company's management cleared four wooden barracks on the factory's grounds, which had been a forced labor camp, and fenced them in with barbed wire. A fifth barrack served as accommodation for the guards.<sup>3</sup>

Initially, the camp was administered from Buchenwald. At the end of October 1944, it was transferred to the newly established Mittelbau concentration camp. However, by all accounts, the transfer to Mittelbau was purely of a formal nature. The Osterode-Freiheit subcamp did not develop close connections with the Mittelbau main camp or the Mittelbau "Dachs IV" subcamp in Osterode-Petershütte, which was only a few kilometers away. In December 1944 and January 1945, members of the Heber company inspected concentration camp prisoners in Buchenwald who were to be sent directly to Osterode.<sup>4</sup> It was only at the end of February 1945 that the first prisoners from the Mittelbau main camp were transferred to Osterode.<sup>5</sup> As a result, the number of prisoners increased to more than 400, of whom more than half came from Poland.

The prisoners were production prisoners (*Produktionsschäftlinge*). If they were unable to work, this would mean economic loss for the Heber company. As a result, the prisoners in the Osterode-Freiheit camp were exposed to less arduous working conditions than were to be found in the numerous Mittelbau-Dora construction camps. Work in a production detachment also offered a certain degree of protection from

the terror and mistreatment. Nevertheless, an unknown number of prisoners died, especially in the last few months of the camp's existence. Most of the dead were cremated in the Mittelbau crematorium, but a few were buried in the Osterode cemetery.

At first the subcamp was commanded by a Wehrmacht noncommissioned officer who had been transferred to the SS. Survivors later stated that he treated the prisoners acceptably. In January 1945, he was replaced by SS-Hauptscharführer Karl Petz (the correct spelling of the name is not certain), who treated the prisoners in an extraordinarily brutal way. The prisoners nicknamed the 25-year-old the "Tiger." He personally beat the prisoners and encouraged his subordinates and Kapos to do the same.<sup>6</sup>

The terror introduced to the camp by the new SS camp leader and the declining rations increased the rate of illness among the camp inmates from January 1945. In March 1945, more than 70 debilitated prisoners were sent to the main camp and the death camp in the Nordhausen Boelcke-Kaserne. The dissolution of the Osterode-Freiheit camp followed on April 5, 1945, when the prisoners were driven by their guards along the western edge of the Harz in a northerly direction. After four days of marching, the survivors of the death march were separated into several groups in Gifhorn and were marched in a northerly and easterly direction. Most of the survivors were liberated by the Americans between April 9 and 13, in the area between Gifhorn and Salzwedel.

**SOURCES** A short sketch on the history of Firma Heber appeared in an essay by Hans-Heinrich Hillegeist, "Die Firmen OIGEE und HEMAF in Osterode/Harz," in *Rüstungsindustrie in Südniedersachsen während der NS-Zeit* (Mannheim: Verlag Peter Wagener, 1993), pp. 119–141. The essay also deals with the subcamp. The work and living conditions in the camp are dealt with in the Mittelbau monograph by Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes: Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 2001). Joachim Neander has researched the evacuation of the camp in his work on the Mittelbau death marches in *Das Konzentrationslager "Mittelbau" in der Endphase der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur: Zur Geschichte des letzten im "Dritten Reich" gegründeten selbständigen Konzentrationslagers unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Auflösungsphase* (Clausthal-Zellerfeld: Papierflieger, 1997).

Details on the prisoner transports to and from Osterode can be obtained from the almost complete Stärkemeldungen and Transportlisten, which are held in ITS (copies are held in the YVA, Microfilm BD3-Bu20) and in the THStA-W (Bestand NS 4 Bu). The BA-L holds the files from the investigation conducted in 1972 by the ZdL into former guards from the Osterode-Freiheit camp (Bestand IV 429 AR-Z 241/72). Transport lists for this camp were published in *BADRDE* 6–7 (June–July 1946): 23.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. ITS, Buchenwald-Ordner 295 (YVA, Microfilm BD3-Bu-43).

2. Ibid.; and Transportliste October 5, 1944, NARA, Microfilm Buchenwald 34, p. 31109; and Transportliste October 20, 1944, USHMM, RG-04.006M, Reel 18.

3. See the statements by the former prisoner Leopold B., December 17, 1969, and Zygmunt S., September 29, 1967, BA-L, 429 AR-Z 241/72, pp. 72, 105.

4. THStA-W, NS 4 Bu/231: "Facharbeitermusterungen Firma C. Heber" im KZ Buchenwald, December 14, 1944, and January 1, 1945, as well as Transportlisten Buchenwald-Heber, December 19, 1944, and January 9, 1945. It was mostly mechanics and electricians and those from similar professions who were chosen.

5. KZ Mittelbau Transport Lists for February 26, 1945, and March 28, 1945, reproduced in *BADRDE 6-7* (June-July 1946): 23.

6. Statements of the surviving prisoners Stefan T., July 20, 1967, Mieczysław D., June 27, 1967, and Marian M., June 30, 1967, BA-L, 429 AR-Z 241/72, pp. 86, 95, 98.

### OSTERODE-PETERSHÜTTE ("DACHS IV")

The subcamp "Dachs IV," which was established rather late, was in some ways different from the other camps and construction sites in the Mittelbau-Dora complex: it lay outside the core geographical area of the concentration camp complex (the camp was located around 50 kilometers [31 miles] to the northwest of the main camp). Its inmates did not have to excavate underground facilities for the Junkers company, as was mostly the case in other Mittelbau concentration camp construction projects. Instead, they were to excavate an underground oil refinery for the Hamburg oil company Rhenania-Ossag. It was for this reason that the construction project, unlike most of the other Mittelbau projects, was not controlled by SS members from the Kammler-Stab but by the Sonderstab (special staff) of the Armaments Ministry, which was under the control of Edmund Geilenberg. Geilenberg's special staff was to secure the production of petroleum in Germany. His staff appointed the Organisation Todt's (OT) Einsatzgruppe IV as construction project manager.

The Geilenberg staff initially planned to locate the underground refinery Dachs IV in the Heimkehle caves near Rottleberode. In March 1945, concentration camp prisoners from the Heinrich camp, which was under the control of the Kammler-Stab, had commenced converting the caves into a store depot for the Junkers branch factory Schönebeck. Following a dispute between both special staffs regarding responsibilities, the Geilenberg staff abandoned its plans and acquired the gypsum quarry owned by the Schimpf company at Osterode-Petershütte in September 1944. The underground oil refinery would be located there.

This was a relatively small project when compared to the other construction projects around Nordhausen. Construction began in October 1944. As with most other construction projects in the last year of the war, there were constant changes to the plans for Osterode. Even the use of different groups of workers showed all the hallmarks of improvisation. There were German civilian laborers on the construction site

as well as several thousand foreign laborers and prisoners of war (POWs), a few hundred German and Czech "half Jews and those with Jewish blood" from the Gestapo camp located close to the construction site, and—from the end of November 1944—also concentration camp prisoners. From the winter of 1944–1945, there were around 3,000 laborers on the site. Despite this, the facility was not completed. It is true that the Rhenania-Ossag was able to locate part of its machinery to Osterode. However, the machines could not be installed into the first cavern that had been excavated.

The beginnings of the Dachs IV subcamp can be traced to November 20, 1944, when an advanced detachment of 100 prisoners from the Buchenwald concentration camp was transferred close to the construction site in Osterode-Petershütte. A little later, the camp, which had been under the control of the Buchenwald concentration camp, was transferred to the Mittelbau concentration camp. At the beginning of February 1945, the numbers in the camp increased with the arrival of a transport of 412 prisoners, almost all of whom were Jews. They had been sent from Auschwitz via the Mittelbau main camp to Osterode. There were now more than 500 inmates in the camp. There were more transfers from the Mittelbau main camp (on February 21, more than 200 mostly Polish prisoners and, a few days later, another 100 prisoners from a number of different countries were transferred). By the beginning of March 1945, the number in Dachs IV had increased to around 800 inmates.<sup>1</sup>

The camp consisted of six makeshift barracks and was surrounded by a high barbed-wire fence. It was severely overcrowded. Hunger and poor sanitary conditions accelerated the prisoners' loss of strength as they undertook forced labor in the caves. Emaciated prisoners and those no longer capable of working were regularly transferred to the main camp infirmary and later to the camp for the dying in the Nordhausen Boelcke-Kaserne.

There was one thing above all that distinguished this camp from other Mittelbau camps: the SS did not evacuate the camp at the beginning of April 1945 but on March 21, when its inmates were transferred to the Nordhausen Boelcke-Kaserne. The evacuated subcamp was then for a short time occupied by 1,000 Soviet POWs who continued the work on the subterranean Dachs IV project. Very few prisoners transferred to the Boelcke-Kaserne are likely to have survived.

SS-Oberscharführer Werner Wachholz (born 1898), who had been transferred from the Wehrmacht, was in command of the camp. The prisoners have described him as "correct" in his command. The camp regime, however, dramatically worsened when Wachholz was replaced in February 1945 by SS-Hauptscharführer Gerhard Herdel.<sup>2</sup> Wachholz remained in command of the 70-man-strong guards, who were also Wehrmacht members who had been transferred to the SS. The camp command was now under the control of the 34-year-old Herdel who had previously occupied the posts of deputy Arbeitseinsatzführer and Rapportführer in the Auschwitz III-Monowitz concentration camp and was apparently well adapted to his role. He was sentenced in 1953 to one year's

imprisonment by a jury court in Göttingen for crimes committed in Auschwitz and Osterode. He did not have to serve time, however.<sup>3</sup> It would seem there were no other criminal proceedings relating to criminal acts committed in the Dachs IV camp.

**SOURCES** Hans-Heinrich Hillegeist's essay on the Dachs IV armaments project, "Dachs IV—ein Projekt des Geilenberg-Programms in Osterode/Harz," in *Rüstungsindustrie in Südniedersachsen während der NS-Zeit*, ed. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Südniedersächsischer Heimatfreunde e.V. (Mannheim: Verlag Peter Wagener, 1993), pp. 317–333, is a little old. In Jens-Christian Wagner's Mittelbau monograph, *Produktion des Todes. Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 2001), the camp is mentioned in several places, and there are additional source references. Those who are interested in the technical details on the Dachs IV construction project should refer to Jürgen Müller's *Dachs IV—der Bau des unterirdischen Hydrierwerkes Dachs IV bei Osterode im Harz zum Ende des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Clausthal-Zellerfeld: Papierflieger, 2004).

Details on prisoner transports between the Dachs IV subcamp and the main camps at Buchenwald and Mittelbau are to be found in the transport lists compiled by the administration in the Buchenwald concentration camp (ITS, Buchenwald-Ordner 165), as well as the Mittelbau Stärkemeldungen (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395). The ZdL (today BA-L) holds the investigation files into the Dachs IV subcamp from 1972 (IV 429 AR-Z 193/72). The 1953 files regarding the trial of former SS camp leader Herdel before the Landgericht Göttingen are held in the NHStA-H (Nds 721 Gö Acc. 99/81, Nr. 41). The judgment on Herdel has been published in C.F. Rüter's collection of documents, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam, 1974), 10: 515–524. For details on the Dachs IV construction project, see the files in the AOCZ (Akte W 7705: Bauprojekt Dachs IV, 1944/45); as well as CIOS, *Report on Underground Factories in Central Germany, 1945*, Report No. XXXII-17.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. KZ Buchenwald, Transportliste Dachs IV, November 20, 1944, ITS, Buchenwald-Ordner 165 (YVA, Microfilm BD3-Bu20), as well as Veränderungsmeldungen Mittelbau-Dora, 1944/45, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395.

2. Statement Hugo G. (former member of the OT-Bauleitung), August 24, 1950, BA-L, 429 AR-Z 241/72, Bl. 17 f.

3. Judgment against G. Herdel, March 4, 1953, in C.F. Rüter, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam, 1974), 10: 515–524; as well as statement Herdel, August 16, 1965, NHStA-H, Nds 721 Gö Acc. 99/81, Nr. 41, p. 25.

## QUEDLINBURG

One of five Mittelbau subcamps that held only Italian military internees (IMIs) was located in Quedlinburg. The district city in the northern Harz plain was well-known during

the National Socialist regime for its Gothic cathedral, which Heinrich Himmler wished to convert into an SS cult site.

The Quedlinburg camp was about 50 kilometers (31 miles) away from the Mittelbau main camp and was the most distant of the subcamps. It was probably established on September 17, 1944, when 21 IMIs were transferred from the main camp. A second transport with 19 Italians followed on September 28.<sup>1</sup> There are no records of any other transfers. An undated camp list (it could have been created on November 1, 1944) lists the names of 58 prisoners.<sup>2</sup> The same number is also recorded on a list dated March 31, 1945.

Gregorio Piali wrote the only known report by a survivor of the camp. He was transferred from the main camp to Quedlinburg in the late summer of 1944.<sup>3</sup> According to Piali, the prisoners were at first shifted from one building to another in the city. Later, a camp was established in a dilapidated building on the edge of the city, which was fenced in with barbed wire.

The prisoners, as with the inmates of the Trautenstein subcamp, which also exclusively held IMIs, worked in Quedlinburg on the construction of the planned high-voltage power line at Frose-Bleicherode, which was to provide additional electricity to the Mittelwerk industrial complex near Niedersachswerfen in the northeast Harz region.

According to a set of directions from the Mittelbau main camp labor administration office, the IMIs were allowed to work without guards from the summer of 1944.<sup>4</sup> It is probably for this reason that the Quedlinburg and Trautenstein camps, whose prisoners worked solely on the construction of the high-voltage power line, were occupied by Italian military internees. In this way, the SS could spare the use of guards. There was no construction work done in January and February 1945 due to severe frost. During this period, the prisoners cleared away the snow.

Concerning deaths at Quedlinburg, what is known is that Giovanni Tomei probably died after being sent back to the main camp.

As with the other Mittelbau camps that held only IMIs, the Quedlinburg camp was not evacuated at the beginning of April 1945 when the Americans approached. Piali stated that the prisoners were still cleaning up rubble in the streets of Quedlinburg following an air raid on April 11, 1945. The following night, the SS guards disappeared. Fearing attacks, he and his fellow prisoners approached the Americans only on April 14. With that, the Quedlinburg camp was closed.

**SOURCES** Joachim Neander contributed an essay on the Mittelbau/Quedlinburg subcamp located in the North Harz Mountains, "Die Aussenlager 'Turmalin' (Regenstein), Quedlinburg und Trautenstein des KZ Mittelbau-Dora," in *Erinnern: Aufgabe, Chance, Herausforderung* (Magdeburg, 2002), pp. 1–11.

Except for the Mittelbau Veränderungsmeldungen (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395), and a few prisoner lists (AG-MD, Microfilm B 1), there are no written records that have survived on the Quedlinburg subcamp. Gregorio Piali, a concentration camp survivor, has



published his memoirs on his concentration camp imprisonment in Quedlinburg, *Una voce da Buchenwald. Campo Dora Buchenwald* (Vicenza, 1973).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Veränderungsmeldungen KZ Mittelbau-Dora, September 17, 1944, and September 28, 1944, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395.

2. List Kommando Quedlinburg, n.d., AG-MD, Microfilm B 1.

3. Gregorio Piali, *Una voce da Buchenwald. Campo Dora Buchenwald* (Vicenza, 1973).

4. See Schreiben Arbeitseinsatzbüro Mittelbau an Arbeitseinsatzführer Buchenwald, June 30, 1944, ITS, Sachdokumenten-Ordner Buchenwald 53, p. 179.

## ROSSLA

The Junkers company had been allocated the northern section of the Kohnstein underground production facility. As a result, the Mittelwerk facilities were insufficient for production and storage in Kohnstein, and the company established several branch factories in the summer of 1944 in the Nordhausen area, where the parts for the Aggregat 4 (A4) rockets were stored. One of these branch factories was established at the beginning of August 1944 in the factory buildings of a unused sugar factory in Rossla, about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) to the southeast of Nordhausen.

As with all Mittelwerk branch factories, concentration camp prisoners were initially deployed in Rossla. Initially, from August 1, 1944, around 100 prisoners were taken daily by rail from the Mittelbau camp to Rossla. Here they had to load and unload rail wagons that arrived from the main factory in Kohnstein. At the same time, the SS had the prisoners convert two barracks of the Reichsarbeitsdienst (Reich Labor Service) camp, which had been constructed in 1936, into accommodation for the concentration camp prisoners. One of the two barracks was fenced in with barbed wire and a security fence. On August 31, 1944, the new camp was opened when 82 prisoners from the Mittelbau camp moved in. The kitchen and infirmary were located in the second of the two barracks. There were around 20 SS guards accommodated in the barracks as well.

Scarcely any SS documents have survived that relate to the Rossla camp. The memoirs of Max Dutilleux, a French prisoner in Rossla, provide a striking report on the camp. Statements by the camp Kapo, Wilhelm Schmidt, have also survived. The statements were made to American officers a few days after the camp was liberated in April 1945. Finally, around the year 2000, a former Ukrainian prisoner reported on his time in the Rossla camp. According to the survivors' reports, the prisoners were held in the fenced-in accommodation barracks. There were two sections in the barracks: the

"Noble Quarter," as Dutilleux named his section, was where the prisoner-functionaries as well as Polish, Czech, French, and Belgian prisoners were held, while in the "Proletarian Quarter" very young Russian prisoners were squeezed together tightly. The morning and evening roll call took place on the 10-meter-square (33-feet-square) area between the two barracks.

There were on average between 110 and 120 prisoners in the camp, the overwhelming majority of whom came from the Soviet Union, France, and Poland. The prisoner-functionaries were Germans. There was also a German medical doctor who looked after the infirmaries. Officially the infirmary was under the control of a local doctor, who was contracted to the infirmary. The sparse SS files refer to one death. It concerned a prisoner who was shot between December 21, 1944, and January 20, 1945, while "trying to escape."<sup>1</sup> This prisoner could be German Communist Hans Merker, who is said to have been a member of a resistance group in the Mittelbau camp.

The prisoners who were transferred to Rossla did not find the living and working conditions too bad when compared to the exhausting cavern excavation work that they had to do in Kohnstein. Loading and unloading rocket parts was very difficult work, but not as murderous as in the subterranean construction sites of many of the other Mittelbau-Dora camps. In addition, the arbitrary mistreatment by the guards and Kapos was kept within limits.

The camp leader was initially an SS noncommissioned officer. He was replaced in February 1945 by SS-Oberscharführer Welzel.

According to the former camp Kapo, on April 4, 1945, the day before the camp was evacuated, 30 prisoners who had been injured in an air raid on the Boelcke-Kaserne in Nordhausen arrived in Rossla. On the next morning, April 5, the SS camp leader ordered the camp's evacuation. By foot in a column the prisoners marched via Rottleberode and Stolberg into the Harz. Between 8 and 10 prisoners each had to push 10 small flat trolleys that had been used in the camp to move rocket parts and that were now laden with supplies for the march and SS baggage. Marching via Halberstadt and Magdeburg, covering about 30 kilometers (19 miles) a day, they reached the Heinkel factory in Oranienburg. Prisoners who could not keep up or who tried to escape were shot by their guards, the first being shot on the first day of the march near Stolberg. The survivors arrived in Oranienburg on either April 17 or 18. They did not stay there for long, as the Oranienburg camp was evacuated on April 21. This time the prisoners from Rossla, who the SS maintained as a group, were forced to march in a northwesterly direction. After nine long and exhausting days, the guards disappeared just to the south of Schwerin—on May 1, 1945, the surviving Rossla prisoners were free.

The Rossla camp played no role in the Dachau Dora Trial in 1947, and even later there were no investigations or criminal proceedings in connection with the Rossla camp. In the local cemetery, there is the grave of a Pole who died in Octo-



ber 1944 in Rossla. Most likely the deceased was not, despite public speculation, a concentration camp prisoner.

**SOURCES** The Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp Veränderungsmeldungen produced by the SS administration refer to the transports to and from Rossla (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395 ). A copy of an undated list of all of the camp's inmates, possibly created on November 1, 1944, is to be found in the AG-MD (Microfilm B 1). Details on the work and living conditions in the camp, such as the death march route from Rossla via Oranienburg to Schwerin, are to be found in survivors' memoirs (Report Viktor Tumizkij, 5.9.1996, AG-MD, EB/H Ukr 1; Statement Dr. Wilhelm Schmidt, 20.4.1945, NARA, Microfilm Publication M-1079, Roll 2, fr. 751). Max Dutilleux, a former prisoner, published his memoirs in France on his imprisonment in the concentration camps in Dora and Rossla: *Le camp des armes secrètes Dora-Mittelbau* (n.p., 1993).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. Monatsbericht Häftlingskrankenbau Lager Rossla, December 21, 1944, to January 20, 1945, NARA, Microfilm Publication M-1079, Roll 1, fr. 563.

## ROTTLEBERODE ("HEINRICH")

As with many other Mittelbau camps, the camp "Heinrich" near Rottleberode was established as part of the plan to relocate part of German air armaments underground. In the spring of 1944, the Jägerstab (Fighter Staff) authorized the Junkers aircraft factory at Schönebeck to convert the Heimkehle caves, close to the villages of Rottleberode and Ufrungen (present-day Sachsen-Anhalt), into an underground facility for the assembly of aircraft frames. SS-Führungsstabe A5 was in charge of the construction work. It was part of SS-Gruppenführer Hans Kammler's construction organization.

On March 13, 1944, 200 prisoners from the Buchenwald concentration camp commenced excavation in the caves, which until then had been a favorite destination for day trips by tourists. In the following months, the number of men increased from 500 to 700 prisoners. To accommodate the prisoners, the SS established the Heinrich subcamp on the edge of Rottleberode. It was at first administered from Buchenwald, but from October 1944, it became part of the Mittelbau concentration camp.<sup>1</sup>

The Junkers company had leased a three-story building owned by the porcelain factory Max Schuck. The prisoners were held in this building, which was surrounded with an electrified fence and guard towers. A courtyard, about 50 meters (164 feet) long, between the building and the electrified fence served as the roll-call square. The ground floor of the building held the kitchen, washrooms, and storerooms. The prisoners' sleeping and day quarters were on the two upper floors. The prisoners had to march 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) to

the Heimkehle caves, which was a relatively long way to the production site. It would seem that Junkers and the SS in this case preferred that the prisoners were held in a relatively large stone building rather than establish a barracks camp closer to the Heimkehle caves.

The A5 construction project, with an area of 7,400 square meters (8,850 square yards), was a relatively small construction project. The "Thyra Werk" (the name given to it for purposes of secrecy) could soon commence operations, as the underground facilities were essentially in place except for the ventilation and the entrances to the caverns. From the end of July 1944, the Junkers (Ju) concentration camp prisoners and civilian workers were producing springs and parts for the Ju 88 and Ju 188 aircraft.<sup>2</sup>

Preferred were prisoners who had already worked in the factory at Schönebeck before it was relocated. They were used to working with the machines that were moved to Rottleberode. Prisoners were also preferred whom Junkers had examined in Buchenwald or who were transferred from the Junkers branch factory in Mühlhausen to Rottleberode. The prisoners who had wasted away in constructing the production facilities for the Thyra factory in the Heimkehle were then used on Project B-4, another construction project in nearby Stempeda. In August 1944, work began here in caverns for another Junkers relocation project. Unlike the A5 facility, this project would not be completed by the end of the war.

The Thyra Werk's production prisoners (*Fertigungshäftlinge*), as they are called in the SS documents, and the Project B-4 construction prisoners (*Bauhäftlinge*) were at first accommodated together in the Heinrich camp in Rottleberode. The prisoners' poor working conditions in the Project B-4 caverns and the resultant poor health in turn affected the camp conditions in Rottleberode: the infirmary was filled with exhausted prisoners from the detachment B4, and the camp was threatened with an outbreak of epidemics. Junkers then pressed for the separation of the Project B-4 Bauhäftlinge from the Thyra Werk Fertigungshäftlinge, because if they could not work, there would be economic consequences: there was not an unlimited supply of qualified and physically fit prisoners in the concentration camp to replace those prisoners who could not work.

At first, Junkers tried to get the SS to separate the Bauhäftlinge from the Fertigungshäftlinge in the porcelain factory. At the beginning of 1945, the SS finally established a separate camp in Stempeda for the construction project. From February 1945, an increasing number of Bauhäftlinge were permanently accommodated here.

However, the number of prisoners held in Rottleberode remained fairly constant. After production commenced in the Thyra Werk, 800 additional prisoners were sent by October 1944 to Rottleberode from Schönebeck, Mühlhausen, and Buchenwald. During this period, the SS moved around 230 Bauhäftlinge as forced laborers to the underground Project B-3, the Mittelbau main camp, and other subcamps. However, by the autumn of 1944, there were around 1,000 prisoners in the Heinrich camp. Additional transfers from

Schönebeck increased this number by the beginning of January 1945 by another 100 prisoners.

A decisive point in the history of the Heinrich camp occurred at the end of January 1945 when around 450 Jewish prisoners, whom the SS had evacuated in the face of the advancing Red Army from Tschenstochau (Częstochowa) via Buchenwald and the Dora camp, arrived at Rottleberode. Until this time, the camp prisoners were mostly non-Jewish Poles (in November 1944, they comprised around 45 percent of the camp inmates), Russians, French, Czechs, and Germans. Until January 1945, there were no Jewish prisoners in the camp. Most of the new Jewish prisoners were sent as forced labor to the caverns at the B-4 construction project near Stempeda. Here they were the victims of brutal mistreatment by SS, Kapos, and German civilian workers. Many Jews drowned in a pool at the entrance to the cavern.<sup>3</sup>

Until the end of 1944, the Heinrich camp was regarded by the concentration camp prisoners as relatively bearable, as a large number did not have to work on the debilitating construction work but were used in production at the Thyra factory. There are no deaths recorded in the camp up to the end of 1944 and beginning of 1945. However, this changed with the murder of the Jewish camp inmates: alone in February and March 1945, the SS files record 50 deaths.

The dramatic worsening in conditions was also a result of a change in the camp leadership's personnel. At first the camp leader was SS-Untersturmführer Heinz Grabowski. There are no known negative reports on him. His removal in the autumn of 1944 probably had to do with a change of direction in his life and internal SS disputes.

The 30-year-old SS-Hauptscharführer Erhard Brauny was Grabowski's replacement. He had previously been Rapportführer in the Dora camp. Brauny himself rarely appeared alone. The reports of surviving prisoners always refer to him in the company of his official deputy, the 40-year-old SS-Unterscharführer Hermann Lamp. In Heinrich, Brauny and Lamp established a reign of terror that was based on corrupt and brutal Kapos and prisoner-functionaries. The Jewish prisoners from Tschechenstochau especially suffered under both. Brauny and Lamp were often drunk and, according to former Kapo and camp recorder Walter Ulbricht,<sup>4</sup> shot at the prisoners every night. Other prisoners have accused Ulbricht himself of involvement in the mistreatment and murder of Jewish prisoners.<sup>5</sup> Brauny and Lamp not only covered up the antisemitic outrages of their Kapo Ulbricht but were themselves particularly brutal toward the Jewish prisoners. As camp leader in the Stempa camp, Lamp was also responsible for the terror and murder in that camp.

Conditions worsened even more in the camp when Fritz de la Cour arrived. He had been sent to a concentration camp because he was a homosexual. He replaced the camp elder, Robert Hagen, who wore the green triangle of the criminals, on March 22, 1945. Hagen is said to have treated his fellow prisoners properly. De la Cour had been a feared Kapo in the Mittelbau-Dora camp before he was transferred to Heinrich. It is possible that he was transferred as a result of the ap-

proaching front to take over security measures as a prisoner-functionary.

The Heinrich subcamp was evacuated on the night of April 4–5, 1945. The 1,500 inmates from the Heinrich and Stempeda camps were marched in two columns in the direction of Niedersachswerfen, which was not far from the Mittelbau main camp. Only the smaller column led by Brauny arrived. Lamp turned his group around following an air attack and commenced to march the next day across the Harz. Both groups were to meet dreadful fates: Lamp drove his 1,100 exhausted prisoners in daylong marches and by rail to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. A few days after their arrival, the survivors were driven on a new march, this time in a northwesterly direction. Only a few prisoners survived this death march.

Brauny's evacuation transport of around 400 prisoners ended at Gardelegen, where most of them died in the massacre at the Isenschnibber barn. Around 1,000 prisoners from different concentration camps, including many from the SS-Baubrigade III and the Heinrich camp, were driven on the evening of April 13 not far from the city into the barn by members of the SS, Wehrmacht, and Volkssturm. The murderers then set the barn on fire and shot anyone who tried to escape the burning building. Only 20 to 25 prisoners were able to escape, using the darkness as protection, and stay hidden until they were rescued on the evening of the following day by the Americans.

A few of the survivors of the massacre came from the Heinrich camp, including Jewish prisoner Romuald Bak, who would be an important witness in the 1947 Dachau Dora Trial. He would seriously incriminate camp leader Erhard Brauny. Brauny was sentenced to life imprisonment and died in prison in 1950 in Landsberg. The former camp recorder, Walter Ulbricht, was also tried in Dachau. He was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Brauny's deputy Lamp was never called to account before an Allied or German court. At the beginning of the 1980s, Hermann Ebender and a former Kapo were tried in the Rottleberode trial in Fulda: Lamp was a witness in the preliminary investigations. Ebender was acquitted.

**SOURCES** The Rottleberode Heinrich subcamp is not only well documented in the sources but in academic works. Worthy of mention are Mittelbau monographs by André Sellier, *A History of the Dora camp* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, published in association with USHMM, 2003); and Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes: Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2001), which devote several passages to Rottleberode. Two publications deal with the death marches from Rottleberode to Gardelegen: Joachim Neander, *Gardelegen 1945: Das Ende der Häftlingstransporte aus dem Konzentrationslager "Mittelbau"* (Magdeburg, 1998); and Diana Gring, "... immer zwischen zwei Feuern": Eine Annäherung an die Biographie des kommunistischen Funktionshäftlings Karl Semmler," *BGNSVND* 4 (1998): 97–105. Jens-Christian Wagner concentrates on the conditions of Jewish prisoners in Rottleberode in "Noch einmal: Arbeit und Vernichtung.

Häftlingseinsatz im KL Mittelbau-Dora 1943–1945," in *Ausbeutung, Vernichtung Öffentlichkeit. Neue Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Lagerpolitik*, ed. Norbert Frei, Sybille Steinbacher, and Bernd C. Wagner (Munich: Saur, 2000), pp. 11–41.

There are numerous detailed witness statements from former prisoners and SS perpetrators in the files of the U.S. Dora Trial in Dachau in 1947 (*U.S.A. vs. Arthur Andrae et al.*, NARA, RG 549. Microfilm Copy M-1079, Rolls 1–16). Documents from the SS camp administration (Transportlisten, Belegschaftslisten des Lagers, Stärkemeldungen, Rechnungen der SS an Firmen, die KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter einsetzen) are to be found in the THStA-W (NS 4 Bu/136, Überstellungsmeldungen KZ Buchenwald, 1943–1945; KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395, Veränderungsmeldungen KZ Mittelbau-Dora, October 1, 1943–March 27, 1945). The surviving Junkers documents relating to Schönebeck and that contain references to the number of concentration camp prisoners used as forced labor are in the LASA-DO (Bestand Junkers-Werke). Finally, there are the judicial files: proceedings against Hermann Ebender are well documented in the files held by the BA-L (429 AR-Z 192/72). In his autobiography, Willy Mirbach, a former Luftwaffe soldier and concentration camp guard in Rottleberode, provides the perspective of a perpetrator, "*Damit Du es später einmal deinem Sohn erzählen kannst . . .*": *Der autobiographische Bericht eines Luftwaffensoldaten aus dem KZ Mittelbau (August 1944–Juli 1945)*, ed. Gerd Halmanns (Geldern: Verlag des Historischen Vereins für Geldern, 1997).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. KZ Buchenwald, Aufstellung der Transporte in Aussenlager, THStA-W, NS 4 Bu/136a u. NS 4 Bu/136b, as well as Arbeitseinsatzmeldungen KZ Buchenwald, March to July 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Bu/230. For the integration into the newly established Mittelbau concentration camp, see "Bericht zur Übergabe der Dora Betriebe [*sic*] als selbständiges Konzentrationslager am 28.10.1944," Nuremberg Document NO-2317. Initially, only the Rottleberode prisoner detachments A5 and B-4 were subordinated to the Mittelbau concentration camp, that is, only the prisoners working on the Kammler staff construction sites, whereas those prisoners working for Junkers remained part of the Buchenwald concentration camp. On November 23, 1944, the prisoners from this detachment came under the control of the Mittelbau concentration camp; see KZ Buchenwald, Stärkemeldungen der Aussenlager, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Bu/210, Bl. 403 ff.

2. Verlagerungsübersicht Junkers Flugzeugwerke Schönebeck, March 15, 1945, LASO-DO, Junkers-Werke 1375, Bl. 10 u. 15.

3. Several survivors from the camp at Tschenstochau and Rottleberode later made statements in investigations into the Rottleberode camp, for example, statements by the former prisoners Hersch J., May 14, 1968, BA-L, 429 AR-Z 192/72, p. 88; Abraham E., May 23, 1968, *ibid.*, p. 86; and Romuald Bak, September 25, 1947, *ibid.*, p. 103.

4. Statement Walter Ulbricht, May 13–15, 1947, NARA, Microcopy M-1079, Roll 11, fr. 518.

5. Statement Roman Drung, 1947, NARA, M-1079, Roll 6, fr. 570; and Romuald Bak, 1947, *ibid.*, Roll 7, fr. 1408.

## STEMPEDA ("KOMMANDO B-4")

The history of the Stempeda camp is closely connected with the nearby Heinrich camp in Rottleberode, whose inmates had to work in a Junkers subterranean aircraft factory, which had been relocated from Schönebeck an der Elbe in the South Harz Mountains. In the summer of 1944, the Junkers AG decided to relocate its branch at Schönebeck to Stempeda in the Harz, where three main shafts and seven cross-shafts with a total area of 12,000 to 14,000 square meters (14,352 to 16,744 square yards) in the Stolberg were to be excavated.<sup>1</sup> The construction work was undertaken by the SS-Führungsstab B-4 commanded by SS-Gruppenführer Hans Kammler, whose Jägerstab (Fighter Staff) was responsible for so-called *Sonderbauvorhaben*, or special construction projects, including securing the relocation of production of fighter aircraft underground.

The construction of the Project B-4 (code name "Lava") began in August 1944. On August 25, the first 50 concentration camp prisoners from the Heinrich camp arrived at the construction site.<sup>2</sup> This number remained constant during the autumn of 1944. At the end of January 1945, the number increased to more than 700 with the arrival of around 450 Jewish prisoners from Tschechenstochau (Częstochowa).<sup>3</sup> As with most Jägerstab construction projects, the construction project B-4 was never completed, despite the ruthless exploitation of the prisoners. At the beginning of April 1945, the three caverns for vehicles had reached a length of between 150 and 200 meters (164 and 219 yards). Together with the completed cross-tunnels, there was a surface area of 3,700 square meters (4,425 square yards).<sup>4</sup>

The prisoners working on the construction site B-4 were at first accommodated in the Heinrich camp at Rottleberode. After repeated protests from the Junkers company, which operated Heinrich as a prisoner camp for its branch factory relocated from Schönebeck (the Thyra Werk) and not as accommodation for the construction prisoners (*Baubäftlinge*) of the Arbeitskommando B-4, the SS decided to establish at the end of 1944 a barracks camp close to the construction site, which from January 1945 was gradually occupied by concentration camp inmates.

The prisoners feared the Arbeitskommando B-4 for its murderous work conditions in the caverns. The Jewish prisoners from Tschechenstochau, in particular, suffered from mistreatment by the guards, Kapos, and civilian foremen. Some of those working in the caverns were beaten and died from their injuries.<sup>5</sup> Surviving prisoners reported later that in the winter of 1944–1945 SS members repeatedly drove Jewish prisoners into the ice-cold water in a pool at the entrance to the caverns, killing them.<sup>6</sup> The SS described these murders of Jewish prisoners as "baptisms" (*Taufe*).<sup>7</sup> This was obviously an indication of violent antisemitism, instigated by SS-Untersturmführer



Hermann Lamp, who was in command of the work detachment from the autumn of 1944. From January 1945, he was also in command of Stempeda. Many of the Jewish prisoners died working in the caverns. Foremen and Kapos in the caverns beat them to death in the caverns or drove over them with heavily laden tip carts.<sup>8</sup> The SS-Bauleitung (Construction Management) and the building companies lost a large number of its workforce in this way but apparently did nothing to prevent these actions. It can be assumed that at least 50 prisoners did not survive working in the caverns B-4 and imprisonment in the Stempeda camp. It was possibly more.

Due to the debilitating work conditions, most of the prisoners from Stempeda were totally exhausted when the Americans approached the camp at the beginning of April 1945. In the night of April 4–5, two groups of prisoners were marched from Heinrich and Stempeda to the Niedersachswerfen railway station. However, only one of the groups arrived. The approximately 500 inmates of the Stempeda subcamp were in all probability part of the second group under the command of SS-Unterscharführer Lamp. Along the way, they were caught in an air raid and turned around. After spending the night near Rottleberode, the 1,000 prisoners on this death march were driven on April 5 by foot through Stolberg and Güntersberge through the Harz Mountains to Quedlinburg and from there across the Elbe to Genthin, where they arrived on April 12. The 800 survivors were loaded onto a train. Four days later, they arrived at the Sachsenhausen subcamp at Heinkelwerken in Oranienburg. From there the SS drove the few remaining prisoners still capable of walking on April 21 on a new death march—this time in a northwesterly direction. The last camp survivors from the Stempeda camp were liberated by the Red Army at the beginning of May 1945 near Schwerin.

Lamp, who led the death march until its arrival in Oranienburg and after the war lived near Lübeck, was never the subject of judicial proceedings. In 1984, former Kapo Ebender was tried before a Fulda court on the charge that he drowned Jewish prisoners from the work detachment B-4 in the Heinrich camp. He was acquitted for lack of evidence.

**SOURCES** There are no secondary sources on the history of the Stempeda subcamp. The Stempeda camp takes up a relatively large section of an essay by Jens-Christian Wagner, who compares the conditions of Jewish and French prisoners in Stempeda and Heinrich in “Noch einmal: Arbeit und Vernichtung. Häftlingseinsatz im KL Mittelbau-Dora 1943–1945,” in *Ausbeutung, Vernichtung Öffentlichkeit: Neue Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Lagerpolitik*, ed. Norbert Frei, Sybille Steinbacher, and Bernd C. Wagner (Munich, 2000), pp. 11–41. Joachim Neander has reconstructed the course of the death march after the camp’s evacuation in *Das Konzentrationslager Mittelbau in der Endphase der NS-Diktatur* (Clausthal-Zellerfeld: Papierflieger, 1997).

This essay is largely based on statements by surviving prisoners before the U.S. military court in the Dachau Dora Trial in 1947. The files are in NARA (RG 549) and were published on microfilm in 1979 (Microfilm Publication M-1079, Rolls 1–16, Dora Trial at Dachau, 1947). Other statements by surviving prisoners are to be found in the files of the trial of the

former prisoner-functionary Hermann Ebender (BA-L, 429 AR-Z 192/72). Remnants of the files of the SS administration in Stempeda and the Buchenwald and Mittelbau-Dora concentration camps are held in the THStA-W (NS 4 Bu/136, Überstellungsmeldungen KZ Buchenwald; KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395, Veränderungsmeldungen KZ Mittelbau-Dora, October 1, 1943–March 27, 1945). Finally there is the company file of the Junkers-Werke in Schönebeck, which is part of the Junkers collection in the LASA-DO. Passages on the prisoners’ work and living conditions from the perspective of a guard are to be found in the autobiography of Luftwaffe soldier Willy Mirbach, “*Damit Du es später einmal deinem Sohn erzählen kannst . . .*”: *Der autobiographische Bericht eines Luftwaffensoldaten aus dem KZ Mittelbau (August 1944–Juli 1945)*, ed. Gerd Halmanns (Geldern: Verlag des Historischen Vereins für Geldern, 1997).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Verlagerungsübersicht Junkers Flugzeugwerke Schönebeck, March 15, 1945, LASO-DO, Junkers-Werke 1375, Bl. 10 u. 15.

2. KZ Buchenwald, Arbeitseinsatz-Abrechnung Kdo. B-4, August 1944, ITS, Sachdokumenten-Ordner Buchenwald 53, S. 414.

3. Figures from the Buchenwald concentration camp administration exist for the period until the camp was transferred to the newly formed Mittelbau concentration camp on October 28, 1944 (THStA-W, NS 4 Bu/221). At the end of January 1945, 400 Jewish prisoners from Tschechenstochau were transferred from the Buchenwald concentration camp and the Dora camp to Stempeda. At this point, there were supposed to have been 200 to 300 prisoners. Therefore, the estimated number of up to 700 prisoners is probably realistic—see the statements by former prisoner Hersch J., May 14, 1968, BA-L, 429 AR-Z 192/72, p. 88; Abraham E., May 23, 1968, *ibid.*, p. 86; and Romuald Bak, September 25, 1947, *ibid.*, p. 103.

4. Rat des Kreises Sangerhausen, Bericht über den Stollen Stempeda, n.d. [1947], LHSA-Ma, Rep. K 6 MW Nr. 5951, p. 51.

5. Statement by Boruch Seidel, NARA, Microfilm Publication M-1079, Roll 6, fr. 489.

6. Surviving prisoners estimate the number of dead murdered in this way as up to 170—see statement by B. Seidel, 1947, *ibid.*, fr. 483; Statement by J. Hersch, May 14, 1968, BA-L, 429 AR-Z 192/72, p. 88; Statement by Romuald Bak, 1947, NARA, M-1079, Roll 7, p. 1406.

7. Statement by Josef S. (former Kapo in Rottleberode), June 25, 1947, BA-L, 429 AR-Z 192/72, Bl. 312.

8. Statement Max L., May 21, 1968, *ibid.*, p. 39.

## TETTENBORN

Little is known about the subcamp in the small village of Tettenborn, about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) to the west of Nordhausen. There are only two sources that refer to the camp: the Mittelbau concentration camp variation report



(*Veränderungsmeldung*) of February 27, 1945, refers to the transfer of 2 prisoners from Tettenborn to the Mittelbau camp's infirmary;<sup>1</sup> and in the British Bergen-Belsen Trial of 1945, former Tettenborn camp elder Oskar Schmitz gave evidence. His statement provided nothing more than that the camp existed and that it had 28 inmates.<sup>2</sup>

According to the former camp elder, some of the prisoners loaded the Aggregat 4 (A4) rockets at the Tettenborn railway station. The others probably, like their fellow prisoners in the SS-Baubrigade III camps at Nüxei and Mackenrode, worked at the construction sites for the planned Helmetalbahn.

It is possible that there were two subcamps in Tettenborn. The two prisoners transferred on February 27, 1945, to the Mittelbau camp's infirmary came, according to the *Veränderungsmeldungen*, from different camps: a "Kdo. Tettenborn" of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp—this can only refer to a Sachsenhausen subcamp of the SS-Baubrigade III, which came under the command of Sachsenhausen on January 15, 1945, and a "Kdo. Tettenborn" of the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp. This could only have been a small camp that had held Schmitz since March 1945.

The camp in which Schmitz was the camp elder was evacuated on the evening of April 5, 1945, when its inmates were loaded onto the wagon of a railway transport that had shortly before left the Mittelbau main camp and that, after wandering through the Lüneburge Heide, arrived on April 10, 1945, at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp's "barracks camp" (*Kasernenlager*).

Some years after the war's end, in April 1960, a mass grave with the human remains of 26 concentration camp prisoners was found close to the Tettenborn railway station. The death of these people had nothing to do with the subcamp in the village. They were prisoners who attempted to escape from an evacuation transport from the Mittelbau main camp on April 7–8, 1945, as it was standing at the Tettenborn railway station, two days after the evacuation of the Tettenborn camp. At least 26 prisoners were shot by the SS guards, and their bodies were hastily buried by a prisoner detachment close to the railway embankment. In 1961, the dead were reinterred at the cemetery of honor at Holzen near Holzminden.

**SOURCES** The Tettenborn camp is mentioned only in two sources—the Mittelbau concentration camp D *Veränderungsmeldung* of February 27, 1945 (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395); and in the witness statement by former camp elder Oskar Schmitz in the British Bergen-Belsen Trial in the autumn of 1945 and reprinted in Raymond Phillips, ed., *Trial of Josef Kramer and Forty-Four Others (the Belsen Trial)* (London, 1949), p. 286.

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. *Veränderungsmeldung* KZ Mittelbau, February 27, 1945, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395.

2. Witness statement by Oskar Schmitz, October 19, 1945, in Raymond Phillips, ed., *Trial of Josef Kramer and Forty-Four Others (the Belsen Trial)* (London, 1949), p. 286.

## TRAUTENSTEIN

Even before it became the independent Mittelbau concentration camp, the Dora camp had a number of subcamps that held only Italian military internees (IMIs). One of these camps was in Trautenstein, a small village in the Harz, about five kilometers (three miles) to the west of Hasselfelde.

The camp was established on either September 17 or 18, 1944, when 20 Italians were transferred from the Dora camp.<sup>1</sup> Among them was a soldier, Antonio Bortot, whose memoirs of the camp constitute the only known survivor's report.<sup>2</sup> According to Bortot, the camp inmates were accommodated in barracks in which there were two-tiered wooden bunk beds. The guard was the sole SS member, with the rank of SS-Scharführer, who, in comparison to others, treated the prisoners as human beings.

However, the working conditions were hard. Without sufficient winter clothing and feet covered only with wooden clogs, the prisoners spent the autumn of 1944 and the following snowy winter cutting a trail planned for a high-voltage electricity line through the forest. This section near Trautenstein was part of a line planned to extend from Frose to Bleicherode, but it was never completed. It was planned to supply energy to armaments factories around Mittelwerk near Niedersachswerfen. Formally, the clearing of the forest was under the command of SS-Obersturmführer Wilhelm Hünefeld of the SS-Führungsstab B-13. The SS-Führungsstab B-13 had engaged local sawmiller Wenneis und Tippe to process the timber.

The camp lasted for seven months. During that time, the number of prisoners greatly fluctuated. On December 12, 8 IMIs were transferred from the Mittelbau camp.<sup>3</sup> With that, there were just 30 prisoners in the camp. Surviving records for the whole of the Mittelbau camps indicate that on April 2, 1945, there were only 11 prisoners in the Trautenstein camp.<sup>4</sup> The files do not reveal what happened to the other prisoners. There are no records of any deaths.

Unlike most of the other Mittelbau camps, the Trautenstein camp was not evacuated in April 1945. According to Bortot, the camp inmates were forced to march to a large city in the area (most likely Blankenburg or Wernigerode) but returned the same day with their guards to Trautenstein. The SS guards disappeared, and the prisoners were freed by the Americans on April 16 or 17. Trautenstein was the last Mittelbau camp to be liberated.

**SOURCES** The only secondary source on Trautenstein is an essay by Joachim Neander, "Die Aussenlager 'Turmalin' (Regenstein), Quedlinburg und Trautenstein des KZ Mittelbau-Dora," in *Erinnern: Aufgabe, Chance, Herausforderung* (Magdeburg, 2000), pp. 1–11.

The sole surviving SS documents on the Trautenstein

subcamp are the Mittelbau-Dora Veränderungsmeldungen (THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395). For details on the construction of the high-voltage power line from Frose to Bleicherode, see the files from the ASt-Blb. (Akte Fo II, Korrespondenz der Herzoglichen Forstverwaltung Blankenburg, 1943–45), the LASO-DO (Akte Kreisbehörden Blankenburg 6378, Bau der Starkstromleitung Frose-Niedersachswerfen, 1944/45), and the THStA-W (Akte Landesplanungsgemeinschaft Thüringen 261, Bau der Starkstromleitung Frose-Bleicherode, 1944/45). Prisoner Antonio Bortot published his memoirs as *Oltre il tunnel la speranza: Raccolta da Luciano Tentonelle* (Silea Treviso, 1994).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Veränderungsmeldung KZ Mittelbau-Dora, September 18, 1944, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395.

2. Antonio Bortot, *Oltre il tunnel la speranza: Raccolta da Luciano Tentonelle* (Silea Treviso, 1994).

3. Veränderungsmeldung KZ Mittelbau-Dora, December 12, 1944, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395.

4. In his memoirs, Italian Antonio Muscaritolo also refers to 12 prisoners in Trautenstein. Muscaritolo escaped from the death march from the Dora camp across the Harz near Trautenstein. He was liberated with other Trautenstein inmates whose guards had already fled. See Bericht Antonio Muscaritolo, November 2003, AG-MD, P1, vol. 28.

## WICKERODE

The Wickerode subcamp is one of a number of smaller Mittelbau subcamps that were solely occupied by Italian military internees (IMIs). The people of the small village, which had around 300 inhabitants and which was located about 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) to the east of Nordhausen, could clearly distinguish the IMIs from other Mittelbau prisoners. They did not wear the usual blue-gray prisoners' uniform but olive drab military uniforms.

The Wickerode camp was established in the middle of January 1945 when 30 Italians were transferred from the main Mittelbau camp to improvised accommodations most likely in the Herbig Inn.<sup>1</sup> According to German eyewitnesses, the IMIs worked for the Dietrich company based in Calbe doing earthworks for the construction of an aboveground gas pipeline. This corresponds with a postwar statement by the Mittelbau "Arbeitseinsatzführers," according to which the Wickerode camp was part of the SS-Führungsstab B-18, in turn, part of the SS-Gruppenführer Hans Kammler con-

struction organization.<sup>2</sup> The Bauvorhaben B-18 most likely functioned to improve the infrastructure in the Nordhausen armaments centers.

The daily Mittelbau change reports (*Veränderungsmeldungen*) do not refer to any other prisoner transports to the Wickerode camp. It is therefore likely that the camp had no more than 30 inmates. There are no records of any deaths.

The camp leader was SS-Unterscharführer Hübner.<sup>3</sup> According to German eyewitnesses, the prisoners worked without guards, which, as reports from other Mittelbau camps show, was not unusual for IMIs. It is possible that in Wickerode there was in addition to SS-Unterscharführer Hübner another one or two SS members who were guards.

It still remains unclear whether the Wickerode subcamp was evacuated at the end of the war and the prisoners sent on a death march. Taking into account the small subcamps at Trautenstein and Quedlinburg, which also held internees and were not evacuated, it is likely that the prisoners were liberated by American troops while still in the camp. If this is so, the camp would have existed on the morning of April 12, 1945, when units of the U.S. Third Armored Division took the village.

**SOURCES** SS sources refer to the camp twice, once in an Überstellungsmeldung of 30 prisoners from January 16, 1945 (Veränderungsmeldungen KZ Mittelbau-Dora, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395); and the other in a note from February 20, 1945, which refers to the camp leader as an SS-Unterscharführer Hübner (NARA, M-1079, Roll 1, fr. 796). Finally, there is a list of the SS-Baustäbe and camps within the Mittelbau concentration camp area, prepared in 1947 by former Mittelbau concentration camp Arbeitseinsatzführer Wilhelm Simon for the U.S. Dora Trial in Dachau (NARA, M-1079, Roll 12, fr. 251).

Jens-Christian Wagner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Veränderungsmeldungen KZ Mittelbau, January 16, 1945, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald u. Hafta Nr. Dora Dok./K 395; as well as Thilo Ziegler, *Auf Spurensuche: Der Kreis Sangerhausen 1939–1945; Eine Dokumentation über die Ereignisse der Kriegszeit 1939–1945, die Rüstungsindustrie und den Einsatz von Arbeitskräften sowie das Ende des NS-Regimes* (Sangerhausen, 1999), p. 119.

2. See Zusammenstellung der Lager und SS-Baustäbe im Bereich des KZ Mittelbau-Dora, compiled in 1947 by former Mittelbau "Arbeitseinsatzführer" Wilhelm Simon, NARA, M-1079, Roll 12, fr. 251.

3. Vermerk "1. Lagerführer SS-Kommando Wickerode," February 20, 1945, NARA, M-1079, Roll 1, fr. 796.

## NATZWEILER-STRUTHOF



French resisters guard the entrance to the newly liberated Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp, December 2, 1944.  
USHMM WS #77581, COURTESY OF NARA



## NATZWEILER-STRUTHOF MAIN CAMP

### [AKA NATZWEILER, STRUTHOF]

The Natzweiler concentration camp (Le Struthof-Natzwiller) is the only one to have been built by the Nazis on French territory. It was set up in Alsace, whose two departments had been annexed to the Reich in July 1940. The occupiers considered Alsace and Moselle to be German lands destined for radical Germanization. Alsace was joined with the Nazi Party province (Gau) of Baden, whose Nazi Party provincial chief (Gauleiter) was Robert Wagner, and Moselle was joined with that of the Palatinate, under the leadership of Gauleiter Josef Bürckel. A civilian administration was installed in Strasbourg, and an internment camp was created as early as July 2, 1940, just two weeks after the entry of German troops into Strasbourg. Doctor Scheel, the first commandant of the SS and of the SD in Alsace, organized the construction of a small camp able to handle the internment of 150 people. The construction order gave a list of people to be held in the camp: (1) Germans who had fought in the international brigades; (2) Alsatian insubordinates; and (3) opponents of the German army.

The first camp was built next to a small town in the Vosges, Schirmeck, about 50 kilometers (31 miles) from Strasbourg, and received the name of Schirmeck-Vorbrück (French: Schirmeck-La Broque). Some 60 Alsatians who had led anti-German activities before the war or who had deserted the German army during World War I were immediately interned. The camp functioned throughout the entire war but never became a concentration camp. It was more of a local work camp, labeled education camp (*Erziehungslager*) or detention camp (*Sicherungslager*). During the entire annexation period, the Schirmeck camp was used for the internment of Alsatians who had attempted to cross the new border with France, Jehovah's Witnesses, those accused of black market activity, and family members of the opposition. The camp was guarded by Germans of the Order Police (Ordnungspolizei, Orpo). The SS tried to obtain control of the camp but never managed to do so. Some Schirmeck inmates were transferred to Natzweiler.

Some months after the creation of the Schirmeck camp, the SS created a second camp, not far from the first. The official date for the establishment of a second camp is May 1, 1941. The chosen site was Natzweiler, in the Bruche valley, because of the existence of a granite quarry there. The construction order for the camp came from Heinrich Himmler himself. The SS-Deutsche Erd und Steinwerke GmbH (German Earth and Stone Works, DEST) enterprise expropriated the site and organized the exploitation of the quarry. They founded an office in Rothau, a village in the valley, where the train station nearest to the camp was located. The mayor of Schirmeck was SS-Standartenführer Blumberg. Before the war, Struthof was known throughout Alsace. A small ski and winter sports resort had been installed there (the site's alti-

tude is 720 meters [2,362 feet]). There was a hotel where the SS guards stayed, as well as a farm. Work on the construction of the camp began in April 1941. Some prisoners from the Schirmeck camp were used to build the first barracks.

The first convoy of prisoners, around 150 men, arrived on May 21, 1941, at the Rothau station. They came from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and were initially lodged in the farm's pigsty. The second convoy arrived three days later. On June 28, the first French prisoners arrived in the third convoy. These men worked to complete the construction of the camp. The first four buildings were not finished until November 1941. The inmates soon worked in the quarry as well. Until the spring of 1942, the Natzweiler concentration camp remained small, only amounting to around 200 prisoners. They built the structures for the administration of the camp. The number of inmates then increased rapidly and considerably. At the end of 1942, 2,000 inmates had already been registered. The construction of the camp was not completed until the beginning of 1943. There were 17 blocks within its confines and 12 other buildings outside it. On March 12, 1942, a large convoy of German Communists arrived in Rothau. On June 15, 1943, a convoy of 71 Norwegians arrived. They were resisters who had been imprisoned in the Grini camp or in the Akershus fortress. They had been sent by boat as far as Aarhus in Denmark and, from there, sent by train to Strasbourg, via Hamburg. Nine convoys of Norwegians, with a total of 504 men, arrived in Natzweiler, the last day in August 1944. All of these were classified under the prisoner category Night-and-Fog (*Nacht-und-Nebel*).

In June 1943, a total of 4,430 prisoners had been registered at Natzweiler. In 1944, their numbers fluctuated between



A section of the Natzweiler concentration camp, December 2, 1944. USHMM WS #10102, COURTESY OF NARA





A view of the Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp, November 30, 1944.

USHMM WS #77583, COURTESY OF NARA

6,000 and 7,000. In total, 52,000 prisoners were registered in the camp or in the exterior subcamps. The mortality rate at Natzweiler was quite high, and it is estimated that around 20,000 prisoners died there of exhaustion, hunger, illness, and maltreatment. The inmates came from many different countries. There were many Alsations and Mosellans imprisoned for insubordinate conduct or acts of resistance. Others were Alsations or Mosellans who had resisted forced enlistment in the German army (*Malgré-nous*), starting in 1942. Also numerous were French, Dutch, Luxembourgers, Germans, and Eastern Europeans. There were Sinti and Roma (Gypsy) prisoners. Not one inmate was recorded as Jewish in the main camp; Jews who were sent to the Natzweiler complex went directly to the subcamps. There were no women prisoners in Natzweiler. In the interior of the camp itself, there was a Nacht-und-Nebel section, as well as a political branch of the Gestapo. The majority of inmates were political opponents or resisters.

The camp had several commandants. The first was Hans Hüttig, replaced first by Egon Zill, then by Heinrich Schwartz. Josef Kramer, an SS-Obersturmführer, stayed in the post for the longest time, from June 1942 to April 1944. He had previously been posted to Dachau, Sachsenhausen, Mauthausen, and Auschwitz. He had worked in the concentration camps since 1934. In April 1944, he was named commandant of the camp at Auschwitz II-Birkenau. It was under his command that Natzweiler became a large concentration camp. His replacement, Fritz Hartjenstein, had previously worked in Birkenau. The camp's surveillance was provided by 200 SS, of which 150 were wardens and 50 handled administrative tasks. The commandants lived in a requisitioned villa, which was located in the mountains above the camp.

The Natzweiler camp had at least 42 subcamps at any given moment (and up to 92 in total, according to some sources), located in Alsace, Moselle, and southwest Germany. Certain subcamps were not created until the autumn of 1944, in Germany, when the main camp had been evacuated. In Natzweiler,

the majority of inmates worked in the quarry. They also built a road between Rothau and the camp. In the autumn of 1943, the quarry was enlarged toward the east, and a wide esplanade was cleared. It was on this plot that two buildings and 13 barracks were built to serve as workshops for the Junker airplane manufacturing firm of Dessau, which had previously taken over workshops in Alsace. In Natzweiler, inmates worked to strip down and repair airplane motors. There were also civilian employees in these workshops.

Inmates' corpses were burned first in a mobile crematorium, until a permanent structure was built outside the camp, in October 1943, next to the hotel. All of the deaths, except those of the Nacht-und-Nebel inmates, were recorded at the city hall of the village.

The inmates could only establish contact with the valley's residents with difficulty. During the marches to the work sites, some residents would try to give a little food to the inmates, sometimes by leaving it along the roadside. The Rothau station was also a place where fleeting contacts could be made. It appears that during the last period of the camp, in 1944, discipline was somewhat less severe, and contacts were easier. The large number of inmates also prevented the possibility of constant surveillance. The locals may have even bribed certain SS guards to be able to feed the inmates.

There were medical experiments performed at the Natzweiler camp, on the effects of mustard gas, typhus, and hereditary diseases. A gas chamber was built for this purpose, outside the camp, in an outbuilding of the hotel where the camp administration was based. It was used from the summer of 1943. The experiments took place at the research center of the University of Strasbourg (Versuchabteilung der Reichsuniversität Strassburg). The director of this center was August Hirt, professor of anatomy at the Reichsuniversität. Another scientist, Professor Eugen Hagen, head physician of the Luftwaffe and professor of hygiene at the University of Strasbourg, was responsible for research for a vaccine against typhus. Dr. Bickenback led studies on urotropine, used as an antidote for phosgene gas, and Dr. Eusele practiced vivisection. Gypsies



A snow detail at the Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp, 1944. USHMM WS #13011, COURTESY OF ECPAD

were sent particularly from Auschwitz to Natzweiler to serve as guinea pigs in these experiments. However, the only murders in the gas chambers that can be regarded as certain are described in testimony at one of the trials of Nazi doctors at Nürnberg: 86 Jews, including 30 women, arrived from Auschwitz in August 1943; they were gassed on August 11, 13, 17, and 19, with potassium cyanide. It took them 30 to 60 seconds to die. Their bodies were sent to the anatomy institute at the Medical University of Strasbourg, where they were reduced to a skeletal state. At the liberation of Strasbourg, in November 1944, 17 bodies, 3 of which were women, were discovered. The dissection work had barely been started.

There were escapes from the camp, with the goal of reaching the border that separated Alsace from the rest of occupied France, which was not far away. In March 1942, some Czech and Polish inmates organized a resistance network, led by Communist leaders. They succeeded in establishing a liaison with Communist militants in the Bruche river valley. The three leaders of the group were Pole Joseph Cichusz, who had fought in the Spanish Civil War; German Edwald Motzkat, a Communist from Wiesbaden; and a Czech, Mautner. Only one escape succeeded, organized by Alsatian inmate Martin Wintenberg. He had arrived at Natzweiler on November 12, 1941, from the Schirmeck camp. He was put to work in the garage of the SS guards, then in a detention commando, and then in the SS laundry. With a German inmate, Alfons Christmann, he set about preparing his escape. He obtained the help of an inmate named Karl Haas, who worked in the SS garage and reserved some gasoline for an escape by car. Since they worked in the laundry, Wintenberg and Christmann got hold of two uniforms left to be washed. On July 4, 1942, they were both able to leave the camp, in a car, dressed in the uniforms. There were three other inmates hidden in the vehicle. The five men succeeded in reaching France, then the unoccupied zone. They left Christmann, quite weakened after his imprisonment in the camp, at the home of some of his family members who lived in the south of France. The Gestapo found him there in October, arrested him again, and sent him back to Natzweiler, where he was hanged in front of the other inmates. The four other escapees succeeded in reaching Spain.

Another resistance group, French Communists led by the FTP (Franc-Tireur Partisan), organized ties with the valley. A massive escape was planned, but the German guards found the plan in a satchel where one inmate had hidden it. The members of this network were executed. Some were hanged, others shot. A similar escape attempt by Russian prisoners was harshly suppressed in June 1943: 15 men were killed after a long public punishment.

The Natzweiler camp was evacuated on August 31, 1944, before the advance of the Allied armies. There were still 7,000 men at Natzweiler at that time. Some trucks took the weakest inmates to the Rothau train station, but the largest number made the journey on foot. At the station, freight trains took them into the interior of the Reich. The evacuation operation was completed on September 4. Only a few SS men remained

at Natzweiler. Convoys of inmates from Natzweiler arrived at Dachau, where they were redistributed to different commandos in southwest Germany, either attached to Natzweiler or not. On September 7, the 1,127 patients from the infirmary (*Revier*) arrived there. The camp administration was reinstalled at Guttenbach, in Germany, on the Neckar.

The administration of Natzweiler continued its work of managing prisoners who were spread out in many subcamps, several of which had just been created, and it even continued to register new inmates. In April 1945, all the prisoners were transferred to the control of the administration of the Dachau concentration camp.

Those principally responsible for the Natzweiler camp were judged at Wuppertal by a British military tribunal, from May 29 to June 1, 1946. The main charge was only the execution of four women, three of whom were identified as members of the SOE (the British Special Operations Executive): Denise Borrell, who was French, Diana Rowden and Vera Leigh, and a fourth woman whose identity remained unknown. They were killed in the camp on July 6, 1944. Among the nine accused were Magnus Wochner, head of the Political Department (Politische Abteilung), and the head of the camp, Fritz Hartjenstein. The latter was sentenced to life in prison. Werner Rohde, the camp physician who administered at least one of the fatal injections, was sentenced to be hanged. SS-Oberscharführer Eugen Buttner, who directed the quarry commando, was sentenced to death by a French military tribunal and to forced labor for life by a Soviet tribunal. He was pardoned in 1956.

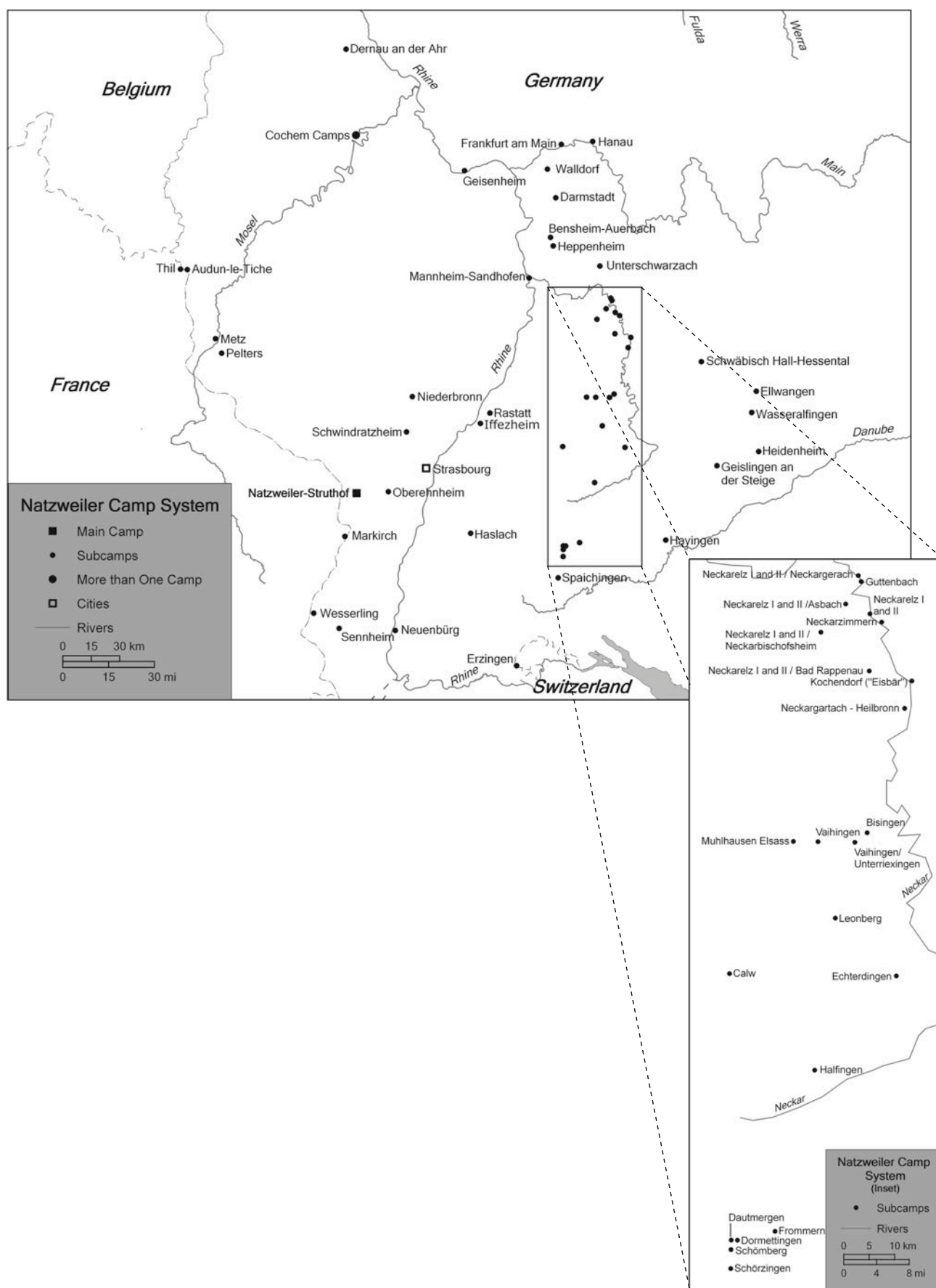
**SOURCES** Only two complete works on the history of the Natzweiler concentration camp have been published: Robert Steegmann, *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005); and Kristian Ottosen, *Nuit et Brouillard. Histoire des prisonniers de Natzweiler-Struthof*, trans. from Norwegian by Elisabeth and Christine Eydoux (Brussels: Le Cri éditions, 1994); original Norwegian edition: *Natt og tåke. Historien om Natzweiler-fængene* (Oslo: H. Aschehoug & Co., 1989). The other existing literature about the camp, listed below, can be divided into two parts: memoirs of prisoners and the works of Alsatian historians about their region under the German occupation. A few articles deal specifically with medical experiments in the camp.

See: Henry Allainmat, *Auschwitz en France: La vérité sur le seul camp d'extermination nazi en France, le Struthof* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1974); Floris B. Backels, *Nacht und Nebel: Der Bericht eines holländischen Christen aus deutschen Gefängnissen und Konzentrationslagern*, trans. from Flemish (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1982), pp. 182–262; Charles Béné, *Du Struthof à la France libérée* (Raon-l'Étape: Fetzer, 1971); Béné, "Le camp de concentration du Struthof (Bas-Rhin) et l'activité de l'Institut d'anatomie de Strasbourg pendant l'occupation," *NÉd* 140 (1950); National Committee for the Erection and the Preservation of a Memorial of the Deportation to Struthof, with the collaboration of the Committee on the History of the Second World War, *Natzwiller-Struthof* (Paris: Imprimerie municipale, 1955); Udo Dietmar, *Häftling X in der Hölle*

*auf Erden!* (Weimar: Thüringer Volksverlag, 1946); Emile Erhard, *Un lieu d'épouvante. Le Struthof tel que je l'ai vu* (Mulhouse: Imprimerie Union, 1945); Jacques Granier, *Schirmeck, histoire d'un camp de concentration* (Strasbourg: Editions des Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace, 1970); Jean-Paul Haas, "A l'ombre d'un crématoire," *Sd'A* 127 (Spring 1995): 257–269; Jacques Héran, "Les sinistres expériences médicales du Struthof," *Sd'A* 121 (Fall 1993): 65–73; Albert Hornung, *Le Struthof, camp de la mort* (Paris: Editions de la Nouvelle revue critique, 1945); Frederik H. Kasten, "Unethical Nazi Medicine in Annexed Alsace-Lorraine: The Strange Case of Nazi Anatomist Professor Dr August Hirt," in *Historians and Archivists: Essays in Modern German History and Archival Policy*, ed. Georges O. Kent (Fairfax, VA: George Mason University Press, 1991), pp. 170–208; Wolfgang Kirstein, *Das Konzentrationslager als Institution totalen Terrors: Das Beispiel des KL Natzweiler* (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1992); François Kozlik, *Der Berg des Grauens. Streiflichter aus dem Lager Struthof* (Strasbourg: SEDAL, 1945); Joseph de La Martinière, *La procédure nuit et brouillard, tome III, 3ème liste alphabétique, Natzweiler, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, nomenclature des*

*déportés NN: Matériaux pour l'histoire des prisons et des camps, des tribunaux* (Lignières-de-Touraine: J. de La Martinière, 1997); F. Marcoux, "Un aspect des crimes contre l'humanité. L'extermination nazie au Struthof," *Sd'A* (1977): 64–69; Jean-Claude Pressac, *The Struthof Album: Study of the Gassing at Natzweiler-Struthof of 86 Jews Whose Bodies Were to Constitute a Collection of Skeletons: A Photographic Document* (New York: Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1985); Jean-Claude Richez, "Struthof-Natzwiller," in *Encyclopédie d'Alsace*, pp. 7164–7165; Aimé Spitz, *Struthof, bagné nazi en Alsace, reportage, mémoires du déporté patriote n° 4596* (Sélestat: Imprimerie Alsatia, 1945); Anthony M. Webb, *Trial of Wolfgang Zeuss. The Natzweiler Trial* (London: Hodge, 1949); Herwart Vorländer, ed., *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegführung. Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1978); Jürgen Ziegler, *Mitten unter uns: Natzweiler-Struthof: Spuren eines Konzentrationslagers* (Hamburg: VSA, 1986).

Jean-Marc Dreyfus  
trans. Gina Cooke



ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933 - 1945



## NATZWEILER SUBCAMP SYSTEM

The Natzweiler concentration camp's subcamps stretched across all of southwestern Germany and occupied Alsace (France) but were primarily located in the areas of northern Baden and Württemberg. Several camps were located in the southern areas of Hessen.

The first Natzweiler subcamps were established at the beginning of 1942. The majority were to follow much later, mostly in 1944, with a few at the beginning of 1945 after the Natzweiler main camp had been abandoned in September 1944 due to the approaching front. The command was not dissolved after the camp was abandoned but relocated to Guttenbach in northern Baden. The subcamp administration was based here as well as the administration responsible for the labor demands of regional firms and the preparation of statistics, which served as the basis for the SS-Business Administration Main Office's (WHVA) accounting of labor use. The administration and storage offices of the former main camp were relocated to Schloss Binau, the vehicle pool and its maintenance to Neunkirchen, and the mail service to Rothau. The establishments in these locations should not be seen as actual subcamps but rather as installations where the leadership and administration of the Natzweiler main camp and its satellite system of subcamps were located.

The use of prisoners in the Natzweiler subcamp system was mostly for armaments purposes. There were two basic uses for prisoner labor: on the one hand, subcamps were attached to existing or newly established armaments firms; on the other hand, the prisoners were used to relocate production underground as a result of the increasing Allied bombing raids. The prisoners in the subcamps in the caverns, tunnels, and mines were often not used in armaments production *per se* but in the creation of the means necessary to commence production. Here they had, as a rule, the heaviest physical labor to perform under extreme conditions—for instance, by being detained for long periods underground in an atmosphere of high humidity and insufficient ventilation—which necessarily resulted in a high death rate.

Although the existing and newly created subcamps continued to be under the control of the Natzweiler camp administration after the main camp was dissolved, they were, because of their specific roles, often connected to the projects and their command structures, such as the Geilenberg Staff, the Fighter Staff (Jägerstab), and the Kammler Staff. For example, the Natzweiler subcamps of the Gruppe Wüste in present-day Zollernalb district were subordinated to the Geilenberg Staff, which drove forward the extremely important war project of excavating shale oil rock. The camps of Gruppe Wüste were infamous for the extreme work and living conditions that prevailed and the resultant mortality rates. (A more extensive discussion of the Gruppe Wüste camps follows separately.)

Many Natzweiler subcamps were subordinated to the Jägerstab, founded in March 1943, which with a rigorous exploitation of labor set the foundations for a manifold increase in the production of fighter aircraft. The Jägerstab worked closely with the Kammler Staff, which, under the command of Hans Kammler, chief of Amtsgruppe C (Construction) of the WVHA, was entrusted with the task of protecting armaments production from Allied bombardment and relocating the armaments firms underground. By January 1945, the Kammler Staff was using tens of thousands of prisoners in the most inhumane conditions, preparing around 425,000 square meters (508,296 square yards) of subterranean production areas.<sup>1</sup> Natzweiler subcamps were also integrated into the Kammler Staff. Within the Jägerstab, many enterprises, such as Daimler-Benz, Heinkel, Junkers, Messerschmitt, and Siemens-Schuckert, profited from the use of prisoner labor. The camps of the Jägerstab represented the largest camp complex within the system of Natzweiler subcamps. They included the “Unternehmen Goldfisch” camps (also called Neckarelz camps), the site of the underground relocation of armaments production to the gypsum mine “Friede” near Obrigheim. The Reich Aviation Ministry chose this pit with an area of about 50,000 square meters (59,800 square yards) to relocate the Presswerk Sindelfingen and the airplane motor production of the Daimler-Benz AG in Genshagen near Berlin in the spring of 1944. From March 1944 on, Natzweiler inmates worked on this project, code-named “A8” by the SS and “Goldfisch” by the Reich authorities. In June 1944, the Goldfisch camps around Neckarelz already held more than 2,500 inmates.

The subordination of subcamps to the various project commands has meant that the Natzweiler subcamp system is largely difficult to analyze and is inadequately researched due to the lack of source material. The later a subcamp was established—and this applies to the majority of the Natzweiler camps—the worse it is documented; many camps, such as Thionville, for example, appear never to have left the planning stage due to the rapidly advancing front.

The prisoners in the subcamps also worked in constructing roads and airfields; by the war's end, the prisoners were often involved in removing rubble or were lent to local manufacturers. Two Natzweiler subcamps, the death camp (*Sterbelager*) at Vaihingen and the auxiliary hospital (*Hilfskrankenhaus*) Unterschwarzach lacked any productive function. They were used solely, or at least most likely in the case of Unterschwarzach, to hold prisoners who were no longer capable of working.

The subcamps' leadership and guards were as a rule, even after the main camp was dissolved, selected from the pool of men at the main camp. As a result, the subcamps most often did not have their own command offices, which due to the reduction in personnel costs led to an increase of profit from

the use of prisoner labor. The subcamps were commanded by camp leaders (Lagerführern) and work detachments (Arbeitskommandos) by detachment leaders (Kommandoführern). The guards were members of the SS, the Organisation Todt (OT), and the Wehrmacht or the Luftwaffe. Male guards secured the female camps, while the supervisory personnel within the camp and during working hours were often a company's female employees assigned to guard the prisoners. These women were usually trained as overseers in Ravensbrück before they took on their new roles.

The number of Natzweiler subcamps cannot be exactly stated. Some of the camps never went beyond the planning stage; the existence of others can only be surmised; and with others one cannot be certain that they formed part of the Natzweiler system. Altogether, Natzweiler, the smallest and most westerly of the German concentration camps, had around 50 subcamps. A few sources mention up to 80 subcamps, but this number is probably too high, even if one includes all the indirect connections of subcamps and all the work details, that is, work sites without accommodations for the prisoners. More than 40 of the Natzweiler subcamps held male inmates. There were no females in the Natzweiler main camp. However, there were a few subcamps, including Calw, Geisenheim, Geislingen an der Steige, Hayingen, and Walldorf, that did hold women. There are a few camps where the sex of the occupants is either unknown or uncertain. In a few other camps, for example, the Hilfskrankenhaus Unterschwarzach and the Sterbelager Vaihingen, prisoners of both genders may have been held.

On average, there were in the subcamps around 20,000 prisoners, including 1,000 to 2,000 women. By the end of 1944, the prisoner numbers reached their high point of 22,587. Thereafter, the numbers declined despite new admissions. Documented numbers for January 15, 1945, for the Natzweiler subcamps are 20,961 male and 1,209 female prisoners.<sup>2</sup>

West European Night-and-Fog (*Nacht-und-Nebel*) prisoners, who represented a dominant category of prisoners within the main camp, due to security reasons were hardly represented in the subcamps. Around 70 percent of the prisoners in the Natzweiler subcamps were from Eastern Europe: they were forcibly evacuated Soviet civilian workers, deported Poles who had been arrested after the extensive roundups in Poland, or Jewish prisoners from Eastern Europe, so-called Arbeitsjuden, who were mostly from the work camps at Radom and Płaszów, but some also came from Auschwitz. In addition, especially in the last phase of the war, there were contingents of prisoners from other concentration camps: the women were mostly transported from Ravensbrück and Auschwitz, the men from Dachau, Flossenbürg, Lublin, and other concentration camps. In addition, there was a constant exchange of prisoners between the Natzweiler subcamps caused by the need to evacuate the camps as the front approached but above all by the specific labor demands of individual subcamps, both quantitative and qualitative.

French prisoners, who constituted 10 percent of the prisoners, were the largest group of Western European prisoners.

The Reich Germans (Reichsdeutsche) represented 5 percent of the prisoners. Many of the prisoners in the subcamps did not go through the main camp, which was dissolved in September 1944; when the prisoner numbers were handed out in the subcamp, however, the number system of the main camp continued to be used. As in the main camp, there was also in the subcamps a limited prisoner administration.

The dissolution of the Natzweiler subcamps took place in stages in the last two months of the war as a result of the front moving from east to west. Many of the prisoners were sent on death marches, whose destination, as a rule, was Dachau and its subcamps. The last of these evacuation marches took place at the end of April or beginning of May 1945. The concentration camp command relocated from Guttenbach via Stuttgart to Dürmendingen in Saulgau, where it dissolved itself. Members of the Natzweiler camp administration as well as the guards were tried toward the end of the 1940s in the Rastatt Trials.

**SOURCES** The history of the Natzweiler subcamp system remains largely unresearched. This is primarily because many files were destroyed when the camp was evacuated. A second difficulty is the dual nature of the languages of the sources: too few works have attempted to deal with both German and French sources so as to provide a comprehensive review of the Natzweiler camp complex including the subcamps. Above all, one must note Christine Glauning, Konrad Pflug, and Georg Fischer, *Arbeit und Vernichtung. Das Aussenlagersystem des KZ Natzweiler-Struthof* (Stuttgart: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2004). Important German works that investigate individual subcamps or subcamp complexes within regional and time-specific contexts are Tobias Markowitsch and Katrin Rautnig, *Goldfisch und Zebra. Das Konzentrationslageraussenkommando Neckarelz. Konzentrationslager des Verlagerungsprojektes A8 und Aussenkommando von Natzweiler-Struthof* (Neckarelz: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neckarelz e.V., 2005); Herwart Vorländer, ed., *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegsführung: Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass* (Stuttgart, 1978); Jürgen Ziegler, *Mitten unter uns: Natzweiler-Struthof; Spuren eines Konzentrationslagers* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986) (the camp in Neckartal); and Karl Giebeler and Christoph Schubert, eds., *KZ-Aussenlager der letzten Kriegsphase in Baden-Württemberg* (Bad Boll: Evang. Akademie Protokoll-dienst 22, 1997). In addition, there are a few German works that attempt to deal with the history of the Natzweiler concentration camp and all of its subcamps or at least parts of it. The most important works include Wolfgang Kirstein, *Das Konzentrationslager als Instrument totalen Terrors: Das Beispiel des KL Natzweiler* (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1992); Bernhard Brunner, *Auf dem Weg zu einer Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler; Forschungsstand, Quellen, Methode* (Stuttgart, 2000), available at [www.lpb.bwue.de/publikat/natzweiler/natzweiler.htm](http://www.lpb.bwue.de/publikat/natzweiler/natzweiler.htm); and Antoine Greffier, *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen-und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof*, ed. LPB-BW (Stuttgart, 2002). For further information, see also Michael Schmidt and Hellmuth Bauer, "'Wir waren ja niemand.' Ein ehemaliger Zwangsarbeiter berichtet über die Jahre 1942 bis 1945 in Genshagen-

Obrigheim,” in *Das Daimler-Benz-Buch. Ein Rüstungskonzern im Dritten Reich* (Nördlingen, 1987), pp. 471–481; Rainer Fröbe, “‘Wie bei den alten Ägyptern.’ Die Verlegung des Daimler-Benz-Flugzeugmotorenwerkes Genshagen nach Obrigheim am Neckar 1944/45” in *Das Daimler-Benz-Buch*, pp. 392–470; Michael Schmid, “Goldfisch. Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung. Eine Lokalhistorie zum Umgang mit Menschen,” in *Das Daimler-Benz-Buch*, pp. 482–513; Neil Gregor, *Stern und Hakenkreuz. Daimler-Benz im Dritten Reich* (Berlin, 1997); and Birgit Weitz, “Der Einsatz von KZ-Häftlingen und jüdischen Zwangsarbeitern bei der Daimler-Benz AG (1941–1945). Ein Überblick,” in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen, 1996).

The first comprehensive French work on the Natzweiler concentration camp appeared in 1988, Arnod Kientzler, ed., *Le camp de concentration du Struthof. Konzentrationslager Natzweiler: Témoignages* (Collection Documents—Tome III) (Schirmeck, 1988). The most comprehensive monograph on the Natzweiler concentration camp system is Robert Steegmann, *Struthof: Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: La Nuée Bleue, 2005). However, the subcamp system is not comprehensively dealt with in the book but is dealt with as part of the camp’s history, with a focus on the

formation of the camps in each relevant chapter. Steegmann lists the camps not under their German names at the time (the most relevant names for researchers) but under today’s French names, which adds a layer of difficulty to the work. However, his monograph provides a good overview of the state of research on individual subcamps.

Archival sources on the Natzweiler subcamps are listed with the individual subcamps. For the Neckarelz (Goldfisch) camps, the Imperial War Museum London holds a collection of records at FD 2228/45. This includes Daimler-Benz correspondence regarding the relocation of production from Genshagen to Obrigheim. Also, BA-BL holds material on the Neckarelz camps under 419 AR-1831/67 Obrigheim.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. For more detailed information, see *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), Teil 1: “Das Lagersystem,” pp. 68–69.

2. BA, Sammlung Schumacher 1329.

## GRUPPE “WÜSTE” COMPLEX

The code name “Wüste” was used for the extraction of oil from Württemberg shale oil, which was part of the Geilenberg project from July 1944 onward. However, the use of shale oil has a longer history. As part of the rearmament and autarky program from 1936 onward, engineer Freiherr Hans Joachim von Krudener (employed by the Benzin-Benzol-Verband and Reichsstelle für Mineralöl Berlin) promoted the economic exploitation of shale oil. The “Amt für den Vierjahresplan” rejected this idea, as it thought that fuel production would be met by the construction of hydrogenation plants.

During the war, shale oil was the cause of many disputes between different agencies, initially between Carl Krauch (chairman of IG Farben, Generalbevollmächtigter für Chemie [GeBeChem], and head of the Reichsamt für Wirtschaftsausbau), who was in charge of fuel production, and SS-Brigadeführer Walther Schieber (head of the Rüstungslieferungsamt in the Rüstungsministerium). Schieber, who was always getting involved in the affairs of GeBeChem, pushed Krauch in 1942 to use shale oil more intensively.<sup>1</sup> This resulted in the formation of the first of three shale oil companies in Württemberg, which experimented with different ways to extract shale oil and which conducted practical tests based on those experiments: the Lias-Ölschieferforschungsgesellschaft Frommern in September 1942.<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning of 1943, Erhard Milch (Generalinspekteur der Luftwaffe) ordered the recall of engineer Krudener to Berlin from the front and instructed him to continue working on the shale oil question and appointed him as the shale oil expert in the Reichsluftfahrtministerium. The reason for this decision was the inadequate supply of fuel, coupled with the almost hopeless order by Hermann Göring in January 1943 to supply by air the Sixth Army trapped in Stalingrad. The ambitious Krudener, who in the meantime had become an SS-Führer in the SD-Hauptamt,<sup>3</sup> together with Schieber, whom he had appointed as his consultant on questions of oil extraction, drove the issue forward.<sup>4</sup> A second shale oil exploration company was established in July 1943: the Kohle-Öl-Union based in Berlin, which at the end of October 1943 began construction of a subterranean carbonization facility.<sup>5</sup> The most important company was the Deutsche Ölschieferforschungsgesellschaft (DÖLF) based in Schömberg, which was established on October 20, 1943: it was to scientifically research and test all issues regarding shale oil, and it developed the primitive “Meilerschmelzverfahren,” the process that later would be the technical foundation for the Wüste Project.<sup>6</sup> Krudener, Schieber, and Krauch were among those who occupied key positions in the management and board of the company.<sup>7</sup>

In August 1943, Krudener, at the request of Schieber, made contact with the Reichsführer-SS Himmler to bring

the SS into the project. Up to this point of time, attempts by the SS to take control of armaments industries had failed due to resistance by Albert Speer and private industry. Driven by Himmler, who was still searching for suitable armaments projects for the SS, the south Württemberg shale oil project quickly developed into a prestigious SS project, but where profitability was not the key focus. Himmler, who had the absurd idea to secure “the oil supply for the Waffen SS and the Heimatarmee from shale oil,” instructed the head of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Oswald Pohl at the end of October 1943 to secure shale oil for the SS.<sup>8</sup> Krudener was to be the SS-WVHA’s consultant on shale oil questions, and he was the only person who was able to strengthen his position within the chaos of competing interests.<sup>9</sup>

Pohl, who traveled several times to the Württemberg shale oil area, agreed to supply the shale oil companies with labor. This resulted in the establishment of three concentration camp subcamps: in Schömberg (October 1943), in Frommern (January 1944), and in Schörzingen (February 1944). There were several attempts by the SS to take over test factories that were in the course of being established. The SS then decided to establish its own shale oil plant near Erzingen.<sup>10</sup> Pohl, in order to more effectively represent the interests of the SS, established on May 2, 1944, the Deutsche Schieferöl (German Shale Oil) GmbH Erzingen—which was the only SS company established and operating in 1944 within the “Altreich.”<sup>11</sup>

The economic aims of the SS had long collided with the goals of the Armaments Ministry (Rüstungsministerium). Rüstungsminister Speer really only began to take an interest in the production of shale oil for fuel after a dramatic reduction in fuel production following the Allied air raids on German hydrogenation plants in the spring of 1944. Speer conferred with Hitler on July 5, 1944, “to get a decision on questions regarding shale oil,” as an unsettled Pohl noted on the same day.<sup>12</sup> A week later during a meeting in the Rüstungsministerium Planning Office (Planungsamt), it was decided that the Wüste Project would be part of the Geilenberg-Program. A new crisis office (Krisenstab), based on the Jägerstab, equipped with almost unlimited power, was to be established. It was to rebuild the damaged hydrogenation plants and to construct new fuel plants.<sup>13</sup>

Edmund Geilenberg, who was appointed at the end of May 1944 as Generalkommissar für Sofortmassnahmen, immediately ordered the construction of 10 plants to extract shale oil in Württemberg. Some 5,000 prisoners were to be used in the construction. He appointed the Deutsche Bergwerks- und Hüttenbau Gesellschaft (DBHG), a subsidiary of the Hermann-Göring conglomerate, as head contractor, which



with the assistance of the Organisation Todt (OT) and countless other firms would construct the factories.<sup>14</sup>

The Wüste Project was a special case because even though this armaments project was under the auspices of the Armaments Ministry, the SS had an option to take over the 10 shale oil plants once construction was complete. This did not come to fruition because of the eventual course of the war. The production of shale oil was doomed from the start because of the poor technology and the high death rate among the concentration camp prisoners. Only 4 of the 10 plants were ready by the end of the war. The Wüste-Werk 2 in Bisingen was the first shale oil plant to commence production on February 23, 1945—but only in a makeshift way.<sup>15</sup>

Despite doubts by some individuals that the plans could be realized, and despite the numerous difficulties (e.g., transport of machines and materials), those involved remained wedded to their decision until the end. Competing interests added to the chaos that reigned in the last stage of the war. Those involved followed their own interests: construction firms focused on securing machines, materials, and labor for the postwar period; technical personnel in the shale companies, chemists, and engineers attempted to promote and secure their future careers.

It was with this background that the employees in the many firms and research organizations closed their eyes to the public suffering of the prisoners and did nothing to change the situation in the camps, which from a production perspective should have been done. It is true that there are some reports, which were sent to Berlin and resulted in Pohl traveling to the shale oil area. However, in the end, all that happened in light of the disastrous physical conditions of the majority of the prisoners was that those who could no longer work were selected and sent to so-called camps for the dying (*Sterbelager*) such as Bergen-Belsen.

The number of prisoners in the existing four subcamps increased dramatically once Project Die Wüste began in the summer of 1944. The largest Wüste camps were established in August 1944 in Bisingen and Dautmergen, with the last camp being established in Dormettingen in 1945. Altogether, there were around 15,000 concentration camp prisoners involved in this armaments project with an unknown number of Italian and Russian prisoners of war (POWs) as well as civilian forced laborers.

SS-Hauptscharführer Josef Seuss was in charge of the Wüste camps in the initial phase. He was executed in Landsberg after the end of the war. From the middle of October 1944, SS-Hauptsturmführer Franz Hofmann was the overall camp commander and was responsible for the largest camps at Bisingen and Dautmergen. He was a long-serving member of the concentration camp elite. SS-Untersturmführer Eugen Wurth took on this role for the other Wüste camps. After Hofmann was removed from his position in February 1945, Wurth, as the highest-ranking SS leader, was responsible for all the shale oil camps.

There are around 3,500 dead buried in the three concentration camp cemeteries at Bisingen (1,158), Schömberg

(1,773), and Schörzingen (549). It must be assumed that the number of dead is significantly higher when one considers that initially the corpses of the victims were cremated in the crematoria in Reutlingen, Schwenningen, and Tuttlingen and that there were many transports of seriously ill prisoners to other camps. The death marches from the Wüste camps resulted in an unknown number of victims. Those prisoners who could not march were relocated to Dachau/München-Allach, and after the evacuation of that camp between April 16 and 18, 1945, the prisoners were moved in a southerly direction. The survivors were liberated in Oberschwaben, Bavaria, or in Austria. There are numerous graves of the victims of the death marches in Upper Swabian villages.

**SOURCES** The basis for this essay is the author's doctoral thesis on the "Wüste" Project and the Bisingen concentration camp, which was published by the Metropol-Verlag, Berlin, in the spring of 2006. The author also published a number of essays that deal with the use of shale oil during World War II in the context of the war economy, forced labor, and the concentration camp system: "Schieferöl und Zwangsarbeit. Das Unternehmen 'Wüste' und das Konzentrationslager in Bisingen," in *Konzentrationslager. Geschichte und Erinnerung. Neue Studien zum KZ-System und zur Gedenkkultur*, ed. Petra Haustein, Rolf Schmolling and Jörg Skriebeleit (Ulm: Klemm u. Oelschläger, 2001), pp. 153–164; "Das Unternehmen 'Wüste'—Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager in Baden, Württemberg und Hohenzollern 1943–1945" and "KZ Bisingen (Unternehmen 'Wüste')," both essays in *Möglichkeiten des Erinnerns. Orte jüdischen Lebens und nationalsozialistischen Unrechts im Zollernalbkreis und im Kreis Rottweil* (Hechingen: Alte Synagoge Hechingen, 1997), pp. 43–59. A general overview of shale oil and SS interests is by Enno Georg, *Die wirtschaftlichen Unternehmungen der SS* (Stuttgart: DVA, 1963). Immo Opfermann deals extensively with the shale oil project in "Das Unternehmen 'Wüste.' Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager entlang der Bahnlinie Tübingen-Rottweil," in *Leitfaden und Materialien zur Ausstellung in der ehemaligen Baracke auf dem Gelände des Oberschulamtes Tübingen 7. Mai–31. Juli 1997* (Schömberg: Selbstverlag, 1997). Michael Grandt brings together the current state of research in *Unternehmen Wüste. Hitlers letzte Hoffnung. Das NS-Ölschieferprogramm auf der Schwäbischen Alb* (Tübingen: Silberburg, 2002). Other information on shale oil is in "Ölschiefer und Konzentrationslager. Das Unternehmen 'Wüste,'" in Heinrich Haasis, *Der Zollernalbkreis* (Stuttgart und Aalen: Theiss, 1989), pp. 157–165; and Andreas Zekorn, "Das Unternehmen 'Wüste,'" in *Verblendung, Mord und Widerstand. Aspekte nationalsozialistischer Unrechtserrschaft im Gebiet des heutigen Zollernalbkreises von 1933–1945* (Hechingen: Zollernalbkreis-Jugendring, 1995), pp. 55–70. Immo Opfermann provides further details on shale oil, including the postwar period, in his essay "Kriegsfolgen. Ölschieferabbau in Frommern 1943–1949," in *1200 Jahre Endingen, Frommern, Heselwangen, Weilstetten, Zillhausen* (Balingen: Stadtarchiv, 1993), pp. 422–431.

The BA-B holds extensive file collections on the topic of shale oil: the files of the SS-WVHA, the RFSS, the RWA, and the RMFRK. The BA-DH holds the files of the DBHG. The AKr-Bal holds an even larger collection regarding the

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Wüste Project. The AOC also holds numerous documents on shale oil. The large collection of investigation and trial files in the StA-L also holds much information on the Wüste Project.

Christine Glauning  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

### NOTES

1. BA-BL, NS 19/1386.
2. The planned experimental facility was financed by the RWA but for “formal reasons” was operated by Lias. BA-BL, NS 19/1386, Schreiben Himmler an Kehrl, Oktober 1943.
3. BA-BL, Schreiben RFSS/Chef der SS-Personalkanzlei an das RuSHA, January 31, 1939, ehem, BDC, Personalakte Kruedener. Spätestens Ende August 1943 war Kruedener SS-Obersturmführer. Vgl. Vermerk über einen Besuch Kruedeners beim persönlichen Stab Himmlers, August 31, 1943, in BA-BL, NS 19/1386.
4. BA-BL, NS 19/1386, Schreiben Schieber an Himmler, September 16, 1943.
5. Charakterisierung der Kohle-Öl-Union, o.D. [nach 1945], in AOC, AEF, c. 1855 d. 36 a.
6. BA-BL, NS 3/823: Schreiben Pohl an Grimm, May 26, 1944. Work by the DÖLF was financed by the RWA. For technical matters, the DÖLF was subordinate to the Planungsamt.
7. Organisation der DÖLF, June 8, 1944, in AOC, AP/PD, c. 1304, p. 15 bis, d. 4, S. 51. Die “Wüste”-Ölschieferwerke in Württemberg, o.D. [nach 1945], in AOC, AP/PD, c. 1304, p. 15/4, S. 10.
8. BA-BL, NS 13/1386, Schreiben Himmler an Pohl, November 24, 1943.
9. BA-BL, NS 13/1386, Schreiben Himmler an Milch, ende November 1943.
10. The factory was to be constructed by DÖLF, operated by it, and then transferred to DESt. BA-BL, NS 19/1386, Schreiben Pohl an Himmler, December 21, 1943. Die “Wüste”-Ölschieferwerke in Württemberg, o.D. [nach 1945], in AOC, AP/PD, c. 1304, p. 15/4, S. 16.
11. BA-BL, NS 3/823.
12. BA-BL, NS 19/1386, Telegramm Pohl an Himmlers Referenten Brandt, 5.7.1944.
13. BA-BL, R 3/1635, Erlass Hitlers, May 30, 1944. Erläuterungen zum Organisationsplan des Geilenberg-Vorhabens “Wüste,” 19.4.1946, in StA-L, EL 317 III, Bü 1252, Bl. 3155.
14. BA-BL, R 3/1907, Bericht Nr. 43—“Wüste” (Besprechung des Arbeitsstabes Geilenberg), July 28, 1944. Vgl. BA-BL, D-H, R 121 (zahlreiche Akten zur DBHG).
15. BA-BL, NS 3/823: Schreiben Jacobi an Pohl [vermutl. 20].3.1945. StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1250: Bericht Dönitz über das Unternehmen “Wüste,” Februar–März 1946. Vgl. auch BA-BL, NS 3/823: Schreiben Pohl an Himmler, March 29, 1945.

## AUDUN-LE-TICHE (“ROWA”)

### [AKA DEUTSCH-OTH]

The Natzweiler subcamp at Audun-le-Tiche lay in the former Gau Westmark, the present-day district of Moselle, France. The camp's opening is dated as somewhere between August 24 and 30, 1944. There were a maximum of 100 male prisoners in the camp who worked for Minett GmbH and in abandoned ore mines near Longwy. Parts for the V-1, produced at the Volkswagen factory in Wolfsburg, were stored in the mine. Robert Steegmann states in *Struthof* that the Bosch facilities from Stuttgart were to be relocated in Audun-le-Tiche at an underground facility of 60,000 square meters (71,759 square yards). The plan was to have 1,300 laborers at work there.

Transfer records from the Audun-le-Tiche subcamp to other camps have survived; for example, there was a transfer of prisoners to the Kochendorf subcamp on January 9, 1944.

Audun-le-Tiche was probably closed in September 1944 as the front was getting ever closer. (Antoine Greffier offers a date of February 1945, but this is highly unlikely.)

**SOURCES** The camp is not mentioned in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979). A collection *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler*, compiled by Antoine Greffier and published in 2002 by the Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, refers to Audun-le-Tiche as a secured Natzweiler subcamp.

Robert Steegmann describes the camp in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos: Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: La Nuée Bleue, 2005), p. 279.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## BENSHEIM-AUERBACH

The Natzweiler subcamp in the Hessian town of Bensheim-Auerbach is mentioned, according to the International Tracing Service (ITS), for the first time on September 11–12, 1944. According to a witness report, the prisoners had been held in the Darmstadt subcamp and following the bombardment of that camp were brought to Bensheim-Auerbach. Horst Riegert, in his detailed report, states that the Bensheim-Auerbach camp is mentioned for the first time in the Natzweiler files on October 10, 1944.

There were 45 male prisoners in the camp—Germans, Czechs, and French. They worked in the underground factory of Dr.-Ing. Frank H. Heymann, Darmstadt, located in a former marble mine in Hochstätten, 125 Mühltal Strasse. The caverns in this mine were excavated and outfitted for armaments production. Stabilizers for the V-2 manufactured in Peenemünde were produced here. The prisoners worked mostly as technical draftsmen; 4 prisoners worked in Darmstadt.

The prisoners in the Bensheim-Auerbach subcamp were accommodated in wooden barracks near the mine. They worked each day of the week. In October 1944, there was an average of 25 prisoners attached to the subcamp. The Natzweiler camp office charged 6 Reichsmark (RM) per prisoner per day for each prisoner, of which 0.80 RM was deducted as costs for rations. Prisoners who died were buried in the Bauerbach cemetery. Their number is not known.

According to a witness report, the camp was dissolved by the guards on March 25 and 26, and the prisoners were driven away from the camp in a southeasterly direction, reaching Dachau on April 3, 1945.

**SOURCES** The *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, published by the ITS (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), mentions the subcamp at Bensheim-Auerbach in vol. 1, p. 199.

Horst Riegert mentions the Bensheim-Auerbach subcamp in his article in Lothar Bembenek, ed., *Hessen hinter Stachel-drabt. Verdrängt und vergessen. KZs, Lager, Aussenkommandos* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn-Verlag, 1984), p. 57, but describes it as a work detachment.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

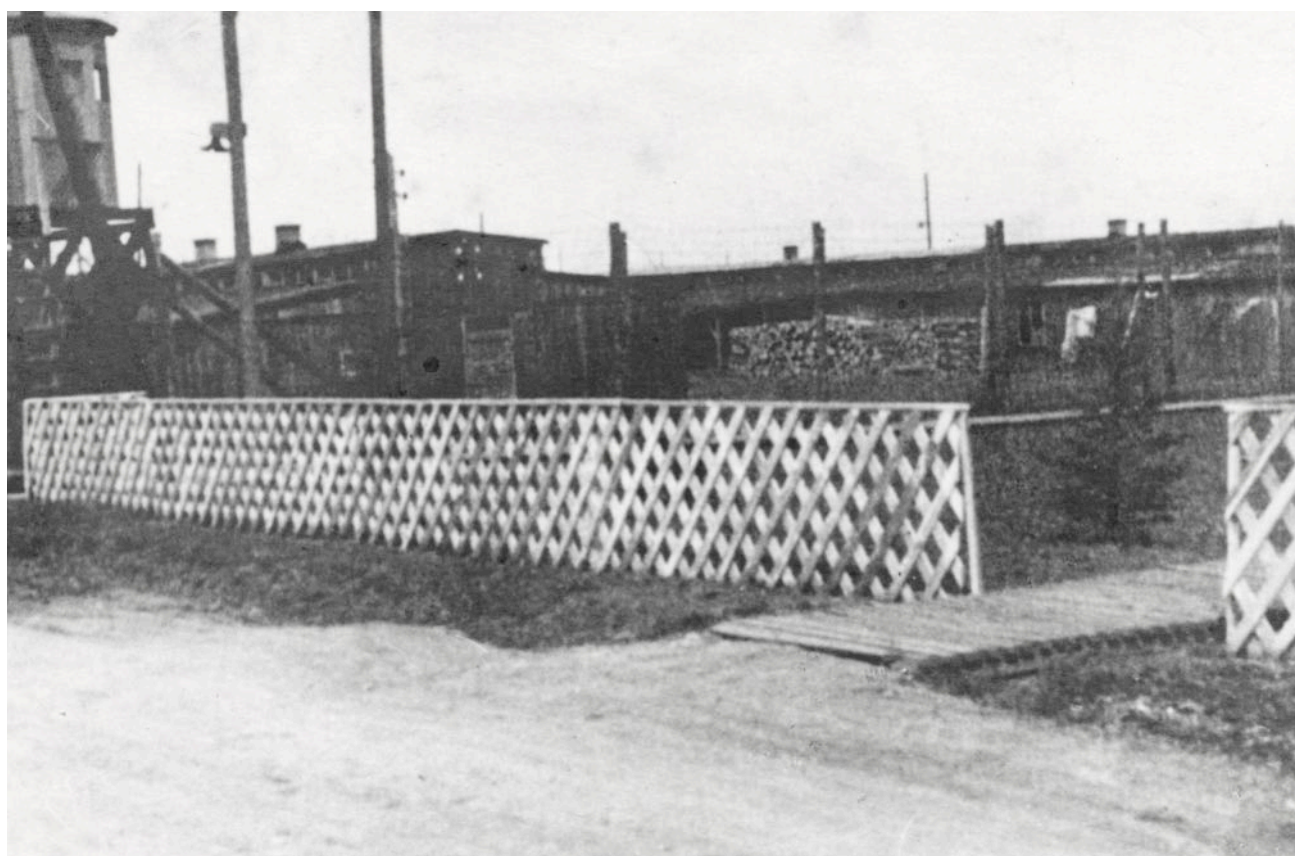
## BISINGEN

Bisingen was the second largest of the “Wüste”-Lager. Between August 24, 1944, and March 1945, at least 4,163 prisoners, including no less than 1,250 Jews, were sent to the camp in five large transports and several individual transfers from other camps. There were approximately 1,000 Poles from Auschwitz; 1,500 East European prisoners from Stutthof; 250 Polish Jews from Vaihingen/Enz; 400 prisoners most probably from Dachau, including Sinti and Roma (Gypsies); and 1,000 Jews from Buchenwald.<sup>1</sup>

The camp was not ready when the first transport arrived. The prisoners were accommodated in tents that were later replaced by horse stables. Contrary to all SS security requirements, the camp site had neither guard towers nor barbed-wire fences. The prisoners' first work was to construct and secure the camp under the direction of the Organisation Todt (OT).<sup>2</sup>

The camp inmates worked primarily in the shale oil plant Wüste 2 in Bisingen but also in Wüste-Werk 3 in Engstlatt and Wüste-Werk 1 in Dusslingen/Nehren. These temporary production facilities also had to be constructed by the prisoners. Bisingen was a typical construction camp where the prisoners had to do physically exhausting work on construction sites and in quarries. The replaceable auxiliary labor had far worse survival chances than the generally better qualified skilled workers in the factory camps (*Fabriklagern*).

In Bisingen, around 1,200 prisoners (about 38 percent) died; 1,158 were hastily buried in a mass grave outside the town; 10 prisoners were cremated in the Reutlingen crematorium, and around 30 victims were buried on the



A view of the factory at the Bisingen subcamp of Natzweiler, 1944-1945.  
USHMM WS #98829, COURTESY OF GFH

construction sites in Bisingen. The actual number is higher, as prisoners who were no longer capable of working were transported to the so-called camps for the dying (*Krankenlager*). At the insistence of companies using the labor and the Deutsche Ölschieferforschungsgesellschaft (German Oil Shale Research Association, DÖLF), the SS, between the end of October 1944 and the beginning of April 1945, transferred several hundred seriously ill prisoners to the concentration camps at Vaihingen/Enz, Dachau/München-Allach, and Bergen-Belsen, where an unknown number of prisoners died.<sup>3</sup>

The head of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), Oswald Pohl, who pushed the SS to quickly establish shale oil plants, inspected the Bisingen concentration camp at the end of 1944 because of its high death rate. Pohl publicly and sharply criticized the senior camp commander Franz Johann Hofmann because of the catastrophic conditions in the camp and transferred him to the Natzweiler main camp. Pohl's appearance is interpreted as an act of "publicity." No one could imagine that he disapproved of the conditions in the subcamp "which he must have known from other areas."<sup>4</sup> The average death rate increased from December 1944, to the middle of April 1945, being almost double that of the preceding months.<sup>5</sup>

The high death rate had little to do with the chaotic conditions toward the end of the war. What was critical was the behavior of the SS camp command, which had little interest in the economic necessity of maintaining the prisoner labor. The SS camp command was more fixed on ideological matters. The senior camp commander of Bisingen and Dautmergen, SS-Hauptsturmführer Hofmann, was a long-serving SS man and, according to statements by his superior, a "fanatical National Socialist." His SS career had begun as early as 1933 in Dachau and had led him to the position of Schutzhaftlagerführer in the "Gypsy Camp" in Auschwitz II-Birkenau and finally to Schutzhaftlagerführer at the Auschwitz I main camp.<sup>6</sup> These experiences greatly influenced his brutal behavior in the Bisingen subcamp, behavior described by survivors and other witnesses.

One of the most decisive changes in the final phase of the concentration camp system was the mass transfer of Wehrmacht soldiers into the camps from the spring of 1944. Countless former Wehrmacht soldiers now served as camp personnel with long-serving SS men. The Wehrmacht soldiers were transferred either from the Luftwaffe or Landes-schützenbataillons to the SS. This was not a temporary phenomenon but the result of a lack of personnel and was widespread in the many new concentration camps that were



established from the summer of 1944. The guards company in Bisingen, which escorted the prisoners to the shale oil plant and guarded them while they worked, consisted almost exclusively of members of the Wehrmacht.<sup>7</sup> These men did not play by any means a subordinate role in the concentration camp system but took over central positions in the camp administration as block leader (Blockführer), work detachment leader (Arbeitskommandoführer), or camp doctor (Lagerarzt).<sup>8</sup>

The camp commander and SS-Oberscharführer Johannes Pauli came from the Wehrmacht. This was not an isolated case. Pauli's behavior toward the prisoners was no different from that of the long-serving concentration camp functionary elite. His career shows that the use of violence in a society over a long period of time, together with a long period of portraying the same groups as enemies, determined his behavior. Serving at the front during World War I, Pauli was a member of a Freikorps whose fighting in the east was motivated by antisemitic and anti-Bolshevist motives. In 1941–1942, Pauli was a member of the Feldgedarmarie in Ukraine, taking part in the murder of the civilian population, murder disguised as “partisan warfare.”<sup>9</sup> As Bisingen camp commander, he was not a follower but a driving force in the excess of violence. Pauli shot a prisoner who was accused of stealing food after an air raid and gave the order to kill two other prisoners.<sup>10</sup> He mistreated the camp inmates not only within the camp but also on the construction site.<sup>11</sup>

At least 10 prisoners managed to escape. A few were shot by the police not far from Hechingen. An accounts clerk, forester, and two policemen shot, on the orders of the Sigmaringen Police Commander, 4 prisoners in the area around Gammertingen/Neufra. Two of the perpetrators were later praised by the head of government in Sigmaringen.<sup>12</sup> Some of the dead prisoners were hastily buried in Neufra; others were brought back to the Bisingen concentration camp and left to lie at the camp entrance as a deterrent.<sup>13</sup> Several prisoners were hung on the roll-call square after their escape attempts failed.<sup>14</sup>

The concentration camp was located on the edge of the town and was not cut off from its surroundings; on the contrary, the civilian world was closely intertwined with the camp world. The daily presence of the prisoners meant that the camp's existence was not hidden from the local population. The prisoners marched daily through Bisingen to the nearby town of Engstlatt, laid water pipes through Steinhofen and Bisingen to the shale oil plant, and removed rubble after air raids, repaired the church roof, and were leased out as labor to local firms. The SS men were friendly with the local women and visited the local pubs; the deputy mayor played cards with the camp commander. The SS did not hide the terror and violence from the population and openly mistreated the prisoners on the public roads. The camp dead were recorded in the civilian death registers; owners of horse-drawn carts had to transport the corpses to a mass grave.<sup>15</sup> The borders between a concentration camp and its civilian surroundings were never so blurred and the local population was never so confronted

with the concentration camp system as in the last phase of the war.

Behavior toward the camp ranged from indifference, individual acts of help, and profit making to participating in tracking down escaped prisoners. However, in the collective consciousness, acts of assistance stand out most.<sup>16</sup> The Bisingen myth arose as a result of an article that appeared in the French newspaper, *Le Figaro* in 1946. The author of the report stated that the Bisingen population had systematically supported the prisoners and protested against their treatment—“an undoubtedly unique act in Germany.”<sup>17</sup> However, the acts were those of individuals motivated by humanitarian or religious grounds. There was no systematic support, and there is no evidence of a strong protest.

The evacuation of the Bisingen concentration camp occurred in the middle of April 1945. Prisoners who could not walk, the majority, were taken by rail to Dachau/München-Allach or by truck to the Natzweiler subcamp at Spaichingen. The remainder of the camp inmates marched to Schörzingen or Dautmergen, where they joined a death march to the south. A few prisoners were shot along the way; several mass shootings were planned, but none took place. The survivors were liberated in Oberschwaben, Oberbayern, or Austria.<sup>18</sup>

In 1947, a French military tribunal sentenced three SS men and an OT member to death; three were hung on August 26, 1947. The sentence of the fourth was commuted to 20 years' imprisonment. He was released in 1962. Another SS man was sentenced to life in prison, two to 20 years, one to 8 years, and one to 18 months. Another OT member was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment.<sup>19</sup> Camp commander Pauli fled to Switzerland, where in a unique trial he was sentenced on February 11, 1953, by the Basel Criminal Court to 12 years' hard labor.<sup>20</sup> The Schwurgericht Hechingen acquitted Hofmann in 1966.<sup>21</sup> Many other investigations of SS men or the camp elders were stopped largely as a result of the passage of time. None of the perpetrators were found guilty by a German court.

The concentration camp cemetery was consecrated in 1947. A memorial with an exhibition and history recalls the Bisingen concentration camp.

**SOURCES** The basis for this essay is the author's doctoral dissertation on the “Wüste” Project and the Bisingen concentration camp, which was published in the spring of 2000 by Metropol-Verlag Berlin. The author has also written a few additional essays on the Bisingen concentration camp and the use of shale oil during World War II: “Schieferöl und Zwangsarbeit. Das Unternehmen ‘Wüste’ und das Konzentrationslager in Bisingen,” in *Konzentrationslager. Geschichte und Erinnerung: Neue Studien zum KZ-System und zur Gedenkkultur*, ed. Petra Haustein, Rolf Schmolling, and Jörg Skriebeleit, (Ulm: Klemm u. Oelschläger, 2001), pp. 153–164; “‘Schwierigkeiten des Erinnerns’: Das Heimatmuseum Bisingen als KZ-Gedenkstätte,” *GeRu* 92: 12 (1999): 3–12; “Das Unternehmen ‘Wüste’—Ölschieferwerke” and “Konzentrationslager in Baden, Württemberg und Hohenzollern 1943–1945 sowie KZ Bisingen (Unternehmen ‘Wüste’),” both essays in

*Möglichkeiten des Erinnerns. Orte jüdischen Lebens und national-sozialistischen Unrechts im Zollernalbkreis und im Kreis Rottweil* (Hechingen: Alte Synagoge Hechingen, 1997), pp. 43–59. The earliest study on the Bisingen subcamp is by Wolfgang Sörös, “Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager und Kriegswirtschaft im regionalgeschichtlichen Unterricht, dargestellt am Beispiel des Konzentrationslagers Bisingen” (unpub., Ludwigsburg, 1977). The Juso-AG Bisingen published the first work on the camp that was taken seriously in Bisingen and that was the subject of discussion: *Das KZ Bisingen* (Bisingen: Selbstverlag, 1996).

There are several survivors’ reports on the Bisingen camp including Otto Gunsberger, *Berufswahl: Botschaft eines Überlebenden an die nachfolgende Generation*, trans. Ines Mayer, Horst Prautzsch, and Ilona Schneider (Bisingen: Selbstverlag, 1998); Alfred Korn, “Ich glaube, die Hölle ist ein Paradies im Vergleich zu dem, was wir mitgemacht haben,” in Bettina Wenke, *Interviews mit Überlebenden. Verfolgung und Widerstand in Südwestdeutschland* (Stuttgart: Theiss, 1980), pp. 196–214; Stanislaw Sagan, *Food Carriers Out!* (Toronto: S.J. Sagan, 1982); and Isak Wasserstein, *Ich stand an der Rampe von Auschwitz* (Norderstedt: Horst Prautzsch, 2001).

There are numerous but scattered archival materials on the Bisingen concentration camp. The largest collection is the numerous investigation files and trial files in the StA-L. A few files relating to the preliminary investigations are held in the ZdL (Aubenstelle des Bundesarchivs), now at BA-L. Prisoner lists are held in the archives of the memorials Auschwitz and Danzig-Stutthof. The Natzweiler concentration camp Nummernbuch 6, which has the names of the prisoners in the transports including to Bisingen, lies in the AN in Paris. The BA-B holds SS files and Reich authority files with numerous details on the camp and the shale oil project, documents on the SS economic interests in armaments firms, and the particular role of Bisingen (Pohl’s visit). In YVA, there are records of interviews and written statements by survivors. The same are also to be found in the archive of the Bisingen Concentration Camp Memorial. The AOC in Colmar has an extensive collection of files on the camp, mass grave, shale oil, the institutions involved, and the behavior of the civilian population (questionnaires after 1945). The files of the Kreisernährungsamt in the StA-S deal with the prisoners’ food supplies and provide details on the troops in the camp. The investigation files as well as the trial files of the Bisingen camp commander are held in the BAR as well as the StA-KBS and can be easily accessed.

Christine Glauning  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Lagerstärke des KZ Bisingen, zusammengestellt nach Dokumenten der historischen Abteilung des Internationalen Suchdienstes in Arolsen, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 379, Bl. 68.
2. Stanislaw Sagan, *Food Carriers Out!* (Toronto: S.J. Sagan, 1982), p. 41.
3. Liste der Opfer des KZ Vaihingen, in ASt-Va/E. Transportliste Bisingen-Allach, April 6, 1945, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 379, Bl. 148–151. Weitere Krankentransporte vgl. Aufstellung über das KZ Bisingen, [nach 1945], in AGe-Bi, Flattich 12309.

4. Vernehmung Haenlein (Betriebsführer DÖLF) vor dem Schwurgericht Hechingen, August 2, 1965, S. 8, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1328.

5. Schreiben Jacobi an SS-WVHA (Stab W) mit einem Schaubild über die Sterberate von Oktober bis Anfang Dezember 1944, December 4, 1944, in BA-BL, NS 3/823.

6. SSO Hofmann, in BA-BL, ehem. BDC.

7. Vernehmung Giese (Wachmann), November 30, 1953, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1362, Bl. 36f.

8. Mappe Mahlerwein, in StALB, EL 317 III Bü 347. Vernehmung Rühle, October 7, 1960, in *ibid.*, Mappe Ehrmanntraut, Bl. 77–79. Vernehmung Bruder, August 2, 1956, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1238, Bl. 8f. Vernehmung Steinicke, July 15, 1959, durch die Staatsanwaltschaft Hechingen, in *ibid.*, Bü 1240, Bl. 549–553.

9. Vernehmung Pauli vor dem Strafgericht Basel, February 9, 1953, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1262, Bl. 754.

10. Vernehmung Pauli in Basel, March 15, 1951, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1262, Bl. 741–747. Vernehmung Pauli in Basel, October 25, 1961, in *ibid.*, Bl. 749–752.

11. Vernehmung Müller, July 30, 1956, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1238, Bl. 7.

12. Schreiben Staatskommissariat für die politische Säuberung Tübingen an Bürgermeister Bisingen, April 26, 1951, in AGe-Bi, Flattich 12404. Verfügung der Staatsanwaltschaft Hechingen, November 9, 1961, in ZdL (BA-L), 419 AR-Z 33/61 Bd. 3.

13. Vernehmung Ehrmanntraut in Rastatt, July 4, 1947, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1260, Bl. 4869–4870.

14. Z.B. Vernehmung Win vor dem Schwurgericht Hechingen, August 26, 1965, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1328, Bl. 1–7. Verfügung der Staatsanwaltschaft Stuttgart, November 3, 1966, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 378, o. Bl.

15. Interviews mit Bisingern und Überlebenden, geführt von d. Verf. Zahlreiche Aussagen von Zeugen, die im Zuge der Ermittlungsverfahren und während des Prozesses in Hechingen vernommen wurden, in StALB, EL 317 III.

16. Vernehmungen von Bewohnern und Bewohnerinnen aus Bisingen und Steinhofen durch die französische Militärregierung, in AOC, W-H, c. 1184, p. 2a. Zeitzeugeninterviews, geführt von d. Verf.

17. *Fig.* November 30, 1946, veröffentlicht im Heimatbuch Bisingen.

18. Zahlreiche Aussagen von Überlebenden und anderen Zeugen, in StALB, EL 317 III.

19. Badische Neueste Nachrichten, Ausgabe Karlsruhe, May 31, 1947. Einstellungsverfügung, November 16, 1970, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 872.

20. Urteil Strafgericht Basel, February 11, 1953, in StA-B, Gerichtsarchiv KK 2. Pauli had both German and Swiss citizenship.

21. Urteil Hechinger Prozess, March 18, 1966, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1236. Hofmann was sentenced to life imprisonment in the parallel-running Auschwitz Trial.

## CALW

The International Tracing Service (ITS) puts the opening date for the Natzweiler subcamp in Calw, Württemberg, as

January 14, 1945. This date is confirmed by the files of the former concentration camp and an eyewitness report.

The camp probably held between 135 and 200 women. They worked on the night shift at the Luftfahrtgerätegesellschaft (Lufag), manufacturing parts for airplanes. They were accommodated on the second floor of a building directly under the roof. Wash and shower facilities were located in the basement of the building. It is possible that the camp also held French and Italian prisoners of war (POWs) later.

On April 1 and 2, 1945, the healthier women and those capable of walking were evacuated in the direction toward Bavaria. The sick were taken to the Dachau subcamp at München-Allach, arriving on April 11, 1945. They were liberated by U.S. troops at the end of April—beginning of May 1945.

**SOURCES** The Calw subcamp is mentioned in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), 1: 200.

A short description of the camp, from which details for this essay are taken, is to be found in Herwart Vorländer, ed., *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegführung: Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*. (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer-Verlag, 1978), p. 11.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## COCHEM-BRUTTIG ("ZEISIG") [AKA KOCHEM-BRUTTIG]

Cochem-Bruttig, in the former Prussian Rhine Province, was the site of a Natzweiler subcamp, which administratively was connected to the Cochem-Treis subcamp. Some sources, among them the International Tracing Service (ITS), state that the Cochem-Treis subcamp was a subdetail of the Cochem-Bruttig subcamp. Sometimes both camps are generically described as Cochem (also known as Kochem).

Bruttig and Treis were connected by a disused railway tunnel that had been constructed at the end of World War I. In 1944, it was integrated into the Jägerstab (Fighter Staff) project. The Bauinspektion Reich-West (Building Inspectorate Reich-West), part of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), Amtsgruppe C, was in charge of the tunnel and operated it as "Project A7" (code name "Zeisig").

According to files from the Natzweiler concentration camp, the camp in Cochem-Bruttig was established on March 10, 1944. The ballroom of the Zum guten Onkel hotel, which was on the outskirts of the town, was requisitioned by the SS to accommodate the first prisoners. The prisoners remained there until they had constructed the new subcamp located at "Auf der Kipp" (i.e., on the railway embankment constructed from fill obtained when the tunnel was excavated).

The first prisoner transport left Natzweiler on March 5, 1944. There were 300 French prisoners, 232 of whom were *Nacht-und-Nebel* prisoners, who for security reasons actually

should not have been permitted to work outside the main camp. After four weeks it was realized that these prisoners should not have been there, and the Frenchmen were removed from the camp and replaced by more than 700 new prisoners—417 Poles, 286 Russians, 5 Croats, 2 Frenchmen, 1 Italian, 5 Germans, and 2 stateless persons. An additional 850 Polish and Russian prisoners from Auschwitz arrived on May 3, 1944. Prisoners were also sent from Buchenwald and in July 1944 from Hinzert to the camps at Bruttig and Treis. The Zeisig construction project involved Frenchmen, Poles, Russians, Dutch, Belgians, Luxembourgers, Yugoslavs, Italians, Croats, Greeks, Norwegians, and a few Germans. Most probably there were no Jewish prisoners. The prisoners were from just about all prisoner categories—convicts transferred from the judicial system to a concentration camp (Security Custody, SV), temporary and preventive remand, asocials, foreign civilian workers, prisoners of war (POWs), prisoners for political reasons, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Special Section Wehrmacht (SAW)—and all types of trades and professions: tradesmen, laborers, farmers, technicians, officers, teachers, traders, white-collar workers, a few apprentices, pupils, students, and doctors. The youngest prisoner in Cochem turned 16 on April 2, 1944. A Frenchman, aged 61, was the oldest. On July 24, 1944, there were 1,527 prisoners in the subcamps at Bruttig and Treis. There was a regular exchange of prisoners between the Natzweiler main camp and the subcamps. It is not known how the prisoners were distributed between the two camps at Bruttig and Treis.

The railway tunnel Bruttig-Treis, with an area of 21,000 square meters (25,116 square yards), was to be expanded by the prisoners for use by Bosch, Stuttgart, so that spark plugs could be produced in the tunnel. To expand the tunnel, the SS-Führungsstab (Command Staff) A7 listed the following materials: 550 metric tons (606 tons, short U.S.) building iron, 275 metric tons (303 tons, short U.S.) machine iron, 145 cubic meters (190 cubic yards) raw timber, 610 cubic meters (798 cubic yards) cut timber, 1,500 metric tons (1,653 tons, short U.S.) cement, and 200 metric tons (220 tons, short U.S.) bricks. The total cost of construction was 3.5 million Reichsmark (RM). The lead construction company was Fix from Dernau.

The names of some members of the Führungsstab (management) of Project A7 are known: it was first led by SS-Obersturmführer Meyer from March 1944. In May 1944, he was replaced by SS-Sturmbannführer Gerrit Oldeboershuis, also known as "Oldenbuhr," who also was head of the Special Inspectorate (Sonderinspektion) III in Bad Wimpfen on the Neckar River. By the end of the war, Oldeboershuis was the camp commandant at Ohrdruf. The deputy commander was SS-Untersturmführer Karl-Heinz Burkhardt (who was given the special task of supervising the construction site in the Bruttig-Treis tunnel). Other names of men who served there are Wachtmeister Funke and SS-Mann Felder. The local representative of the Amtsgruppe D with the A7 project was SS-Obersturmführer Rudolf Beer (also spelled "Bär"). SS-Sturmscharführer and Kreissekretär (District Secretary)



Friedrich Schulze was given security responsibility by the Koblenz Gestapo.

The commander in the Bruttig and Treis subcamp was initially SS-Obersturmführer Beer. He was followed by SS-Obersturmführer Scheffe and later SS-Untersturmführer Wicker. The prisoners were guarded by a Luftwaffe detachment commanded by Hauptmann Rückert. However, some sources state that SS members or Wehrmacht members constituted the guard.

Working conditions in the tunnel were catastrophic. Ernst Heimes wrote:

Everyone goes into the tunnel. That is the worst of the work columns. It is really mean. The dead are no longer counted. . . . The old water drainage system is to be removed and a larger ditch is to be constructed. At the entrance civilians supervise the work; insults are in German, the baton at the ready. . . . And the hunger. . . . The prisoners never get even the smallest portion of sausage or margarine. Packages arrive, but the SS takes them. Even most of the bread is stolen from them. The prisoners eat only weeds and white snails. . . . There are four water cans for 400 prisoners. It is impossible to get to them.<sup>1</sup>

There were constantly attempts to escape, which generally failed because of the local geography—close settlements, hills, and the Mosel River loop. There are more than 20 documented escape attempts from the camps at Bruttig and Treis. In general, the recaptured prisoners were executed in the camp at Cochem-Bruttig on a gallows located on the camp grounds. As the camp was located in the middle of the village, the villagers were daily witnesses to the crimes committed on the prisoners. They were also required to be present at executions. At the Bruttig cemetery are the grave stones of 12 prisoners from the year 1944. Not all the prisoners were buried in Bruttig; some corpses were cremated in the Mainz crematorium. The death toll is therefore likely to be much higher—at least 50 but more likely much more.

A few prisoners were used outside the tunnel in local workshops or households, at a blacksmith's at Cochem, or loading goods at the railway yard. Supplies for the subcamp most probably came by rail to Karden (present-day Treis-Karden), and the machines required by Bosch most likely arrived at the Cochem railway station.

Bombing raids began at the end of August 1944 and were probably the reason why the camps in Bruttig and Treis were dissolved. The Cochem-Bruttig camp is mentioned for the last time in the files of the Natzweiler concentration camp on September 29, 1944. According to a report from the Protective Detention Camp, dated September 30, 1944, 1,081 Cochem prisoners were transferred on September 29, 1944, to Buchenwald. According to Natzweiler records, the prisoners were transferred in the middle of September. A member of the guard wrote in his diary that the evacuation of approxi-

mately 600 Bruttig prisoners took place on September 14–15, 1944. They were taken via Nordhausen to Ellrich in the southern Harz region. The ITS records the dissolution of the camp as occurring on September 29, 1944.

In July 1947, a trial began before the Tribunal Général in Rastatt against eight former members of the camps at Cochem-Bruttig and Cochem-Treis. SS-Sturmbannführer Gerrit Oldeboershuis was sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor for the cruel crimes he had committed personally. SS-Obersturmführer Scheffe, occasional camp commander, who had 13 prisoners hung for trying to escape, was sentenced to death. On November 8, 1947, the sentence was commuted to 15 years' hard labor. Scheffe was pardoned and released from prison on July 9, 1956.

SS-Untersturmführer Burkhardt, who was under Oldeboershuis's direct command to supervise the construction work in the tunnel, was sentenced to 10 years in jail. Oswald Allhäuser, a senior foreman in charge of some of the prisoners, was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment. Mathias Schneider, a bricklayer and office worker at the Treis construction site, together with the foremen Anton Zimmer and Oskar Kröber, received sentences of less than 5 years. The former mayor and Nazi Party local group leader at Bruttig, Alois Mentenich, was acquitted.

**SOURCES** The Cochem-Bruttig subcamp is described by Robert Steegmann in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 75, 274. Ernst Heimes, *Ich habe immer nur den Zaun gesehen. Suche nach dem KZ-Aussenlager Cochem* (1992, Koblenz: Fölbach, 1996), provides a detailed description of the research on the camps at Treis and Bruttig and includes numerous photographs. Two Bruttig and Treis prisoners have written their memoirs: Bert Aerts, *Advokaat en Nacht en Nevel* (Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, 1972); and Henry Allainmat, *Auschwitz en France* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1987). Albert Pütz describes Cochem in *Das SS-Sonderlager/KZ Hinzert 1940–1945. Das Anklageverfahren gegen Paul Sporrenberg* (The SS Special Camp/Concentration Camp Hinzert 1940–1945. Proceedings against Paul Sporrenberg) (Frankfurt: Ministerium der Justiz Rheinland-Pfalz, 1998) as a subcamp of Hinzert and a Natzweiler work detachment (map at p. 277). In *Schattenmenschen* (Shadow men) (Frankfurt am Main: Brandes and Apsel, 1996), Ernst Heimes relates the events in the Cochem camp and in the subcamps at Bruttig and Treis.

Archival records on Cochem and the subcamps Treis and Bruttig are to be mostly found in the archival collections of the Natzweiler concentration camp. Incomplete details on the victims in both camps during the Natzweiler period are to be found in *Nachweisung über Grabstätten von Angehörigen der Vereinten Nationen im hiesigen Amtsbezirk VG Cochem-Land, Kreis Cochem*, and *Nachweisung über Todesfälle von KZ-Häftlingen in der Gemeinde Bruttig, Kreis Cochem, Amtsbezirk Cochem—Cochem Land*. There are also two newspaper articles about the proceedings against commanding officers of the Natzweiler subcamps before the Tribunal Général 1947 in Rastatt: “Die Verbrechen von Treis und Bruttig,” *Tr-Vo*, August 5, 1947; and “KZ-Lager Treis und Bruttig vor Gericht,”



*Tr-Vo*, July 22, 1947. Reinhold Schommers has published two articles on Cochem: "Die Last drückt immer noch," in *RzC*, ca. 1985; and "Ein Mahnmal deutscher Vergangenheit," *St. Ald*, ca. 1985. The ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979) mentions the Cochem-Bruttig subcamp at 1:200.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans Stephen Pallavicini

#### NOTE

1. The French inmate Henry Allainmat, quoted from Ernst Heimes, *Ich habe immer nur den Zaun gesehen. Suche nach dem KZ-Aussenlager Cochem* (1992; Koblenz: Fölback, 1996), pp. 58–59.

### COCHEM-TREIS ("ZEISIG")

#### [AKA KOCHEM-TREIS]

Cochem-Treis on the Mosel River in the former Prussian Rhine Province was the site of a Natzweiler subcamp that organizationally was connected to the Cochem-Bruttig subcamp. Some sources, among them the International Tracing Service (ITS), state that the Cochem-Treis subcamp was a subdetail of the Cochem-Bruttig subcamp, whereas other sources describe both camps as Natzweiler outside details usually known under the common term "Cochem" (also known as Kochem).

Bruttig and Treis were connected by a disused railway tunnel that shortened the Mosel loop between both locations. The tunnel had been built at the end of World War I. In 1944, it was integrated into the Jägerstab (Fighter Staff) project and was known as "Project A7" (code name "Zeisig") and administered by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), Amtsgruppe C, Building Inspectorate (Bauinspektion) Reich-West.

The Cochem-Treis camp is mentioned for the first time in an official report dated March 27, 1944. Confirmation of that report is to be found in the files of the Natzweiler concentration camp. Thus, Cochem-Treis is about two weeks younger than the Bruttig camp. According to a prisoner statement, the Treis camp existed in 1942, but this cannot be confirmed by official documents or from other witnesses.

As temporary accommodation for the prisoners, the SS had requisitioned some rooms in the Treis Wildburg hotel on the Mosel River. The hotel's hall was separated from the rest of the hotel by barbed wire, and the first 150 prisoners were held there. Presumably, business continued as normal in the rest of the hotel. The prisoners stationed at the hotel constructed the subcamp that was located in Treis "Auf der Kipp" (i.e., on the railway embankment constructed from material excavated from the tunnel). It was to this camp that the prisoners were transferred at the end of March–beginning of April 1944.

Initially, the Treis camp consisted of a two-level prisoner barrack and three other barracks (one for the kitchen and two

barracks for the guards) as well as a kennel. The camp was surrounded by barbed wire, and at each of the four corners, there was a watchtower with a height of approximately 4 meters (13 feet). The guards in the towers were armed with machine guns, and searchlights were mounted on the towers. Another six or seven prisoner barracks were very quickly added, the foundations in part being on the railway embankment. It is probable that, as a result, a number of the barracks even had cellars. Outside the camp there were other barracks for the guards, and further up the Mosel, there were three stone buildings, whose purpose remains unclear (most probably they were administration buildings and garages).

The first transport of prisoners from Natzweiler to Bruttig and Treis left on March 5, 1944, and consisted of 300 French prisoners, 232 of whom were *Nacht-und-Nebel* prisoners. For security reasons, these prisoners usually were not permitted to work outside the main camp. Once this error was realized, four weeks later, the French prisoners were withdrawn and replaced by more than 700 new prisoners—417 Poles, 286 Russians, 5 Croats, 2 French, 1 Italian, 5 Germans, and 2 stateless persons. Another 850 Polish and Russian prisoners arrived from Auschwitz on May 3, 1944. Prisoners were also sent from Buchenwald and, in July 1944, from Hinzert. French, Poles, Russians, Dutch, Belgian, Luxembourgers, Yugoslavs, Italians, Croats, Greeks, Norwegians, and a few Germans (but most likely no Jews) were the prisoners who made up the construction project Zeisig. They were from just about all prisoner categories—convicts transferred from the judicial system to a concentration camp (Security Custody, SV), temporary and preventive remand, asocial, foreign civilian workers, prisoners of war (POWs), prisoners for political reasons, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, SAW (Sicherheits-Abteilung/Security Section Wehrmacht), and all types of trades and professions: tradesmen, laborers, farmers, technicians, officers, teachers, traders, white-collar workers, a few apprentices, pupils, students, and doctors. The youngest prisoner in Cochem turned 16 on April 2, 1944; a French prisoner aged 61 was the eldest. On July 24, 1944, the Natzweiler documents recorded 1,527 prisoners in the subcamps at Bruttig and Treis. There was a constant exchange of prisoners between the main camp and these subcamps. It is not possible to determine for every individual whether they were sent to Bruttig or Treis.

The prisoners' task was to expand the Bruttig-Treis railway tunnel with its 21,000 square meter (25,116 square yards) area. Once complete, the tunnel was to be used by Bosch, Stuttgart, to manufacture spark plugs. The SS-Führungsstab A7 listed the following material for construction: 550 metric tons (606 tons, short U.S.) building iron, 275 metric tons (303 tons, short U.S.) machine iron, 145 cubic meters (190 cubic yards) raw timber, 610 cubic meters (798 cubic yards) cut timber, 1,500 metric tons (1,653 tons, short U.S.) cement, and 200 metric tons (220 tons, short U.S.) bricks. The total cost of the construction work was 3.5 million Reichsmark (RM), and the construction firm Fix from Dernau had primary responsibility for the work.

From March 1944, Project A7 was commanded by SS-Obersturmführer Meyer and, from May 1944, by SS-Sturmbannführer Gerrit Oldeboershuis, who was known as “Oldenbuhr” and who simultaneously was head of the Special Inspectorate (Sonderinspektion) III at Bad Wimpfen on the Neckar River. At the end of the war, Oldeboershuis was in command of the camp at Ohrdruf. The second in command was SS-Untersturmführer Karl-Heinz Burkhardt (he had the special task of securing the Bruttig-Treis tunnel construction work). Noncommissioned officers included Wachtmeister Funke and SS-Mann Felder. The regional representative of Amtsgruppe D was SS-Obersturmführer Rudolf Beer (also spelled “Bär”). SS-Sturmscharführer and Kreissekretär (District Secretary) Friedrich Schulze was given responsibility for security by the Koblenz Gestapo.

The commanders of the Bruttig and Treis details were SS-Obersturmführer Beer, followed by SS-Obersturmführer Scheffe and finally by SS-Untersturmführer Wicker. The guards were supplied by a Luftwaffe detachment under the command of Hauptmann Rückert, although some sources refer to SS or Wehrmacht members.

The working conditions in the tunnel were disastrous. Belgian prisoner Albert Aerts, a former lawyer, describes his time in Treis as follows: “The Germans felt that it had become a race against time, and although we only had picks, they drove us with kicks and blows to a hellish working tempo. The road had to be constructed within one week, and that’s the way it happened. Practically, we received no food at all. The guards sold off our rations to the local population, who themselves suffered from hunger. For the first time, we were starving day and night.”<sup>1</sup> There were constant escape attempts that, due to the geography, close settlements, hills, and the Mosel loop, as a rule failed. More than 20 escape attempts are documented for the Bruttig and Treis subcamps. The official documents reveal that the local Treis gendarmerie actively participated in the hunt for the escapees. Recaptured prisoners were regularly executed—in the subcamp at Cochem-Treis, the prisoners were hanged from the acacia or linden trees. Aerts reports that on Good Friday 1944 two inmates were crucified for their attempt to escape. The camp inmates had to watch their death struggles for hours. Only at the very end, after many hours, one guard shot them to death.

The punishment was just as severe for those who tried to assist the prisoners. Two civilian forced laborers from Luxembourg working in the tunnel for Bosch, Johann-Peter Wilwert and Wilhelm Braun, gave information, money, and food to some Italian prisoners in the Treis subcamp. They were detected and held as concentration camp prisoners in Treis. Wilwert was later sent to the so-called Education Camp at Neuwied. He died in Buchenwald at the end of 1944—beginning of 1945.

A few prisoners were used outside the tunnel by local tradesmen or in homes, at a smith in Cochem, or for unloading goods at the railway station. Supplies for the subcamps probably came via the Karden railway station (present-day

Treis-Karden). The Bosch machines probably came via the Cochem railway station.

Bombing of the camps began at the end of August 1944, and this probably resulted in the decision to close the subcamps. The Cochem-Treis camp is mentioned in official documents for the last time on October 7, 1944. The Treis and Bruttig prisoners were transferred to Buchenwald. A trial began in July 1947 before the Tribunal Général in Rastatt of those in charge of the subcamps at Cochem-Bruttig and Cochem-Treis. SS-Sturmbannführer Oldeboershuis was sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor for aggravated crimes committed by him personally. SS-Obersturmführer Scheffe, occasional camp commander, who ordered 13 prisoners to be hung for trying to escape, was sentenced to death. The sentence was commuted on November 8, 1947, to 15 years’ imprisonment with hard labor. Scheffe was released early from prison on July 9, 1956.

SS-Untersturmführer Burkhardt, who, pursuant to Oldeboershuis’s direct order, was responsible for supervision of the construction in the tunnel, was sentenced to 10 years in jail. Oswald Allhäuser, a foreman of some of the prisoners, also received a sentence of 5 years in jail. Mathias Schneider, a mason and office worker at the Treis construction site, and foremen Anton Zimmer and Oskar Kröber received sentences of less than 5 years.

**SOURCES** Ernst Heimes provides a detailed report on his research into the camps at Treis and Bruttig as well as numerous photographs in *Ich habe immer nur den Zaun gesehen. Suche nach dem KZ-Aussenlager Cochem* (1992; Koblenz: Fölbach, 1996). Robert Steegmann describes the Cochem-Treis subcamp in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 75, 274. Two Bruttig and Treis prisoners have written their memoirs: Bert Aerts, *Advokaat en Nacht en Nevel* (Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, 1972); and Henry Allainmat, *Auschwitz en France* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1987). Albert Pütz describes Cochem in *Das SS-Sonderlager/KZ Hinzert 1940–1945. Das Anklageverfahren gegen Paul Sporrenberg* (Frankfurt: Ministerium der Justiz Rheinland-Pfalz, 1998) as a subcamp of Hinzert and a Natzweiler work detachment (map at p. 277). In *Schattenmenschen* (Frankfurt am Main: Brandes and Apsel, 1996), Ernst Heimes relates the events in the Cochem camp and in the subcamps at Bruttig and Treis. Incomplete details on the victims in both camps during the Natzweiler period are to be found in: *Nachweisung über Grabstätten von Angehörigen der Vereinten Nationen im hiesigen Amtsbezirk VG Cochem-Land, Kreis Cochem*, and *Nachweisung über Todesfälle von KZ-Häftlingen in der Gemeinde Bruttig, Kreis Cochem, Amtsbezirk Cochem—Cochem Land*. There are also two newspaper articles about the proceedings against commanding officers of the Natzweiler subcamps before the Tribunal Général 1947 in Rastatt: “Die Verbrechen von Treis und Bruttig,” *Tr-Vo*, August 5, 1947; and “KZ-Lager Treis und Bruttig vor Gericht,” *Tr-Vo*, July 22, 1947.

Reinhold Schommers has published two articles on Cochem: “Die Last drückt immer noch,” *RZC*, ca. 1985; and “Ein Mahnmal deutscher Vergangenheit,” *St. Ald*, ca. 1985. The ITS’s *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-*

SS (1933–1945) (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979) mentions the camp at Cochem-Treis, 1:200.

The archives at the Natzweiler concentration camp hold documents on the Cochem subcamp and the Treis and Brütig camps.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Quoted from Ernst Heimes, *Ich habe immer nur den Zaun gesehen. Suche nach dem KZ-Aussenlager Cochem* (1992; Koblenz: Fölbach, 1996), p. 55.

## DARMSTADT

The Natzweiler subcamp at Darmstadt was opened on August 31, 1944, according to the files of the main camp. The prisoners were accommodated in Darmstadt and taken daily to Bensheim-Auerbach, where they worked supposedly as draftsmen in a decommissioned tunnel of a marble quarry used by the company Dr. Hans Heymann of Darmstadt. They worked on the gyro stabilizers for the V-2 rocket produced in Peenemünde.

Following the heavy bombardment of Darmstadt on September 11–12, 1944, the Darmstadt subcamp was closed, and the prisoners were permanently transferred to Bensheim-Auerbach.

**SOURCES** Robert Steegmann describes the Darmstadt subcamp in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 92, 263. Horst Riegert refers to the subcamps at Bensheim-Auerbach and Heppenheim in Lothar Bembek's book *Hessen hinter Stachel-drabt. Verdrängt und vergessen: KZs, Lager, Aussenkommandos* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn-Verlag, 1984), p. 57, and briefly mentions the Darmstadt subcamp. The ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), 1:200, refers to the Darmstadt subcamp.

Information regarding the Darmstadt subcamp and the work of the inmates at Bensheim-Auerbach can also be obtained from NWHStA-(D), RG H 13 Darmstadt (Staatsanwaltschaft beim Landgericht Darmstadt), 1124—here especially AZ: 2 Js 263/72, the records of the investigations undertaken in 1970 to 1972.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## DAUTMERGEN

Dautmergen was the largest of the seven Wüste camps, with an average of around 3,000 prisoners. On February 1, 1945, the camp reached its peak number with 3,181 prisoners.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Lithuanian Jews, survivors of the Warsaw Uprising, and resistance members from France, Holland, and Norway, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies) were also held there.

There are records that confirm the following transports: August 23, 1944, 1,000 Poles from Auschwitz; August 31, 1944, 1,000 Poles from Bisingen; September 19, 1944, 15 prisoners from Sachsenhausen; September 27, 1944, 400 prisoners from Dachau; at the beginning of October 1944, 1,000 Jews from Wilna (Vilnius), who had previously been working in Estonian shale oil plants; November 8, 1944, 250 prisoners from the Vahingen Krankenlager.<sup>2</sup> The Natzweiler concentration camp Nummernbuch 6 lists three additional transports: 32 prisoners of unknown origin; 599 prisoners who, no later than the beginning of December 1944, arrived at Dautmergen; and 138 prisoners who left Buchenwald on December 21, 1944.<sup>3</sup> The last Buchenwald transport with 280 prisoners reached Dautmergen on March 30, 1945.<sup>4</sup> To these 4,714 prisoners must be added an unknown number of Jewish prisoners who were transferred to Dautmergen in the middle of February 1945.

There were initially 50 to 60 guards; 24 were from a former Russian prisoner-of-war (POW) factory security unit that had been formed in Estonia.<sup>5</sup> At the end of 1944, 188 men guarded around 3,000 prisoners.<sup>6</sup> The camp inmates were mostly deployed at the Wüste 9 construction site in Schömberg. This factory commenced initial operation on March 11, 1945.<sup>7</sup>

According to a list composed after the end of the war but that starts on November 1944, 1,468 men died in the Dautmergen concentration camp.<sup>8</sup> Among the victims (so far as is known) were 356 Jews.<sup>9</sup> The total number of victims is not known, as sick prisoners were shunted off to death camps where most did not survive. On November 9, 1944, 500 prisoners were transferred to the Vaihingen/Enz concentration camp. The first of these died two days later.<sup>10</sup>

SS-Hauptscharführer Liskén was the camp commander from the beginning of October 1944, having been transferred a few months previous from the Territorial Guardsmen (Landeschütze) to the SS. His successor, Braunwarth, also came from a Landeschütze unit.<sup>11</sup>

The last camp commander, SS-Unterscharführer Erwin Dold, took over the leadership of the camp at the beginning of March 1945.<sup>12</sup> The 24-year-old Luftwaffe noncommissioned officer had previously been camp commander at the Haslach concentration camp and is probably the only camp commander who tried to improve the conditions in the camp. He obtained building material, improved barracks and sanitary conditions, and obtained additional food from the black market. Survivors have described Dold as the “Angel of Dautmergen”<sup>13</sup> and as a “great moral support.”<sup>14</sup>

SS-Unterscharführer Stefan Kruth, who arrived at the end of August 1944 at Dautmergen via the concentration camps Neuengamme, Lublin-Majdanek, Radom, and Vaihingen/Enz, was at first in charge of the camp office and later became the Rapportführer. Kruth, who had the nickname “hare” or “Hase,” because he was constantly hunting the prisoners, engaged in systematic mistreatment of the Jewish prisoners. Survivors have described him as the “prisoners’ nightmare” and as a “prototype sadist.”<sup>15</sup>



Kruth and Hofmann (commandant of the Natzweiler/Bisingen subcamp) implemented a delousing action in January 1945 that resulted in many victims. The prisoners, including many seriously ill, were forced to bathe in cold water and run back to the camp through the snow either naked or with a minimum of clothing.<sup>16</sup> Kruth, Hofmann, and Wurth ordered the hanging of an unknown prisoner and the shooting of 22 prisoners on April 7, 1945, who had been brought to Dautmergen for their execution. Dold refused to assemble the execution squad. Finally, Wurth led the execution. Among the victims were 20 Russian officers and 2 German clergymen.<sup>17</sup>

Prisoner-functionaries also mistreated prisoners: the feared Polish camp elder and Kapo and his successor, a German prisoner, as well as another Polish Kapo and a young Jewish block elder were all abusive to prisoners.<sup>18</sup>

Dold, the only SS member to face trial, was acquitted by a French military court in Rastatt in 1947 on the evidence provided by survivors. The camp elder and a Kapo were sentenced to death; the Jewish block elder was sentenced to life imprisonment. Six other SS members received the death sentence; there were two life sentences; and two received prison terms of 20 years. An SS member was sentenced to 10 years, two to 5 years, and one to 1 year in prison.<sup>19</sup>

At the trial at the Hechingen Schwurgericht (Court of Assizes) in 1966, the court sentenced Rapportführer Kruth to 12 years in prison in a penitentiary for 2 counts of attempted murder. He had originally been charged on 129 counts of murder and 23 counts of accessory to murder.<sup>20</sup> The court took into account that Kruth “since then had not offended” and that “as a Volksdeutsche he was proud to be serving in the SS.”<sup>21</sup> Hofmann was acquitted of all charges for crimes committed in the Dautmergen concentration camp.<sup>22</sup> On appeal, the Schwurgericht Ulm reduced Kruth’s sentence to 6 years.<sup>23</sup>

**SOURCES** Information on the Dautmergen concentration camp is to be found in a variety of sources. For example, Immo Opfermann, *Das Unternehmen Wüste. Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager entlang der Bahnlinie Tübingen-Rottweil 1944/45* (Tübingen: Schömborg, 1997); and Michael Grandt, *Unternehmen Wüste. Hitlers letzte Hoffnung. Das NS-Ölschieferprogramm auf der Schwäbischen Alb* (Tübingen: Silberburg Verlag, 2002). Thomas Seiterich-Kreuzkamp has written an essay on the Dautmergen camp commander, “Der Fall Erwin Dold,” in *Widerstand gegen die Judenverfolgung*, ed. Michael Kissener (Konstanz: Universitätsverlag, 1996), pp. 261–283. Johannes Winter is working on Dold’s life and has published an article in the *FASz*, “KZ-Kommandant und Lebensretter,” October 24, 2004.

Floris B. Bakels has written exhaustively about time in the Dautmergen concentration camp in *Nacht und Nebel. Der Bericht eines holländischen Christen aus deutschen Gefängnissen und Konzentrationslagern* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979). Norwegian Helge Norseth wrote about the Dautmergen camp in his autobiography *Gefangen und doch frei* (Stuttgart: Neuhausen, 1995).

The largest source on the Dautmergen concentration

camp is to be found in the StA-L (Akten der Ermittlungsverfahren und Prozessakten). A few survivors’ reports as well as prisoner lists are held in YVA (including a list of Jewish victims), in the NARA, as well as in the ANFP. In the AOC, there are files on the mass grave, the exhumation after 1945, and the shale oil project. In the StA-S, there are the files of the Kreisernährungsamt, which provide detail on the camp troops.

Christine Glauning  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Tägliche Stärkemeldungen für das KZ Dautmergen im Februar 1945, February 28, 1945, in StA-S Wü 65/4 Bd. 2, 1416.

2. Anlagen zum Schutzhaftlagerrapport des KZ Natzweiler vom September 30, 1944, October 14, 1944, October 31, 1944, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1312, Bl. 219–223. Verschiedene Dokumente über den Transport von 1000 Juden (einschliesslich Transportliste), in AMS, I-IIIC-3. Urteil Hechinger Prozess, March 18, 1966, S. 54, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1236. Namensliste der von Vaihingen nach Dautmergen überstellten 250 Häftlinge, November 8, 1944, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1312, Bl. 204–208.

3. Nummernbuch 6 des KZ Natzweiler, in ANFP, 72 AJ 2171. Transportliste Buchenwald—“Wüste,” December 19, 1944, in NARA, Target 0011614-0011885.

4. Zugangsliste Buchenwald nach Dautmergen, March 30, 1945, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1312, Bl. 200–202.

5. Urteil Hechinger Prozess, S. 58.

6. Schreiben 8. SS. Totenkopfsturmbann KL Natzweiler/Dautmergen an das Ernährungsamt Balingen, December 7, 1944, in StASIG, Wü 65/4 Bd. 2, Nr. 1416.

7. Bericht über das Unternehmen “Wüste,” Februar–März 1946, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1250, Bl. 2712–2716.

8. Schaubild der Opfer der KZ Dautmergen und Schömborg, nach 1945, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1250, Bl. 2859.

9. Liste der im KZ Dautmergen gestorbenen Juden, in YV, M-1 DN/53.

10. Namensliste der 500 aus dem KZ Dautmergen in das KZ Vaihingen am November 9, 1944, überstellten Häftlinge und der 40 aus Dautmergen nach Vaihingen am November 20, 1944, 40 überstellten Häftlinge, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1312, Bl. 200–202. Liste der Opfer des Konzentrationslagers Wiesengrund bei Vaihingen an der Enz (Nachkriegsaufstellung), in ASt-Va/E. Namensliste der von Dautmergen nach Dachau überstellten arbeitsunfähigen 973 Häftlinge, April 7, 1945, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1312, Bl. 6–24. Namensliste der von Dautmergen nach Dachau überstellten arbeitsunfähigen 101 Häftlinge, April 13, 1945, in *ibid.*, Bl. 25–26.

11. Schreiben SS-Aussenkommando Dautmergen an SS-Hauptscharführer Hubert Liskien, October 5, 1944, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1346, Bl. 2. Vernehmung Liskien durch das Landgericht Hechingen, July 13, 1960, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1244, Bl. 1541–1544.

12. Urteil Hechinger Prozess, S. 57.

13. Bericht des Überlebenden Stanislaw Gladyszek in [www.laehnemann.de/auschwitz/seite16-1.htm](http://www.laehnemann.de/auschwitz/seite16-1.htm).



14. Urteil Rastatter Prozess, February 1, 1947, cited in Michael Grandt, *Unternehmen Wüste. Hitlers letzte Hoffnung. Das NS-Ölschieferprogramm auf der Schwäbischen Alb* (Tübingen: Silberburg Verlag, 2002), pp. 181–204, 198.

15. Anklageschrift Hechinger Prozess, August 1, 1963, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1236, S. 56–60. Urteil Hechinger Prozess, S. 59.

16. Urteil Hechinger Prozess, S. 173–174.

17. Urteil Hechinger Prozess, S. 203–208. Anklageschrift Hechinger Prozess, S. 131–145.

18. Urteil Rastatter Prozess, February 27, 1947. Urteil Hechinger Prozess, S. 89–90. Floris B. Bakels, *Nacht und Nebel. Der Bericht eines holländischen Christen aus deutschen Gefängnissen und Konzentrationslagern* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979), p. 269.

19. Urteil Rastatter Prozess, February 1, 1947, cited in Grandt, *Wüste*, pp. 181–204.

20. Anklageschrift Hechinger Prozess, S. 6f.

21. Urteil Hechinger Prozess, S. 3, 141.

22. Ibid., S. 3.

23. Urteil des Schwurgerichts Ulm in der Strafsache gegen Kruth und Schnabel, September 8, 1969 (rechtskräftig bezüglich Kruth am May 1, 1970), in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1237, S. 2.

## DERNAU AN DER AHR [AKA REBSTOCK]

There were several railway tunnels and caverns in the Ahrtal Valley that were of interest to the Reich for the construction of underground munitions plants, especially toward the end of the war. Among other things, the Luftwaffe leadership planned to assemble the V-1 rockets there in underground facilities. One of the participating companies was Volkswagen (VW).

The so-called Rebstock subcamp in Dernau an der Ahr consisted of a number of different camp types and categories. The camp held military internees, forced laborers, German and foreign laborers, and also concentration camp prisoners. Wolfgang Gückelhorn estimates the percentage of concentration camp prisoners in the Rebstock camp was around 20 percent; the camps had been in existence long before the first concentration camp prisoners arrived (that probably took place in 1944) and held prisoners of a number of nationalities: Germans, Poles, Russians, French, Czechs, Hungarians, Italians, Spanish, Dutch, Yugoslavs, and one Canadian flyer.

It is difficult to follow the trail of the Natzweiler subcamp in the Dernau camp complex. Most research works focus on the Dernau camp, but they inadequately differentiate its parts according to main camp. In Dernau, there was also a significant Buchenwald subcamp and a concentration camp for prisoners from the Amersfoort concentration camp.

The Natzweiler/Dernau subcamp originally probably consisted of prisoners from the Natzweiler/Thil subcamp, who in August 1944 were brought to Dernau for construction work. They were followed at the beginning of September by a group of 300 Jewish specialists to work in an underground iron ore mine in Tiercelet that would be used to assemble the V-1.

However, the machines and tools remained in the Lothringen town of Tiercelet, and the training of these prisoners could not be used in Dernau. It is likely that in the first two to three weeks of their stay in Dernau they were used in general construction work in the tunnels before they were transported to Mittelbau/Nordhausen in September 1944, when plans for armaments production in Ahrtal were abandoned in the face of the incessant bombardments.

Details on work and living conditions in the Natzweiler subcamp cannot be filtered out from the general information on the Dernau camp complex. The same applies for the prisoners' death rate. The Natzweiler subcamp in Dernau is not referred to in the published International Tracing Service (ITS) works, nor was it the subject of investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL).

**SOURCES** Wolfgang Gückelhorn describes production, camp categories, and the history of Dernau in his *Lager Rebstock. Geheimer Rüstungsbetrieb in Eisenbahntunnels der Eifel für V2-Bodenanlagen 1943–44* (Aachen: Helios-Verlag, 2002), whereas Uli Jungbluth in his *Wunderwaffen im KZ "Rebstock." Zwangsarbeit in den Lagern "Rebstock" in Dernau/Rheinland/Pfalz und Artern/Thüringen im Dienste der V-Waffen* (Briedel: Rhein-Mosel-Verlag, 2000) focuses on the Dernau camps and their later relocation into Thüringen.

General documents on the Dernau camp and its armaments production—most without any specific reference to the Natzweiler subcamp—are held in various archives. The BA-MA holds the following relevant collections: RW 21/34-7, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9; RH 8/1265 and 1267; RH 26/1022 and 1023. The DMM holds documents on Dernau in the collections GD 639.5.13, GD 639.5.18, GD 639.5.21, and GD 639.51.6, Folder 3226 b. At NARA, collection RG 243 is relevant. The "Beschreibung der unterirdischen Tätigkeiten bei Dernau/Marienthal, Deutschland: Aufklärungsbericht Nr. U.16" at PRO, Kew Richmond, Surrey AIR 20/ 5857 (10 pp.), is based on reconnaissance photos taken by the Royal Air Force between the summer and the end of 1944. It holds information on the camp, its geography, geology, size, railway facilities, road connections, facilities, water, and accommodation for the laborers, but there is no specific mention of the Natzweiler subcamp.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## DORMETTINGEN

The Dormettingen concentration camp was the last "Wüste"-Lager to be opened. It was ready at Christmas 1944, but it was only at the end of February–beginning of March 1945 that the first prisoners arrived.<sup>1</sup> According to the mayor of Dormettingen, the number of prisoners in the camp was 3,000,<sup>2</sup> but this number cannot be confirmed. On September 20, 1944, the commander of the Stutthof concentration camp, Hoppe, suspected that the planned transport of 3,000 prisoners to Dormettingen was a mistake.<sup>3</sup> According to investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL), around 500 prisoners were ultimately interned in

Dormettingen.<sup>4</sup> According to statements by two SS men, the camp functioned as a camp for sick prisoners from Bisingen and Dautmergen.<sup>5</sup>

Three slate oil plants were planned for Dormettingen (Wüste 6–8). Only the Wüste-Werk began operation before the war, but it was not fully commissioned. Work on Wüste 6 and 7 ceased at the beginning of March 1945.<sup>6</sup> The camp commander was at first SS-Unterscharführer Fritz Bauer, until he was replaced, probably at the beginning of April 1945, by the Rapportführer and deputy commander of the Bisingen concentration camp, Franz Ehrmanntraut.<sup>7</sup>

The Dormettingen register of deaths records the death of 16 prisoners. The victims were probably buried in Dautmergen.<sup>8</sup> Among the dead were 6 prisoners who attempted to escape after the first air raid on the slate oil plant at the end of March or beginning of April 1945; 2 of them, Hungarian Jews, hid in the house of a leading Dormettingen National Socialist. The camp commander, Ehrmanntraut, was in the house at the time. When he discovered the prisoners in the cellar, he shot them. The other prisoners were held in rooms in the local castle and were probably also shot.<sup>9</sup> The Schömberg gendarmerie daily logbook (*Geschäftstagebuch*) notes the escape of Nikolai Kierew from Dormettingen, his capture, and his “departure” on April 5, 1945, to the Oberndorf Gestapo.<sup>10</sup> Nothing is known of his fate.

The Catholic priest in Dormettingen reported after 1945 that the security at the camp shortly before the end of the war was not tight and that the prisoners entered the village. He visited several times a clergyman from Lothringen who was held in the camp. Directions by the camp commander that during religious services the local population should be told not to give food to the prisoners were ignored by him.<sup>11</sup> The Dormettingen concentration camp was evacuated in April 1945. Between April 6 and 13, 1945, 428 prisoners were evacuated to Dachau. The remainder most probably set forth on a death march. The number of victims is not known.<sup>12</sup>

The Dormettingen concentration camp is anchored less in the collective consciousness of the population than a private, “wild” concentration camp established after the end of the war. This camp was established by former concentration camp prisoners and forced laborers who worked at the Deutsche Ölschieferforschungsgesellschaft (German Oil Shale Research Association, DÖLF) in Schömberg. The camp was to intern perpetrators from the local Dormettingen concentration camp and local National Socialist bigwigs. They were to be punished here. However, most of the SS at the Dormettingen concentration camp had long gone. Around 40 Germans from Dormettingen and its surrounding area were arbitrarily imprisoned. Among them were a few women who were raped by the guards. At least 16 people were mistreated and died. Among them was an Organisation Todt (OT) construction leader, the former Ortsgruppenleiter in Dotternhausen, the mayor of Dotternhausen, an SS man, and a builder from Metzingen who had mistreated prisoners at the Schömberg concentration camp. Among these perpetrators was the local Dotternhausen commander installed by the French mil-

itary government, Alfons Scheerer (also known as Deletre or de Laitre). A Frenchman, he had apparently worked during the National Socialist period for the SD. Also responsible for mistreating the prisoners was a Czech who during the war had worked for a Czech OT labor detachment as well as an engineer and master mechanic Helmer-Sandmann, who had worked for DÖLF in Schömberg.<sup>13</sup>

The French military tribunal in Rastatt sentenced Ehrmanntraut on May 29, 1947, to death for the murder of the two Jewish prisoners who escaped from the Dormettingen concentration camp (as well as for other crimes committed in the Bisingen concentration camp). His sentence was finally commuted to 20 years' imprisonment, and he was released from prison in 1962. Investigations by the Stuttgart state prosecutor into Ehrmanntraut were temporarily halted as the result of a German-French treaty on the exchange of prisoners and were permanently halted after his death in 1974.<sup>14</sup> In 1951, the Rottweil Schwurgericht (Court of Assizes), after extensive investigations, sentenced the person most responsible for the wild camp in Dormettingen, Helmer-Sandmann, to 15 years' imprisonment in a penitentiary.<sup>15</sup>

**SOURCES** There has been little research on the Dormettingen concentration camp. Michael Grandt has devoted part of his book *Unternehmen Wüste: Hitlers letzte Hoffnung: Das NS-Ölschieferprogramm auf der Schwäbischen Alb* (Tübingen: Silberburg-Verlag, 2002) to the camp.

Most information on this subcamp is to be found in the investigation and trial files held in the StA-L (on the camp commander). A few files, mostly on the topic of shale oil, are held in the AOC, Colmar, as well as the StA-S. In Sigmaringen there are the investigation files (Verfahren der Staatsanwaltschaft Rottweil) regarding the time of the wild camp.

Christine Glauning  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Schlussvermerk ZdL, October 23, 1970, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 872, Bl. 212–216.
2. Charnier de Schömberg, 1947, S. 24, in AOC, AP/PD, c. 1304, p 15 bis, d. 5.
3. Telegramm Hoppe an das SS-Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt, Amtsgruppe D, September 20, 1944, in AMS, I-IIC-3.
4. Schlussvermerk ZdL, October 23, 1970, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 872, Bl. 212–216.
5. Vernehmung Franz Hofmann durch die Staatsanwaltschaft Hechingen, May 22, 1959, in StASIG, Ho 400 Bd. 2, Nr. 588. Vernehmung Franz Ehrmanntraut durch die Kriminalpolizei, September 11, 1968, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 872, Bl. 67–68.
6. Schreiben Pohl an Himmler, March 29, 1945, in BA-BL, NS 3/823.
7. Vernehmung Franz Ehrmanntraut vor dem Cour d'Appel (Oberlandesgericht) in Caen, January 12, 1961, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1248, Bl. 2335–2338. Schlussvermerk ZdL, October 23, 1970.

8. Bericht des Kriminalkommissariats Hechingen, June 8, 1959, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 1239, Bl. 428–433.

9. Mappe Strafsache der Staatsanwaltschaft Hechingen gegen Ehrmanntraut wegen Mordes im KZ Dormettingen, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 347. Verfahren gegen Ehrmanntraut wegen Verbrechen im KZ Dormettingen, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 872.

10. Original in StALB, EL 48/2 II, Bü 114.

11. Vernehmung Johannes Haug, February 12, 1968, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 872, Bl. 34.

12. Schreiben ITS Arolsen an ZdL, July 6, 1970 (Transportliste in Arolsen), in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 872, Bl. 97.

13. Verfahren der Staatsanwaltschaft Rottweil gegen Franz Helmer-Sandmann, 1950/51, in StASIG, Wü 29/2 Bd. 2, Acc. 9/1985, Nr. 1048.

14. Einstellungsverfügungen der Staatsanwaltschaft Stuttgart vom November 16, 1970, und November 5, 1974, in StALB, EL 317 III, Bü 872.

15. Urteil, October 6, 1951, in StASIG, Wü 29/2 Bd. 2, Acc. 9/1985, Nr. 1048.

## ECHTERDINGEN

The Echterdingen camp was founded in November 1944 as a subcamp of Natzweiler, under the supervision of the Organisation Todt (OT)-Bauleitung Esslingen am Neckar. On September 23, 1944, the OT required 600 workers from Oranienburg to work on the military airport; at the beginning of October, a member of the Kommandanturstab Natzweiler visited Echterdingen (a town of 3,054 inhabitants in 1939) in order to prepare for the establishment of the camp. The whole administration of the camp was in the hands of the SS; an SS-Untersturmführer who had been active in Natzweiler since January 1942 and later became block leader (Blockführer) was appointed to oversee the guards; he finished the war as head of the women's camp Geislingen an der Steige. All the other guards belonged to the German air force.

As early as November 22, an inmate died in Echterdingen. His death was registered at the Bernhäuser city hall, the neighboring town, which indicates that inmates arrived very shortly after the OT had requisitioned them. Six days later, the first eight inmates were incinerated in the Esslinger crematorium, eight Jews. The inmates arrived from Oranienburg but also from the Konzentrationslager (KZ) Stutthof near Danzig, in one single transport. Some were transported in ordinary passenger trains that split at the Stuttgart train station between Echterdingen and Spaichingen, another Natzweiler subcamp.

Before the arrival of the Jewish inmates from Oranienburg, foreign workers, mostly East European prisoners of war (POWs), had already worked on the airport compound and also on the surrounding farms. They lived in the empty hangar, as the planes were no longer kept in it because of the Allied air attacks. They were provided with minimum furniture, beds, coal heating, and even cupboards and with makeshift quarters for doctors and the camp elder (Lagerältester). Four

watchtowers were built to guard the prisoners and were surrounded by a nonelectrified fence. A kitchen barrack and an OT office were built outside the camp. Some 600 inmates, all male Jews, were registered under Natzweiler numbers 42904 to 43503. The main camp kept the records of the death registry.

The camp was widely self-administrated, and four inmates worked in the kitchen. There were three doctors among the inmates. All of the prisoners had been registered for labor on the transport list, most as officially unskilled manual workers. The transport list kept in the Arolsen archives shows that the inmates were of different nationalities, including Dutch, Italian, Lithuanian, Hungarian, Estonian, Belgian, and Russian. The largest number came from Poland; some inmates were registered as Spaniards, others as political Jews (*politische Juden*) who were in fact German. Many of the inmates arrived in Echterdingen in poor health, sick and undernourished. They received no food during the transport to Stuttgart. While the conditions of living in the new camp were much better than in Stutthof or Oranienburg, the food supplies remained insufficient. No evidence of ill treatment in Echterdingen is documented due to the composition of the guards and of the prisoner administration; the Lagerältester, a Polish Jew named Jakob, behaved quite decently toward his fellow prisoners. The death rate in Echterdingen was high, though still below many other concentration camps. A maximum of 111 inmates perished of the 600 who arrived in Echterdingen: 8 in November 1944, 49 in December, and 54 in January 1945. The first 19 bodies were burned in the Esslingen crematorium, and the ashes were transported to the Jewish section of the Ebershalden cemetery. The cremations had to be stopped for lack of adequate facilities, and the bodies were then buried in two mass graves in the communal forest, about 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) from the camp. In January 1945, a typhus epidemic raged through the camp. The deaths were also registered in a special volume at the city hall, following the instruction of the mayor, but a secretary of the municipality burned it in April 1945 when French troops entered the village.

Doctors treated the ill in the camp. One to three doctors worked at any given time, among them a Doctor Goldberg from Kraków. The German air force, the OT and the Esslinger hospital provided a small amount of medicine.

The inmates had four work assignments: the construction of a road between the airport and the neighboring motorway, so that the planes could be moved to them for takeoff; the camouflaging of planes to protect them from air raids; the cleaning of the airport runways after air attacks; and the mining of rock from a quarry. The quarry was located 6 kilometers away (3.7 miles) from the Echterdingen camp, between Bernhausen and Sielmingen. It belonged to the Bernhausen municipality as well as to several private individuals and had been idle before the war. German civilians worked alongside the inmates, probably as skilled workers. The SS received 6 Reichsmark (RM) a day per skilled worker and 4 RM per unskilled worker.



All contacts between the inmates and the civilian population were strictly forbidden. Nonetheless, the senior inmate met frequently with the mayor of the village, as the municipality was in charge of providing the ration cards for the inmates. Some inhabitants gave food to Jews on their way to work, even though this was forbidden by the head of the camp.

The SS administration dismantled the Echterdingen subcamp at the end of January 1945, following the typhus epidemic. At that time, air raids on the airport were frequent, and the village was almost entirely destroyed. Two transports of 50 men each left the camp on January 9 and 10 and eventually reached the Natzweiler/Vaihingen subcamp. On January 21, a transport of 12 train cars left the Echterdingen train station, taking the remaining inmates to Ohrdruf, a subcamp of Buchenwald. These cars were heated; the transport bore the number 6782554 and took two days to reach its final destination. A fourth transport left Echterdingen, also on January 21; 59 men were sent to Celle/Hannover. They might possibly have arrived in Bergen-Belsen, but their fate remains unknown.

After the war, American forces ordered the bodies of the deceased inmates to be reburied in the Jewish section of the Esslingen cemetery. A ceremony was held there in October 1945. The American air force occupied the airport and took over the still-standing hangar that had housed the inmates.

**SOURCES** The most complete survey, using many interviews with survivors and bystanders, is Barbara Keuerleber-Siegle, "Das Lager Echterdingen," in *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegsführung. Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*, ed. Herwart Vorländer (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978). The Echterdingen camp is also mentioned in Christine Grabinger, *Bernhausen, Ortsgeschichte* (Bernhausen: Gemeindeverwaltung, 1974), p. 344. A book describes the bombings of Echterdingen, with many pictures of the airport, but does not mention the subcamp: Gerhard Schlecht, *Ein Dorf am Rande des Abgrunds, Echterdingen 1939–1945. Eine Dokumentation von Kriegereignissen in Echterdingen von 1939–1945* (Stuttgart: Karl Scharr, 1993).

Documents on the camp can be found at ITS, Hänge-mappe Akdo Echterdingen, and at BA-L (AZ. IV 419 AR 1775/67).

Jean-Marc Dreyfus

## ELLWANGEN

A Natzweiler concentration camp for male prisoners was located in the Württemberg town of Ellwangen on Stettin Strasse. The camp is mentioned for the first time in the Natzweiler files on June 28, 1943. Other sources refer to the date that it is first recorded as June 18, 1943. Herwart Vorländer's work states that the camp was probably completed in August 1943 and that it commenced operation then. The number of prisoners exploited in Ellwangen is unclear: in September 1943, it was probably 50, and another 50 arrived at the end of 1944. In March 1945, there were 102 prisoners in the camp,

mostly foreigners. There were very few German prisoners. All the prisoners were accommodated in barracks.

The men worked for the SS-Grenadier-Ersatz-Ausbildungs Bataillon 5 (Grenadier Replacement Training Battalion 5) in the Neunheim quarry, the charcoal-fueled power station (*Holzkohlemeilern*) in Schwabsberg, where they produced charcoal for carburetors. They constructed bunkers, roads, and dwellings; repaired military barracks; and did other work in the barracks. Julius Schätzle states that five prisoners died in the Ellwangen camp.

According to an official report, the camp was evacuated on April 6, 1945 (following Gudrun Schwarz) via Hessental to Dachau (other sources conclude that the prisoners were sent to Dachau/München-Allach). The first night of the prisoners' evacuation march was spent in their former work site, the Neunheim quarry. Around 30 of the prisoners lost their lives during the night. The survivors finally joined prisoners from the Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental subcamp on the Hessental death march, reaching Dachau/München-Allach sometime between April 19 and 21.

**SOURCES** The Ellwangen subcamp is listed in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), 1:201. A short description of the camp, some details of which have been used in this essay and which differ from the account in the ITS, is to be found in Herwart Vorländer, ed., *NS Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegsführung. Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des KL Natzweiler/Elsass*. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg, Reihe B: Forschungen, 91. Band (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer-Verlag, 1978), p. 11. The camp is also mentioned in *Heimatgeschichtliche Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstands und der Verfolgung 1933–1945, Baden-Württemberg I, Regierungsbezirke Karlsruhe und Stuttgart*, vol. 5 (Frankfurt am Main: Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand, 1991).

Julius Schätzle lists Ellwangen in his monograph *Stationen zur Hölle: Konzentrationslager in Baden und Württemberg 1933 bis 1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Bibliothek des Widerstandes, Röderberg-Verlag GmbH, 1980), p. 64. Gudrun Schwarz also mentions the camp in *Die nationalsozialistischen Lager* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus-Verlag, 1990), p. 180.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## ERZINGEN

The SS-Deutsche Schieferöl (German Shale Oil) GmbH, founded on May 2, 1944, part of the Amtsgruppe (Office Group) W des SS-Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt (SS-Business Administration Main Office) and a subsidiary of the SS economic enterprise Deutsche Wirtschaftsbetriebe (German Business Enterprises) GmbH, was responsible for the construction of a factory to process shale oil in Erzingen. The SS wanted to keep open all possible options for the production of oil so that it would be in control of the ever-decreasing supplies. Russian prisoners of war (POWs) were to



provide the labor, and the SS established a camp called Hungerberg for them in Erzingen. The local population called it the Russian camp (*Russenlager*). The factory was to be operational by May 1945.

The SS-Schieferöl and its primitive attempts to extract oil from shale using a charcoal-fired power station became part of Unternehmen Wüste. On May 30, 1944, the Arbeitsstab Geilenberg began construction of Wüste 4 and Wüste 5 in Erzingen. The Erzingen concentration camp was completed on May 22, 1944. It was situated opposite the railway station. The first prisoners arrived a month later.

Although the SS-Schieferöl was officially established in May (meaning that it was then entered into the *Handelsregister*), equipment was being transported by rail to Erzingen from March 1944. A list prepared by the company Ernst König, Magdeburg, which was involved in the construction, makes this clear.

The subcamp was constructed by the 20 prisoners from the Schömberg concentration camp, including Julien Hagenbourger, who later was prisoner recorder (*Häftlingsschreiber*) in the concentration camps at Erzingen and Schörzingen. They were brought each day by rail to Erzingen from Schömberg: construction took two months, from March to the end of April, taking place during the period that materials were supplied by the König company.<sup>1</sup> The barracks were prefabricated, and the Organisation Todt (OT) was the project manager. Initially, the newly constructed barracks held the work detachments, and later Erzingen became a camp for political prisoners. It existed from May 22, 1944, to April 17, 1945 (331 days). It was the fourth of the seven Wüste camps and was, like the main camp, a *Nacht-und-Nebel* Lager; its prisoners were mainly resistance fighters from the German-occupied states of Western and Northern Europe. The first 200 prisoners arrived in Erzingen on June 22, 1944. In the *Natzweiler Nummernbuch*, the Erzingen concentration camp was abbreviated with the letter *E*, which conforms to the Dutch camp elder Jan Albertus Cleton's prisoner population book (*Häftlingsbestandsbuch*), containing a list of transports. Some 125 prisoners from the transport on August 28, 1944, remained in Erzingen. The highest number of prisoners in the camp was 339, but numbers were reduced as prisoners were transferred to other camps. On September 26, 1944, the camp reached its "ideal" number of 200 prisoners, the number of the first transport. At the beginning of January 1945, the numbers increased for a time to 245. There were two transports from Erzingen to Dachau on April 12, 1945 (33 prisoners) and on April 17 (126 prisoners), so that at the camp's end there were 159 prisoners.

The camp consisted of three large barracks in which the prisoners lived, as did the guards, who were recruited from SS ethnic Germans and Luftwaffe members. There were also a kitchen and a draftsman's office. The largest barracks was divided in two: the barbed-wire fence that surrounded the camp went straight up to the walls of this barracks so that the camp was passable both from the "outside" and the "inside" of the camp: a prisoner drawing "vom 11.XI." refers to "here in the

shadows" (*Hier im Schatten*), "there in the light" (*dort im Lichte*), and both areas are separated by a rose, borne by a prisoner's hand. Erzingen was an extremely unusual concentration camp, "aussergewöhnliches KZ," conspicuous from the many other barracks of the OT by its barbed-wire fence and the little guard's house and the camp's entry. Nevertheless, the guards' tower and roll-call square suggested a concentration camp. The Kommandoführer/Lagerkommandant was SS-Oberscharführer Paul Olesch, who, according to Hagenbourger, was replaced by SS-Oberscharführer Haas. The deputy was SS-Oberscharführer Rühling. SS-Hauptsturmführer Jakobi is also named as camp leader (*Lagerleiter*). He was the Chef, Sonderbeauftragter des Wirtschaftshauptamtes Berlin and operational manager (*Betriebsführer*) of the SS-Deutsche Schieferöl GmbH.

The accused tried in the postwar trial in Rastatt also included SS-Hauptscharführer Karl Rieflin; SS-Aufseher Anton Geisel, nicknamed by the prisoners as "White Glove" (*weisse Handschube*); and Simon Kellinger, the "Machine Pistol" (*Maschinenpistole*). Paul Marek, König's head foreman, also played a special role at the camp. He was convicted with the other accused in Rastatt: he had the nickname "Croquignole" (or *Nasenstüber*).

The SS lived in the village of Erzingen, as did Marek and the other mine inspectors (*Schachtmeister*). The Erzingen concentration camp is an example of how the SS hierarchical structures meshed with those of the OT and civilian firms who did the construction work: here were the "anarchical gray zones" where the Erzingen prisoners could profit.

The prisoner hierarchy (*Häftlingshierarchie*) included the prisoner-functionaries (*Funktionshäftlinge*) of the camp, including Dr. Léon Bouthbien, who looked after the prisoners as well as the guards. "Thanks to the French prisoner doctor . . . the sick were able to get indispensable care," in reference to the small infirmary in the Erzingen concentration camp.<sup>2</sup> The block elder (*Blockältester*) was Bernhardus Hemmer, a Dutchman, as was camp elder (*Lagerältester*) Jan A. Cleton. All three received birthday wishes in the form of cards from their fellow prisoners in 1944–1945. This reveals the unusual character of the Erzingen camp, as the birthday cards were a sign of resistance against the National Socialist regime, which wanted to destroy the *Nacht-und-Nebel* prisoners. The birthday cards for Cleton's thirty-first birthday on December 15, 1944, were from prisoners of each nationality in the camp—Norwegians, French, Belgians, and Dutch. This was the composition of the Erzingen camp and is confirmed by the *Häftlingsbestandsbuch*.<sup>3</sup>

There was also a close connection between the prisoners and the civilian employees, as shown in the case of Dr. Bouthbien and Frau Ziebarth. For Christmas 1944, she organized "cakes" that Bouthbien thanked her for with the following note: "I am very much touched that Saint Nicholas did not forget us—and I rejoice at the fine presents! Once again I thank you—Leon."<sup>4</sup> Ziebarth also gave the prisoners a work by Goethe, and in return, Isaak Wirschup, the only Jew in the camp, drew a portrait of her and Cleton; the connection was very strong.<sup>5</sup> All of them, including the SS (it is said that

Olesch was “bearable when he was drunk”), prevented the transfer of Wirschup to Berlin, as he was “urgently needed” in Erzingen.<sup>6</sup>

There were a few prisoners who died. One event makes it clear that this had something to do with the work the prisoners were forced to do. Cleton records the deadly accident (*Unval*) of the Belgian Gastwirt Marcel Groevoet, born on August 8, 1909, prisoner number 17392, on “30–11–44.” Paul Marek had to answer for this “accident” after the war in the Rastatt Trials, as he was accused of deliberately loosening the last screw while pipes were being unloaded at the Erzingen railway station. This could not be proven. Marek, as a civilian mine inspector, supervised small groups of prisoners who worked on the supplies for Erzingen including unloading railway wagons, heavy labor for which there were additional rations. Erzingen concentration camp prisoners worked on the construction sites of the Wüste-Werke 4 and 5, at other Wüste construction sites that they reached by traveling by rail, and on building a light field railway that would connect the “Abbaufeld” and “Kondensation.”

The prisoners mined shale at the Wüste 4 and 5 construction sites of the Deutsche Bergwerks- und Hüttenbau Gesellschaft (DBHG); worked the shale oil ovens run by the Bossert company; and dug caverns, as the prisoners had to help the Erzingen villagers construct air-raid shelters, which are today remembered by the villagers as “Jakobibau,” in memory of the leader (Gefolgschaftsführer) of the operation, Jakobi.

**SOURCES** The basis for this essay is the author’s third brochure for the exhibition (after Balingen and Rottweil): *Das Unternehmen “Wüste” Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager entlang der Bahnlinie Tübingen-Rottweil 1944/45. Leitfaden und Materialien zur Ausstellung in der ehemaligen Baracke auf dem Gelände des Oberschulamtes Tübingen 7. Mai–31. Juli 1997* (Schömborg: Opfermann, 2000) and Michael Grant’s *Unternehmen “Wüste”—Hitlers letzte Hoffnung* (Tübingen: Silberburg-Verlag, 2002).

There are numerous archival sources on the Erzingen concentration camp in the ASt-Bal. The estate of Frau Ingeborg Ziebarth, who worked in the geological office and who had good contact with the prisoners, also provides a wealth of information.

The author possesses original documents relating to Erzingen, including the birthday cards prepared by the Nacht- und Nebel prisoners for Cleton’s thirty-first birthday.

The StA-S also contains numerous unpublished archival sources including postwar documents from the Zentralverwaltung der Württembergischen Ölschieferwerke and documents from the National Socialist period on the Wüste Project.

Immo Opfermann  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Julian Hagenbourger, *Aus schwerem Traum erwachen: Bericht des ehemaligen KZ-Häftlings Julien Hagenbourger, Lagerschreiber im Aussenlager Schörzingen mit der Natzweiler-Nummer 7244*, revised by Gerhard Lempp

(Deisslingen-Lauffen: Initiative Gedenkstätte Eckerwald, 1999), p. 29.

2. “Journal Officiel” vom April 15, 1947, cited in Immo Opfermann, *Das Unternehmen “Wüste.” Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager entlang der Bahnlinie Tübingen-Rottweil 1944/45. Leitfaden und Materialien zur Ausstellung in der ehemaligen Baracke auf dem Gelände des Oberschulamtes Tübingen 7. Mai–31. Juli 1997* (Schömborg: Opfermann, 2000), p. 102.

3. This card is displayed in the Natzweiler main camp.

4. A secret message in the estate of I. Ziebarth, Opfermann, “Wüste.”

5. Verbally by I. Ziebarth.

6. Ibid.

## FRANKFURT AM MAIN [AKA KATZBACH]

A Natzweiler subcamp was located in Frankfurt am Main in the Prussian province of Hessen-Nassau. According to concentration camp files, the subcamp was opened on August 22, 1944. The subcamp, which lasted for seven months, held 1,600 prisoners, many of whom were Poles. The prisoners mostly came from the Natzweiler, Dachau, and Buchenwald concentration camps. Many of them were in poor condition and suffered from tuberculosis. It is likely that very few survived the camp.

The prisoners worked at the Vereinigte Dente OTA (VDO, previously known as Heinrich Kleyer), Kleyer Strasse 45, Frankfurt am Main. They manufactured replacement parts for tanks and trucks, but they were also used within Frankfurt in cleanup operations after bombing raids. They were accompanied by SS guards as they were taken to and from work. The camp was cut off from the outside world. There are reports of frequent executions in the Adler factories where skilled tradesmen from Western Europe, laborers from Eastern Europe, prisoners of war (POWs), and Italian military internees (IMIs) all worked. All of them were forced workers.

There were still 474 prisoners in the camp in March 1945, many of whom were suffering from tuberculosis. On March 24–25, 1945, the prisoners were evacuated on foot to Gelnhausen, via Dörnigheim, and on to Hünefeld. More than 80 prisoners died on this death march. From Hünefeld the prisoners were sent on March 30 to the Buchenwald concentration camp, where many of them, because of their weakened condition, were murdered in the infirmary by lethal injection.

There are few witness statements on the subcamp and the prisoners’ treatment. Two of those statements were made in 1946 by a former employees’ spokesman and by the deputy director of the factory. There are said to have been investigations against the last managing director of the Adlerwerke, but they were stopped in 1949. It is claimed that after the liberation of the subcamp by U.S. forces, 516 urns, marked with wooden crosses and nameplates, were buried in the vicinity of the camp; however, the locations of these graves are no longer known.

**SOURCES** The ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1939–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979) refers to the Frankfurt am Main subcamp on p. 202 of volume 1. Some details on the camp and the prisoners are to be found in the article “Spurensicherung: Katzbach Frankfurt/Main” in Lothar Bembeneck, ed., *Hessen hinter Stacheldraht: Verdrängt und vergessen: KZs, Lager, Aussenkommandos* (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn Publishing House, 1984), p. 60.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## FROMMERN

At the war's unexpected reversal of fortunes in 1942, certain circles in the Wehrmacht remembered the Swabian shale oil rocks and commissioned geological investigations on the edge of the Albtrauf with the aim of securing a limited degree of self-sufficiency in oil production and so as not to be outdone by the SS, which planned a shale oil plant in Erzingen. Test wells were drilled in Frommern, Edingen, and Rosswangen. Frommern was chosen as the site for a factory that would extract oil from shale using the Lurgi-Schweitzer method.

Before the war, there had been planned a shale oil test plant at the Dotternhausen cement factory. In 1936, there were plans for eight shale oil-processing plants on the “Ölschieferplateau Schömberg-Dotternhausen,” geologically part of the Frommern location.

The Frommern concentration camp was located close to the Lias factory (one of the 11 facilities that processed oil shale and so loosely connected with Gruppe “Wüste”) because it was here that the concentration camp prisoners would work, just as they worked in the Wüste camps. The camp is unusual because it did not have a large number of prisoners: only 120. A “Forderungsnachweis Nr. 34/44 über den Häftlingseinsatz” dated June 1, 1944, and sent by SS-Obersturmführer Ehrmantraut to the Lias-Ölschiefer-Forschungsgesellschaft (Oil Shale Research Association) in Frommern, documents the origin of the prisoners who came from the Natzweiler main camp.<sup>1</sup> (The invoice differentiated between skilled and unskilled labors. It was for 11,933 Reichsmark [RM], less 1,704 RM costs for food [*Verpflegungskosten*]. It is here that the number 120 prisoners appears for special food costs on May 28, 1944, for Whitsuntide [*Pfingsten*]. From this, one can conclude that on this holy day the prisoners were given special rations.)

The prisoners were accommodated in barracks. A British aerial photograph from March 15, 1945, shows the number of barracks and their location. The Allies could not but see the quickly expanding construction site between the dividing line of the “Ohnra” and “Kohl” fields.<sup>2</sup>

The Frommern concentration camp functioned as a subcamp from March 1, 1944, to April 17, 1945. Its commander was Hartjenstein, the superior to the Forderungsnachweis signatory. On July 14, 1944, he arranged for 20 prisoners from the Frommern concentration camp to be transferred to Ebingen to remove unexploded enemy ordinance. This pro-

vides further proof that Frommern was administered by the Waffen-SS and the “KL Natzweiler Elsass” office.<sup>3</sup> In the concentration camp's *Nummernbuch*, which lists all the prisoners that were sent from the main camp to this camp, the Frommern concentration camp is abbreviated with a simple “F.”<sup>4</sup>

SS-Hauptscharführer Wilhelm Seith, born March 25, 1896, was the camp commander in Frommern. He headed the camp from March to December 1944. He arranged for the paint that gave the barracks a more friendly appearance, as one has “to be able to see from the outside that the barracks hold humans and not animals.”<sup>5</sup> His successor was either SS-Obersturmführer Wurth or Hauptscharführer Driziwicki: this is an indication of the personnel connections with the other concentration camps because Wurth administered Dautmergen and Bisingen as was revealed in the Hechinger trial.

Poles, Russians, French, Italians, Alsations, Croats, and Germans were used as laborers (*Hilfsarbeiter*). There were skilled workers, for example, three carpenters and two painters: the relationship between the two was about 2:1, as there were around 80 laborers and 40 skilled workers.<sup>6</sup> The skilled workers, as with those higher up the hierarchy, lived in private homes in Frommern.

The Frommern camp infrastructure resembled that of a large concentration camp: an SS squad of 20 to 28 men formed the guards, in part recruited from men from the nearby villages such as Weilstetten; there was an SS cook; and Fritz Böttiger managed the canteen, suggesting a separation between meals for the guards and the prisoners. There was medical care from two local Frommern doctors and later a camp doctor, a Polish prisoner. One of the three barracks was the infirmary, and there was a shower-bath that was adequate, according to eyewitnesses. There is nothing to suggest that there were executions in Frommern or that prisoners died there. It is possible that this had something to do with the camp's prisoner hierarchy. As a German prisoner, Wilhelm Kratt, a salesman in civilian life, born on March 21, 1905, in Trossingen, was for a long period of time the camp elder, Kapo, and camp scribe. His successor, the French prisoner Edmond Heiter from Forbach in Lothringen, was also probably able to prevent the worst in Frommern because of its small size.

Death certificates of the deceased in Frommern were signed by SS-Stabsarzt Dr. Steinicke or the SS-Standortarzt Dr. Rohde, well known in Bisingen and Dautmergen.<sup>7</sup>

There are eight foreign “protective custody” prisoners (*Schutzhäftlinge*) listed in the Frommern register of deaths. Of these, three died between January and March 1945. Their deaths were listed as the typical causes of death and noted by the doctors on the death certificates, real or otherwise, namely, as “acute heart weakness” or “tuberculosis.” The prisoner numbers of these prisoners suggest that they came from the Natzweiler main camp or another large camp.

The Frommern concentration camp was fenced in with a 2-meter-high (6.6-feet-high) electrified barbed-wire fence.

The Royal Air Force photo shows four rather large barracks. A comparison with other photos from the early days of construction of the Lias factory suggests that it was only the concentration camp area that was fenced in with barbed wire.<sup>8</sup> Three large prisoners' barracks are separated from the SS guards' area and a barracks for mine inspectors (*Schachtmeisterbaracke*) by a double barbed-wire fence.

The prisoners worked daily for 11 hours. The sick were not permitted to remain in the barracks and, on orders issued by the camp command, were forced to stay in the area of the construction site until those who could work returned.

Some 55 concentration camp inmates were taken by rail to Dachau and given Dachau numbers: 17 on April 12, 1945, and 38 on April 13. The remainder of the prisoners embarked on a death march on April 17 with prisoners from the other camps, marching in the direction of Bodensee and Oberland.

**SOURCES** This essay is based on the brochure for the author's third exhibition (after Balingen and Rottweil): *Das Unternehmen "Wüste" Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager entlang der Bahnlinie Tübingen-Rottweil 1944/45. Leitfaden und Materialien zur Ausstellung in der ehemaligen Baracke auf dem Gelände des Oberschulamtes Tübingen 7. Mai–31. Juli 1997*. (Schömberg: Opfermann, 2000); and essays on Frommern: *Ölschieferabbau in Frommern*. (In 1200 Jahre Emdingen, Frommern . . . Veröffentlichungen des Stadtarchivs Balingen Band 5, Balingen 1993. S. 422–431) and *Die "Lias": Ölschieferverschmelzung und das KZ Frommern 1942–1949*. (In *Ölschieferwerk Frommern Industriereportage 1947*. Schwäbisches Kulturarchiv des Schwäbischen Albvereins (Hg.) Stuttgart und Albstadt-Ebingen 2002, p. 4–15. This publication contains photos from 1947 on the completion of the oil shale plant. The author wrote the foreword. Also of note is *Unternehmen "Wüste"—Hitlers letzte Hoffnung* (Tübingen, 2002), by Michael Grant.

There are many archival documents on the Frommern concentration camp in the AKr-Bal. The estate of Frau Ingeborg Ziebarth, who worked in the geology office and who had good contacts with the prisoners, is a source of information.

Original documents from the Dotternhausen cement factory regarding the technology used at the Wüste factories, Lias at Frommern, and Kohle-Busse-KG in Schörzingen, were used, for example, "Technische Forschungen und Verwirklichungen industriellen Massstabes ausgeführt in den Jahre 1945–1948 von der Zentralverwaltung der württembergischen Ölschieferwerke in Dotternhausen," 1948; a "vertrauliches Exemplar," or confidential copy, of a German translation of "Deux ans de Recherches Techniques et de Realisations Industrielles," in the "Sequestre Français de Mines et Usines a Schistes Butimineux de Wuerttemberg," 1945–1948, Tome I-III.

The StA-S holds numerous unpublished archival sources either from the postwar Zentralverwaltung der Württembergischen Ölschieferwerke or original Wüste documents from the National Socialist period.

Immo Opfermann  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, StA-S, Wü 120 T 4 Nr. 585, "Forderungsnachweis Nr. 34/44," June 1, 1944.
2. University of Keele, Geograph. Abteilung Nr. 4149, Serie G vom March 15, 1945.
3. ZdL (at BA-L), Prozess-Akten gegen Franz Hofmann, Aktenzeichen IV 419 AR 1773/67.
4. "Nummernbuch 1-bis 6499" des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler (copies only).
5. Statement of concentration camp prisoner Schneider.
6. Statement of concentration camp prisoner Schneider. Questioned by Fritz Müller, Nr. 23160.
7. Totenbuch Frommern für 1945.
8. StA-S, Wü 120 T 4 Nr. 585.

## GEISENHEIM

Geisenheim, in the Prussian province of Hessen-Nassau, was a subcamp for female prisoners of the Natzweiler concentration camp. The earliest reference to the subcamp, contained in a prisoner statement, is December 12, 1944. Geisenheim existed only for 100 days and was evacuated as early as March 22, 1945, when the women were transferred via Neckargerach to Dachau.

Lothar Bembenek's research has revealed that the Geisenheim subcamp was established following a special order given by the Natzweiler commandant's headquarters on September 26, 1944. The subcamp comprised three barracks located on the factory grounds. They were to hold 200 female prisoners who were admitted to the camp on December 12, 1944. The prisoners were mostly Polish Jewish women from the Łódź ghetto who had been selected in Auschwitz as "capable of working." There were also a few Hungarian Jewish women. They were all sent to Geisenheim via Bergen-Belsen. It is likely that the prisoners had also been processed through the camp at Ravensbrück.

Bembenek has shown that as early as August 1944 seven female workers from the machine factory, each of whom had just turned 20, were sent to Ravensbrück for training so that they would be ready to assume the roles of female wardens in the subcamp. Of the 200 prisoners, 80 worked for the machine factory Johannisberg GmbH. The remainder, about 120 in number, worked for Krupp. They finished off the seals for flak guns. The female wardens accompanied the prisoners to work and back and guarded them while they were working. The type and the duration of work were determined, however, by the foremen and skilled tradesmen at Krupp. Prisoner statements vary significantly about the type and degree of difficulty of the work.

In the camp there were 10 SS male guards under the command of SS-Lagerführer Schack. In addition, there were seven female wardens in the factory. Prisoners have described the camp as clean, the food as tolerable, and the treatment by the guards as humane. Schack was soon replaced by SS-Oberscharführer Lenzian. He mistreated the women severely.



The prisoners have also stated that, except for Lenzian, no SS male ever entered the camp. The real security was provided by five SS uniformed women in the barracks who, as a rule, properly treated the prisoners and never beat them. Medical care was provided by an SS noncommissioned medical orderly and a Polish Jewish woman. According to the prisoners, when one of the prisoners was suffering from inflammation of the lungs, a senior SS doctor was called. After the war, the Wiesbaden state prosecutor investigated an incident in which a female prisoner and her newly born baby were said to have died because the SS was intentionally negligent in providing the appropriate care. The proceedings were stopped 25 years after the event, as it was not possible to prove the allegation. Overall, there were few deaths in the subcamp.

Following the evacuation of the subcamp on March 18, 1945, the women were forced to march seven weeks via Geislingen and Neckargerach to the Dachau/München-Allach camp. A couple of women were shot along the march (which took place only during the night), and others were mistreated when they arrived in München-Allach.

**SOURCES** The ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979) refers to the Geisenheim subcamp at 1:202.

Lothar Bembek describes the Geisenheim subcamp in detail in his article "AK Geisenheim," in *Hessen hinter Stachel-drabt: Verdrängt und vergessen. KZs, Lager, Aussenkommandos*, ed. Lothar Bembek (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn Publishing House, 1984), p. 50. On p. 51, there is an aerial photograph of the Krupp factory, and the Johannisberg machine factory, both taken by the USAAF on March 13, 1945. The four barracks are clearly visible.

The HAK contains an essay defending the use and treatment of the Geisenheim workforce. It is to be found in the file WA 40/681. It was prepared in June 1948 by lawyer Dr. W. Siemens and presented to the U.S. military tribunal as part of Krupp's defense.

The investigation files of the ZdL (held at BA-L) hold statements by two female wardens and four former prisoners.

Investigations by the Wiesbaden state prosecutor into the negligent death of a female prisoner and her baby are to be found in that court's file 8 Js 232/71.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## GEISLINGEN AN DER STEIGE

The Natzweiler Geislingen an der Steige subcamp for women was located in what is Kreis Göppingen in present-day Baden-Württemberg. The women were accommodated in a section of a barracks camp for East European forced laborers on the Heidenheim Strasse/Robert-Bosch-Strasse. The site was leased by the city to Württembergische Metallwarenfabrik (WMF). The company, in return for the lease, agreed to accommodate all of Geislingen city's foreign labor force.

In February 1944, the WMF entered an agreement with the Organisation Todt (OT) where an area of 100×100 meters (109×109 yards) on the site was fenced off with a 1.5-meter-high (5-feet-high) barbed-wire fence. On the inside of the fence a ditch was dug. Wooden screens hid the view of the camp from the road. In the camp, there were five (some sources say six) one-level accommodation barracks with a surface area of 8×26 meters (26×85 feet), an infirmary barracks, and an office barracks that held the camp's administration and the guards. In the summer of 1944, the WMF negotiated with regional Höherer-SS und Polizeiführer Obergruppenführer Hoffmann for the dispatch of concentration camp prisoners to the new camp. On July 28, 1944, 600 Hungarian Jewish women arrived at the camp; with the arrival of the transport the camp was open. The women were aged between 15 and 45. Their heads had been shaved. They were put in quarantine for a fortnight; this respite may also have been because the WMF had initially not been able to find a sufficient number of its employees (there had to be at least 15) who would volunteer to be wardresses.

The WMF supplied the prisoners' accommodations and food. The women working the night shift received per person an extra liter (4.2 cups) of soup; there was a camp vegetable garden, and the company made tools and seed available. The prisoners stated that the food in the factory was markedly better than that in the camp. This was not because of any philanthropic motive but because of the necessity of preserving the prisoners' strength. Within a few weeks of the camp opening, additional security measures were put in place including rolls of barbed wire, searchlights, guard towers, and probably an electrified fence.

The first camp commander was SS-Oberscharführer Christian Ahrens. He was soon transferred to Natzweiler and replaced by a person named Schopp. In January 1945, Rene Roman took over command of the camp.

With the arrival of transports from Ravensbrück, the prisoner administration came into operation: in October 1944, 6 political and 10 asocial women arrived in the subcamp who were appointed the block elders. On November 29, 1944, 130 women arrived from Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. The total number of women in the camp was at least 800 and possibly as high as 1,050. The women worked in the Württemberg metal factory, producing munitions, engines for jet fighters, machine guns, and empennage (tail assemblies) for aircraft. Mostly, they produced coops for the jet engines and worked on the presses, working in two shifts, each of 12 hours, with shift changes at 6:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. The women were separated from the other workers both at work and on their route to work by wooden partitions. The SS guards accompanied the women to work, where the wardresses took over. The behavior of the wardresses and the German foremen is described as correct in prisoner statements, and in a few cases, they supported the women with food and medicine.

Nevertheless, living conditions in the camp were hard. There was a lack of food, which, coupled with the long working hours, resulted in many accidents at work. The prisoners

were mistreated, with survivors reporting whippings. In the camp, there was an infirmary that was under the control of a Hungarian female doctor. On average, around 10 percent of the prisoners were ill—and this despite the fact that the women knew that being in the sick bay was accompanied by the risk of being selected. As a rule, women who could no longer work were transported to Auschwitz (which usually meant to the gas chambers). Details of at least two transports to Auschwitz have survived. Pregnant women were also transported—at least one child who was born in the camp died in the camp. At least 8 (some sources say 12) women died in the subcamp and were buried in the local cemetery or cremated.

On March 28, 1945, an evacuation transport of 230 women arrived in Geislingen. It had originated in Auschwitz, traveling via Bergen-Belsen, Neckargerach, and Calw to Geislingen. For a short time, the number of women in the camp climbed to over 1,000, but no more work was being done. The WMF refused to feed the newly arrived women and asked the SS to evacuate the camp. A few days later, on April 4, 1945, the women were taken by train in the direction of Dachau/München-Allach. However, before they arrived at that camp, they were liberated by Allied troops on April 17, 1945.

Arthur Burkhardt, of the WMF, who was in charge of the use of the concentration camp prisoners, was interned by the Allies between 1946 and circa 1948. After that, he was released and was in charge of the WMF for the next 21 years.

**SOURCES** This essay closely follows a report of the Geislingen city administration at [www.geislingen.de/formulare/Aussenlager.pdf](http://www.geislingen.de/formulare/Aussenlager.pdf). The camp's history is told in several essays including one by Annette Schäfer: "Das Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler in Geislingen/Steige," 1999 3 (1990). Ullrich Haller describes the camp in his essay on the complex web of forced labor in the city (foreign forced laborers, military internees, POWs, and concentration camp prisoners) in "Zwangsarbeit und Rüstungsproduktion in Geislingen an der Steige, 1939–1945," *ZfwLg* 57 (1998): 305–368. The essay contains numerous statistical details including the WMF turnover between 1939 and 1945 and the total number of people employed by the company including POWs and concentration camp prisoners.

Other depictions of the camp are by Richard Wagner, "Das KZ-Aussenlager in Geislingen," *Gesch.-r.* 2 (1982): 98–111; Volker Hecht, "Die Württembergische Metallwarenfabrik Geislingen/Steige 1853–1945. Geschäftspolitik und Unternehmensentwicklung," *BsWuSg*, 19: 292; and *Heimatgeschichtlicher Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstandes und der Verfolgung 1933–1945*, vol. 5, *Baden-Württemberg, Regierungsbezirke Karlsruhe und Stuttgart, Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für akademische Schriften HG, 1991), pp. 180–183. An article by Sönke Iwersen in the *StutZ* of February 15, 2003, "Messer, Gabeln und Patronenhülsen. Der 1853 gegründete Besteckhersteller WMF war einst der grösste Industriebetrieb in Württemberg," contains some detailed information and was used in this essay.

Richard Steegmann describes the Geislingen an der Steige subcamp in several sections of his comprehensive history of the Natzweiler concentration camp: *Struthof. Le KL-*

*Natzweiler et ses kommandos: Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: La Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 83, 112, 261. The *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler*, comp. by Antoine Greffier and published in 2002 by the Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, describes the Geislingen an der Steige subcamp on pp. 113–115. The city of Geislingen has a description of the camp on its Web site at [www.geschichtsbuero.de/pdf/Stuttgart.pdf](http://www.geschichtsbuero.de/pdf/Stuttgart.pdf).

The subcamp is listed in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), 1:203.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## GUTTENBACH [ALSO BINAU AND NEUNKIRCHEN (FAHRBEREITSCHAFT)]

Guttenbach is located in Nordbaden, 14 kilometers (8.7 miles) to the northwest of Mosbach in the Neckar River Valley between the cities of Heidelberg and Heilbronn. After World War II, it was incorporated into the town of Neckargerach, which lies to the south of the Neckar River.

It is uncertain whether there was in fact a Natzweiler subcamp in the Baden-Württemberg town of Guttenbach. The village provided accommodation for the guards of the Neckargerach subcamp, which was only 500 meters (547 yards) from the town; the assumption that there was a subcamp in Guttenbach might be the result of this arrangement.

From November 23, 1944, on, the Natzweiler concentration camp administration was transferred, in the face of the advance by Allied troops, to Guttenbach, just opposite Neckargerach, on the opposite side of the Neckar River. The approximately 15 to 20 SS men who worked in the Guttenbach command remained responsible for organizing the guard units for the various subcamps, for assessing labor requests by regional companies, and for preparing information that served as the basis for the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) when determining labor allocations. At the end of February or the beginning of March 1945, the members of the camp command retreated to Stuttgart and from there farther south.

Between November 23, 1944, and March 2, 1945, 30 to 35 (other sources: 10 to 15) prisoners worked in the command office and on farms around Guttenbach.

Like the prisoners put to work in Guttenbach, the inmates who were employed at Binau were also transferred on a daily basis from the Neckargerach subcamp. At the Binau Castle, in the village of Binau between Neckargerach and Neckarelz, about 10 (other sources: 8 to 17) inmates were employed in the administration and clothing storage depot in auxiliary functions. A last detachment to leave the Natzweiler main camp was the carpool (*Fahrbereitschaft*), which was transferred to Neunkirchen, about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Neckarelz. Some 15 SS men were in charge of approximately six

trucks, supported by 3 inmates who were taken to Neunkirchen on a daily basis from the Neckargerach subcamp.

Like the other inmates of the Neckargerach subcamp, also the inmates employed at Guttenbach and Binau were evacuated at the end of March 1945. In Neunkirchen, the SS had already left the premises, and the inmates only had to wait for the arrival of the U.S. troops. Several SS men and inmates who were involved in the administration at Guttenbach, Binau, and Neunkirchen stood trial after the war. Adolf Rieg, who was in charge of food supply, was acquitted in the second case during the Rastatt Military Tribunal. Some prisoner-functionaries were tried and sentenced in the same court trial.

**SOURCES** There is little information on Guttenbach or on Binau and Neunkirchen. Tobias Markowitsch and Kattrin Rautnig refer to the subcamps/work detachments repeatedly in their study *Goldfisch und Zebra. Das Konzentrationslager-aussenkommando Neckarelz. Konzentrationslager des Verlagerungsprojektes A8 und Aussenkommando von Natzweiler-Struthof* (Neckarelz: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neckarelz e.V., 2005). Robert Steegmann does not mention Guttenbach in his history of the Natzweiler concentration camp, *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005). The *Heimatgeschichtlichen Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstandes und der Verfolgung 1933–1945*, vol.5, *Baden-Württemberg, Regierungsbezirke Karlsruhe und Stuttgart*, ed. Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für akademische Schrifte, 1991), p. 100, has a short description of Guttenbach. Jürgen Ziegler mentions the Guttenbach command office in his *Mitten unter uns. Natzweiler-Struthof. Spuren eines Konzentrationslagers* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986), p. 262. Antoine Greffier in *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof*, ed. Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg (Stuttgart: Landeszentrale, 2002), p. 250, does not refer to Guttenbach as a subcamp but as part of the camp administration and as a production site. There are also short references in Wolfgang Kirstein, *Das Konzentrationslager als Institution totalen Terrors. Das Beispiel des KL Natzweiler* (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1992); and Julius Schätzle, *Stationen zur Hölle. Konzentrationslager in Baden und Württemberg 1933 bis 1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg-Verlag, 1980). Guttenbach is not referred to in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, vol.1 (Arolsen, 1979).

At BA-BL, some witness statements and documents have been gathered dealing with events and conditions in Guttenbach. For further information, see BA-BL, 419 AR-1835/67. For information on Binau, see 419 AR-1771/67.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## HAILFINGEN

Very little is known on the prehistory of the Hailfingen subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp. In 1937, the building of a military airport started near Hailfingen (district

Rottenburg, near Tübingen) on a place known as Hailfingen/Tailfingen where land had been expropriated. The Reich Labor Service (Reichsarbeitsdienst) started the construction project on a small airport where Messerschmitt planes and about 100 people from the German air force were stationed. It is not known which workforce built the camp itself, whether the Reichsarbeitsdienst or the inmates that were soon to arrive after the war broke out. In the second half of 1941, around 100 Russians were transported to the camp. It is not known if they were prisoners of war (POWs) or civilians submitted to forced labor. As postwar testimonies describe a 12-year-old prisoner and as some inmates were sent to work on surrounding farms, the Russians may have been used as slave laborers. They worked at extending the airport facilities, as did the 350 Greeks who arrived in the camp on September 20, 1944. These Greeks were all men, aged between 14 and 60, and had been arrested in a roundup in Athens on August 9 before they were transported to the Reich as hostages. At least 2 Greek inmates died in Hailfingen. Most of them were sent to other labor camps in December 1944. Only 4 remained and worked as locksmiths.

The Hailfingen subcamp was founded in early December 1944, when 600 inmates were sent there by the Office II in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). The transport had been requested two months earlier. All the prisoners were male and Jewish, with numerous different citizenships (Baltic States, Belgium, Hungary, the Netherlands, Greece, France, Italy, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Turkey, and Germany), all registered as “political inmates” and most coming from different concentration camps. Inmates of the newly founded subcamp were registered under Natzweiler numbers 40448 to 41047. They wore a Star of David on their clothes, made of a red triangle (political) and a yellow one (Jew).

The camp facilities were simple. Jewish inmates lived in a hangar surrounded by a wired fence. A watchtower allowed an easy view of the prisoners. Outside this area, several buildings were used for air defense, a coal store, the inmates' kitchen, and five barracks for the guards. A street divided the compound into two parts. On the other side of it, the building for the Russians was near the Organisation Todt (OT) building and the Mattes firm office. The head of the camp was an SS-Unterscharführer. He commanded about 60 guards, most of them older air force soldiers who, according to postwar accounts, behaved decently toward the Jews. Testimonies were gathered after the war of ill treatment and killings of inmates by the head of the camp, as well as by the work supervisor (a member of the OT) who received the nickname “Chess Master” (*Schachmeister*). Some Lithuanian and Ukrainian guards may also have been active in the camp.

Conditions of living were terrible; inmates were undernourished, ill-treated, and beaten. No medical treatment was available. It was almost impossible to wash. On their way to work, prisoners kept trying to steal potatoes or fruits in the surrounding fields. If caught, they could be shot. The death rate was especially high if compared to that of other Natzweiler



subcamps of this region in southwest Germany. Corpses were first transported to the Reutlingen cemetery, where they were burned in the crematorium. After January 31, 1945, the corpses were buried on the airport compound in a mass grave. When the Allies opened it, they exhumed between 72 and 96 bodies (testimonies differ from one another). Between 300 and 390 inmates died, most of them of hunger, which means a death rate between 50 and 65 percent.

Working conditions were extremely hard. Some local firms employed the inmates: Gärtner & Sohn, Härer, Mattes, Meyer, Kirchhoff, and the OT. The Jews continued the building of the airport runway and built streets on the compound, one leading to the neighboring train station at Nebringen. Most of the inmates worked in two quarries, in Hailfingen and Reusten.

On February 14, 1945, the Hailfingen subcamp was dismantled, and all the surviving Jews were evacuated in two transports. One, of about 110 people, arrived in the subcamp Vaihingen; the second, with about 100 Jews, went to the subcamp of Dautmergen and other subcamps of Natzweiler. After the evacuation of Hailfingen, only 4 Greeks and 1 Pole from the previous transports remained at the airport. French troops entered the village and searched the compound. A survivor, a former inmate, is said to have shown them the location of the mass grave. On June 2, 1945, inhabitants of the surroundings villages were forced by the French to gather around the grave. Former Nazi Party (NSDAP) members had to exhume the corpses as the other Germans were watching. Workers were beaten, some were wounded, and two died on this day. The corpses of the prisoners were transported to the Tailfingen cemetery and reburied in a common grave, under a wooden cross.

The head of the camp died in December 1945 as a POW and thus was never put on trial. A historical project conducted in the 1970s in the region of Tübingen revealed that the women of Hailfingen used to sing a song, to the tune of the famous melody "Ich liebte einst ein Mädchen." The words of the song follow:

Es war am 2. Juli,  
Ein heisser Sommertag,  
Wir standen auf dem Flugplatz,  
Bei einem Judengrab.  
Und als wir so standen,  
Erwachten Reu und Leid,  
bekamen wir noch Schläge,  
Mit einer langen Peitsch.  
Ach Gott, wo sind die Juden,  
Die Juden sind ja tot,  
Man hat sie ja erschossen.  
Ihr Blut floss rosenrot.  
(It was on July 2,  
A hot summer day,  
We stood at the airport,  
Near a Jewish grave.  
And as we so stood,  
Waiting for remorse and grief  
We got beaten

With a long whip  
O God, where are the Jews,  
The Jews are dead,  
They have been shot  
Their blood streamed rose-red.)

Before leaving the airport, the Wehrmacht blew up some buildings, as did the French occupation troops a few months later.

**SOURCES** The Hailfingen subcamp is described in Utz Jeggle, "Ach Gott, wo sind die Juden? Tödliche Erfahrungen beim Flugplatz Hailfingen/Tailfingen," in *900 Jahre Hailfingen. Ein Gaudorf und mehr als 900 Jahre Geschichte*, ed. Karlheinz Geppert, (Hailfingen: Heidi Heusch, 1993), pp. 245–253; Monika Walter-Becker, "Das Lager Hailfingen," in *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegsführung. Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*, ed. Herwart Vorländer (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978), pp. 149–174.

Documents on the camp can be found at ITS (Hänge-mappe Akdo Hailfingen), in the BA-L (AZ. IV 419 AR-Z 171/69), at the Prosecutor's Office (Staatsanwaltschaft) Stuttgart (16 Js 326/52), and in files pertaining to the Natzweiler-Struthof Trial at the Landgericht Hechingen (Ordner 23 Bl. 5030).

Jean-Marc Dreyfus

## HANAU

The Natzweiler subcamp in Hanau is not listed in the International Tracing Service (ITS) list and was never the subject of an investigation or court proceedings.

Lothar Bembenek states that this subcamp was to be established at the Dunlop factory. The only mention of its existence is to be found in a special order of the Natzweiler concentration camp, dated September 26, 1944, dealing with the assignments of the companies of guards. The order stated that the future camp should be guarded by the 2nd Company.

It is possible that a heavy bombing raid on the Dunlop factory toward the end of the war wiped out any trace of the camp.

**SOURCES** The only mention of the camp is to be found in N.N., "Spurensuche Aussenlager Hanau," in *Hessen hinter Stacheldraht: Verdrängt und vergessen; KZs, Lager, Aussenkommandos*, ed. Lothar Bembenek (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn-Verlag, 1984), p. 61.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## HASLACH ("BARBE") [ALSO VULKAN, KINZIGDAMM]

In Haslach, located in the Baden district of Wolfach near Offenburg in Baden-Württemberg, three camps were erected in



summer and fall 1944 in connection with the relocation of armaments production underground, using the tunnel system of the Hartsteinwerke Vulkan. The company had been erected in 1902, and until the outbreak of World War II, it had produced large quantities of gravel for streets and railways, paving stones, undressed stone, and other related building materials. With the start of World War II, Vulkan received enormous government contracts, especially in connection with the erection of strategic highways to the east and the construction of the Siegfried Line (Westwall). When these orders ceased in 1943, Organisation Todt (OT) recruited personnel and machinery from the company for employment in the Ukraine. The grounds of the property were confiscated by the Reich Armaments Ministry and came under the control of OT. Plans were developed to have Mannesmann produce parts of the V-weapons in the underground areas, and the Messerschmitt company was also interested in using the grounds for producing crankshafts for airplanes. The code name of the project was "Barbe," and it was to cover 18,488 square meters (21,111 square yards) of underground area. In June 1944, OT began planning the erection of 14 larger prisoner barracks along the road between Haslach and Mühlenbach.

The first inmates, males only, arrived in Haslach on September 16, 1944. The transport consisted of 450 inmates who had been evacuated from Struthof via Dachau and Allach. Two-thirds of the prisoners were French; the others came from Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg, and some from Poland and the USSR. They were kept in a wooden shed near the Haslach sports fields that formerly had belonged to the Wehrmacht. From there they had to walk for about one hour to their work sites, the underground area of the former Hartsteinwerke, where they had to prepare the access road to the area. The prisoners were employed by two local firms, Wayss & Freytag and Dohrmann in Mühlheim, which cooperated with OT. Plans to prepare the production of V-weapons and crankshafts for airplanes were quickly changed after the severe bombardment of the Daimler-Benz facilities at Gaggenau on October 3, 1944. Now the Armament Office in Berlin decided to have Daimler-Benz use the underground facilities, and the partial transfer of production began in November 1944.

The living and working conditions of the inmates at the Sportplatz camp were hard. According to survivor statements, they had to be up at 4:00 A.M. Roll call was accompanied by yelling and beatings. Afterward, they marched in long columns through the town. Their work was physically challenging: They had to build roads, lay pipe, break stones, and pour concrete on the tunnel floors. The guards were brutal, and SS-Rottenführer Lindau was considered the most brutal of them all. Survivors report that he killed several inmates.

Due to their poor condition, inmates began to die quickly. There was no medical treatment available, and the food was bad. Inmates also died from mistreatment, were executed after failed attempts to escape, or died as a result of the exploitation at the job site. When, early in December 1944, a transport

of 248 inmates from Flossenbürg arrived, the conditions in the Sportplatz subcamp became even worse. Dysentery, typhoid, and tuberculosis began to spread; by the end of the year, more than 100 inmates had died. Many inhabitants of Haslach who witnessed the brutal treatment of the inmates and observed their poor physical condition tried to provide food, especially apples and potatoes. The local minister, Vetter, got in touch with ministers among the inmates and used these contacts to help severely sick prisoners by providing food and medication.

Numerous transports of prisoners incapable of work left the subcamp for other camps. In February 25, 1945, the remaining 265 prisoners—all of them in very weak condition—were sent to the sick camp in Vaihingen/Enz. But since the Sportplatz camp was not the only camp in Haslach, the work on the project "Barbe" was continued by the inmates of two other camps that had also been erected in the fall of 1944. The Sportplatz camp was put to use one final time from March 28 until mid-April 1945, when the remaining inmates of the Vulkan camp were accommodated there.

On December 10, 1944, when 300 more prisoners arrived from the Work Education Camp (AEL) Niederbühl, there was no room left for them at the Sportplatz camp. For one night, the newly arrived prisoners were kept at the Haslach city hall, and immediately afterward they were taken to the premises of the Kaufmann Co. From there, they were taken in groups to the Kinzigdamm camp, which probably consisted of two barracks near the Arche Inn, between the houses along Fischerbacher Strasse and the Kinzigdamm, not far from the bridge across Kinzig creek. The camp had been erected by Dutch forced laborers in the fall of 1944, and it existed from fall 1944 until March 1945 and is sometimes also referred to as Protective Custody Camp (Sicherungslager) Kinzigdamm. The Kinzigdamm camp was the smallest of the three Haslach camps, but it was notorious for its horrible hygienic conditions, the poor food supply, and the mistreatment of inmates that resulted in several deaths. The inmates of this camp were employed with numerous local companies and craftsmen. On March 1, 1945, most of them were taken to the Sülz camp, where they were put to work again.

The last Haslach camp was the Vulkan camp, which was erected on December 4, 1944, with the arrival of about 700 male inmates, mainly from the Schirmeck-Vorbrück (Elsass) protective custody camp. Many of them were members of the French resistance, about 100 were hostages from Alsace, and about 350 were Soviet prisoners. The Vulkan prisoners lived under inhuman conditions in the former Hartstein tunnels. They slept on the plain floor, which was covered with straw. The straw was never renewed and became saturated with water and waste from the prisoners, who had no toilets to relieve themselves. The prisoners of the Vulkan camp were employed to prepare the Hartstein tunnel for armaments production; their tasks consisted of laying wastewater pipes, digging tunnels, pouring concrete floors, and breaking and cutting stone.

The camp leader was SS-Scharführer Kraus. Survivors report that on a regular basis he had prisoners' excrement from the infirmary poured out over the kitchen waste to prevent the inmates from eating the garbage, but the inmates were so starved that they ate it nevertheless. Kraus also owned a dog trained to attack human beings—at least one inmate was killed this way, and another one was severely injured. In general, the conditions at the Vulkan camp were worse than in the main camp: Lice were everywhere, and many inmates suffered from typhoid. Inmates who tried to escape were shot, among them several Russian prisoners. A plot among Ukrainian inmates was betrayed, and they were all killed; 10 officers, members of the French resistance, disappeared without a trace; it is very likely that they were shot. Despite the arrival of additional inmates, the production in the tunnel never commenced. The poor condition of the prisoners, the lack of materials and supplies (especially of trucks to transport machinery to the tunnel), and Allied air raids made it impossible to reach any of the planned goals.

In September 1944, there were 1,700 inmates in the three Haslach camps, of which the names of 750 are known. Among them were *Nacht-und-Nebel* prisoners, hostages, prisoners of war (POWs) and hundreds of forced laborers. All three Haslach camps were under the command of SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Buck, who had a long career as an SS officer: in 1933, he had been the commandant of the Heuberg concentration camp; afterwards, of the Ulm-Oberer Kuhberg and Welzheim camps. From July 1940 until November 1944, Buck had been the commandant of the Schirmeck-Vorbrück camp, until he took over command of the Haslach camps. Detlef Ernst and Klaus Riexinger state that the guards at the Haslach subcamp were from the Sixth Waffen-SS Guard Company.

There is no clear indication how many prisoners died in the three Haslach camps. Originally there had been plans to transport the dead back to the main camp and burn them there. Very soon, this became impossible: The main camp was dissolved, and no trucks or gas were available to transport the dead to crematoria in other camps. On September 21, 1944, the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) therefore issued a decree (*Anweisung*) to bury the dead at local cemeteries: They were to be dressed in a way that they could not be recognized as concentration camp inmates, and they should be buried in a remote area, where usually suicides and forced laborers were buried. No local, outside personnel had to be involved in the burial. Inmates who died at the Haslach camps were buried at the western edge of the local cemetery; their graves were not marked. Inmates who died at the Vulkan camp were buried next to the camp, on the mountain. After the war, 135 corpses were exhumed, identified, and taken back to their home countries. It is estimated that at least 400 inmates died in the three Haslach camps, among them 192 who succumbed to an epidemic of dysentery in the fall of 1944.

In March 1945, the prisoners were evacuated in a number of transports, either by truck, train, or on foot.

In 1946, Karl Buch was sentenced to death by a British court for his killing of four American and two British pilots who had parachuted from their planes. In 1953, he stood trial again, this time for crimes committed at the Schirmeck-Vorbrück camp, and he was sentenced to death again. Later this sentence was reduced to penitentiary for life in Great Britain, but in 1955 he was transferred to the German authorities who released him shortly after. Further attempts by the Office of the District Attorney to put him on trial were not successful.

**SOURCES** A detailed description of the Haslach camps can be found in "Gedenkstätte Vulkan—Haslach im Kinzigtal," in *Ortenau, Jahrsband 2001*, ed. Historischen Verein Mittelbaden, p. 533. There is also information available online at <http://gedenk.vulkan@tc->online.de>. Robert Steegmann describes the Haslach subcamp in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 112, 286. Detlef Ernst and Klaus Riexinger refer briefly to the Haslach subcamp in *Vernichtung durch Arbeit: Die Geschichte des KZ Kochendorf/Aussenkommando des KZ Natzweiler-Struthof* (Bad Friedrichshall: D. Ernst, K. Riexinger, 1996), p. 18. The ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979) mentions the Natzweiler subcamp at 1:203.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## HAYINGEN [AKA EBINGEN]

The prisoners in the Natzweiler Hayingen subcamp (French: Hayange) in the former Gau of Westmark were deployed to Ebingen (French: Ebange). The camp is sometimes referred to in the literature as Ebingen.

The camp was opened on August 24, 1944. There were around 500 women who entered the camp on August 28. They were employed by the Hüttenwerkverwaltung Westmark GmbH, in a Hermann Göring Reichs factory in Ebingen. The number of prisoners who died in the camp is uncertain: Antoine Greffier estimates the number as five.

According to concentration camp files and prisoner statements, the prisoners were transferred by foot on September 11, 1944, via Saarlautern to the Ravensbrück concentration camp; it is most likely that the camp was then dissolved. Of the 500 women who marched out of Hayingen, only 363 arrived in Ravensbrück on September 29, 1944; 135 women were able to escape along the way, and only a few of them were recaptured.

**SOURCES** Robert Steegmann focuses on the subcamp in his monograph *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 74, 261.

Antoine Greffier deals with the history of the Hayingen subcamp in *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof* (Baden Württemberg: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2002), p. 125.

The subcamp is listed in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), 1:203.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## HEIDENHEIM

In mid-December 1944, evacuees from the concentration camp Natzweiler were housed in a barrack at the Police School Heidenheim, which in 1941–1942 had already held prisoners from Dachau.

Immediately before that, the Police School had been evacuated from Heidenheim. From the end of November, part of the SS-Signal Intelligence Female Assistants' School Oberehnheim/Elsass had occupied the empty rooms. This school was forced to leave Oberehnheim on November 22–23, 1944, because of the approaching front. The labor detail, which from September 24, 1944, consisted of 20 prisoners, had been assigned to the SS-Signal Intelligence Female Assistants' School Oberehnheim. It was transferred together with the assistants via Geislingen an der Steige to Heidenheim. The labor detail does not appear on the International Tracing Service (ITS) lists, perhaps because it has always been known as the evacuated subcamp "Oberehnheim." From January 13, 1945, the school was officially known as the SS-Female Assistants' School Heidenheim.

The labor detail was kept busy with all the work required by the school: hauling boxes of supplies, felling trees in the forests and cutting them into firewood (there was an acute shortage of coal), cleaning, clearing snow, and so on. Under guard, the prisoners acquired supplies in the city and did work there, partly of an official nature and partly as private work for the SS from the school; skilled craftsmen (cobblers, tailors, painters, carpenters) applied their skills in the camp and in the town.

The identity of the 20 prisoners is known; 7 of the 8 Germans were "criminals"; the eighth, a long-standing Communist, was the camp elder. The foreigners (7 from Luxembourg, 3 Poles, 1 Frenchman, and 1 Russian) were all "protective detention" prisoners; the prisoners from Luxembourg had been arrested because of illegal political activity. There were no Jews. There was no nurse, but there was a (German) clerk.

The strength and composition of the labor detail changed—one of the Luxembourgers was transferred to the subcamp Le-onberg on December 31, 1944, and on February 23, 1945, two of the German "criminals" escaped. They were able to cut through the fence of the Police School at night. The SS guard intentionally paid no attention to their escape. The prisoners should have been punished for an infringement, according to a relative's statement, possibly with the death penalty. They were not caught, and there were no reprisals against the remaining prisoners. There were no deaths in Heidenheim.

The commander of the SS squad was Oberscharführer, later Hauptscharführer, Hermann Stiefel, born in 1890 in Erfurt. He joined the Nazi Party in 1933 and the SS only in

November 1941. From then until May 1942, he was stationed in Auschwitz; thereafter, until March 1943, he was in the Natzweiler main camp and then in Oberehnheim. Stiefel was relatively old, small, and fat. His behavior was not what one would expect from a member of the SS. The prisoners did not have any difficulties either with him or the other four guards. This could have been because the end of the war was near, plus the personal interest of the SS that the labor detail remained as a unit to avoid being sent to the front.

The prisoners' barrack most probably was the same as the one used by the Dachau prisoners. However, because of their fewer numbers, they were quartered in one room. The SS occupied the other room. Barbed wire covered the windows. Other barracks existed on the remaining vacant land of the school area. Again, the school kitchen provided food for the prisoners. Even cigarettes were distributed to them from time to time. With the help of the guards, it was also possible to obtain additional food supplies in the town.

The Female Assistants' School and the prisoners were evacuated with trucks on April 5, 1945, further to the south. To the south of Ulm, in Albstadt-Illereichen, another eight prisoners were able to escape with the passive assistance of the guards. Finally, Stiefel simply dismissed the remaining prisoners. The Americans arrested Stiefel on May 1, 1945, as he tried to return home.

**SOURCES** There is only a Luxembourg documentary report written in the Luxembourg language about the end of a number of Natzweiler subcamps, including the subcamp Oberehnheim: Ernest Gillen, "D'Enn vun den Niewelager vum K.Z. Natzweiler," *Rappel* Nr. 1–3 (1985): 174. Besides that, only Alfred Hoffmann has written about the Natzweiler subcamp at Heidenheim: Alfred Hoffmann, *Verschwunden, aber nicht vergessen. KZ-Nebenlager in der Polizeischule* (Heidenheim: Verlag Hans-Joachim Kopp, 1996).

The subcamp has scarcely been acknowledged until more recent times. It has definitely not been acknowledged in Heidenheim. Hints of its existence were found by chance in a number of denazification court files and through statements made for the ZdL (files held at BA-L). File IV 410 AR 1209/69 is on Heidenheim, and file IV 419 AR-Z 170/69 is on the subcamp Oberehnheim. Other incomplete records are scattered in the BA-B, NS 32 II (SS-Female Signal Intelligence Assistants' School Oberehnheim). NS 4 Na Büschel 81 (Subcamp Oberehnheim) contains a compiled list of the prisoners. Further worthwhile and precise information was obtained in 1995–1996 from former Luxembourg prisoner Marius Pauly and through contacts with another Luxembourger, Ernest Gillen, who had extensively studied the Natzweiler subcamps and conducted interviews with survivors who have subsequently died.

Alfred Hoffmann  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## HEPPENHEIM

Documents from the Dachau concentration camp show that between May 28, 1942, and December 18, 1942, a Dachau subcamp existed in the town of Heppenheim in Hessen.

On June 15, 1943, the camp was reopened and placed under the administration of the Natzweiler concentration camp. Horst Riegert has shown that the camp held 66 male prisoners, some of whom were from Yugoslavia. The prisoners constructed the “Trokofa” dried vegetable factory (Trockenkonserverfabrik) and worked there and on the farm of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Amt W V/1 at the German Experimental Institute for Nutrition and Provisions (Deutsche Versuchsanstalt für Ernährung und Verpflegung GmbH, DVA). During the cold winter, they had to sort, wash, and trim vegetables in unheated rooms. They were accommodated in wooden barracks on the “Trokofa” site. Occasionally, they were assigned to work in the Schriesheim quarries.

The Heppenheim subcamp was evacuated on March 22–23, 1945. Witnesses stated that most of the prisoners were taken to Dachau. The remaining prisoners were liberated on March 27, 1945.

**SOURCES** The ITS’s *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979) mentions Heppenheim at 1:204.

Horst Riegert, in “Aussenkommandos Bensheim-Auerbach und Heppenheim,” in *Hessen hinter Stacheldraht: Verdrängt und vergessen; KZs, Lager, Aussenkommandos*, ed. Lothar Bembenek (Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn-Verlag, 1984), p. 57, provides a short description of the camp.

The BA collections, NS 4, KL Na (Natzweiler) refer to the camp in the following subcollections: 49–102: *Häftlingsangelegenheiten*; within that range, number 85—*Errichtung und Besichtigung einzelner AK*—and also number 102—*Kommando Heppenheim: “Häftlingsküche Heppenheim”; Kontrollbuch über Zu- und Abgänge bei Lebensmitteln, 1943*.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## IFFEZHEIM

A Natzweiler subcamp with male prisoners was located at Iffezheim in Baden. The first reference to the subcamp in the Natzweiler files is on October 14, 1943. The Waffen-SS, Baden/Oos, Sandweiler Office, Hauptwirtschaftslager (HWL) II employed the prisoners, who put up barracks for the Waffen-SS in Sandweiler and Iffezheim and also worked for the Müller Wine Cellars in Rastatt in loading operations.

The camp is mentioned for the last time in the Natzweiler files on April 22, 1945.

**SOURCES** The ITS’s *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979) mentions Iffezheim at 1:204.

The BA collection, NS 4, KL Na (Natzweiler) refers to the camp in the following files: 72—*AK Iffezheim*; 83—*Namensliste AK Iffezheim*; 85—*Errichtung und Besichtigung einzelner AK*.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## KOCHENDORF (“EISBÄR”)

A Natzweiler subcamp for male prisoners was located in the Württemberg town of Kochendorf (incorporated into the city of Bad Friedrichshall in 1933) near Heilbronn. According to the Natzweiler files, the Kochendorf camp was opened on September 3, 1944. At first it held 635 prisoners, but by the time it was dissolved in March 1945, between 1,700 and 1,900 prisoners occupied the camp. Detlef Ernst and Klaus Rie-xinger have written that just under half of these prisoners were Jewish, many of them from Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen. Other prisoners were from Poland, France, the Soviet Union, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, Serbia, Croatia, Greece, and Romania. There were also Czechs, Bulgarians, a Spaniard, a Swiss, and probably crew members of American and British aircraft that had been shot down. The youngest prisoners in Kochendorf were most likely the Polish brothers Abram and Lolek Frydmann from Łódź, 16 and 14 years old.

The subcamp, which was constructed just beneath the present-day district hospital in Bad Friedrichshall, was to be a collection point for prisoners evacuated from Natzweiler subcamps in Lothringen, Audun-le-Tiche, and Thil-Longwy. The former commander of Thil-Longwy, SS-Oberscharführer Eugen Walter Büttner, became camp commander in Kochendorf. The guards were from the Waffen-SS Guard Company 6 commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Lautenschlager, who had been commander in Vaihingen an der Enz. The German SS guards were complemented by members of the Africa Corps and the Luftwaffe, as well as by Ukrainian SS members. In October 1944, there were 77 guards. Additional armed guards were later supplied by the Organisation Todt (OT).

The first prisoner barracks were erected by the OT, but prisoners who arrived from September 3 onward at the latest continued construction. At the beginning of October 1944, there were just under 1,400 prisoners in the camp, which was surrounded by an electric barbed-wire fence. Inside the camp there were, as described by Ernst and Rie-xinger, 11 barracks (8 of them for prisoners, including a special barrack for Jewish prisoners), as well as a jail, a kitchen, and an infirmary. At the rear of the camp there were 3 or 4 transit barracks for prisoners who were only temporarily in Kochendorf. Outside the camp were the administration building, guards’ quarters, the food warehouse, the commander’s blockhouse, the guards’ washhouse, and the laundry room.

The camp was set up in the immediate vicinity of a sloping tunnel that led to underground armaments manufacturing sites, the SS construction venture called “Eisbär,” which was part of a still-active salt mine. Ernst and Rie-xinger provide evidence that the construction companies Hochtief AG and Veruschacht, which had constructed these underground facilities, were among the first and the largest recipients of prisoner labor. Another major taskmaster was Ernst Heinkel AG, Werk Hirthmotorenbau (Hirth Engine Construction



Plant), which in this underground location produced prototypes for Heinkel (He) S 011 jet engines (probably only blades and crankshafts). It is not known exactly when production began; the prisoners were initially busy preparing the manufacturing sites. By December 1944 at the latest, other armaments firms, primarily metalworking, had begun production in the mine. Among them were facilities to produce machine guns and gearboxes for the *Panzerkampfwagen* III tank. Ernst and Riexinger list about 40 companies at work in the mining tunnel (*adit*). (It has not been possible to confirm the rumors that the V weapons were produced in Kochendorf. Ernst and Riexinger suspect that such statements arose from prisoners because the slim Heinkel turbine resembled the V rockets and that the production of both required printed circuit boards.)

Kochendorf prisoners also worked under OT construction management in Weinsberg and Kochendorf and for the Kiebitz OT site management in Heilbronn. They were furthermore deployed to work in agriculture, to fill bomb craters at the nearby military airfield in Oedheim, and to work at the Neckarsulm Motoronwerke AG (NSU) factory in Neckarsulm. The prisoners also performed forced labor for the Bad Friedrichshall community, where, among other things, they cut grass, removed rubble from bombed houses, dug graves for bombing victims, cleared snow, and fortified the banks of the Neckar canal.

Sanitary conditions in the Kochendorf subcamp were catastrophic. The camp only existed during the coldest part of the year (September to March), but neither the buildings nor the prisoners were suitably outfitted: cold, constant dampness, infestations of lice, systematic malnutrition, and ruthless exploitation resulted in a high rate of illness and death among the prisoners. According to Ernst and Riexinger, the death rate in the infirmary, where a Czech and a French doctor worked under the supervision of an OT doctor, was 90 percent.

Reports of prisoner abuse, escape attempts, and executions have emerged from the subcamp. Thus, in October 1944, Hungarian prisoner Miklos Klein was executed for alleged sabotage. In November 1944, a Russian prisoner, who had tried to escape with two others, was executed. His companions were apparently successful in their escape attempt, as was a Russian who had already fled in October.

After a U.S. bombing raid in March 1945 destroyed a shaft-head frame and as the front moved steadily closer, armaments production gradually shut down during that month. On March 28, 1945, at least 398 no longer ambulant prisoners were evacuated by freight car to Dachau. On March 30, between 1,200 and 1,500 prisoners started the Kochendorf death march headed by Commandant Büttner. Conservative estimates are that at least 220 people died on this march. The prisoners arrived at Dachau in several batches: the transport of nonambulant prisoners arrived on April 2 (354 prisoners and 44 dead); on April 8, another 753 prisoners; a further 5 prisoners on April 12. Kochendorf prisoners were also joined with the Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental death march to Dachau,

while others were sent to Dachau/München-Allach and from there to München-Riem.

The number of surviving Kochendorf prisoners ranges between 1,000 and 1,300; a closer estimate is impossible. Within the camp itself, 234 deaths have been verified, along with a further 213 on the evacuation marches. Nevertheless, the numbers are unreliable because many of the dead could not be identified. In addition, the numbers do not include those prisoners who were selected in Kochendorf and sent to the death camps.

During the Rastatt Trials from October 6 to November 21, 1947, 42 members of the guard and camp command of the Natzweiler subcamps at Hessental, Kochendorf, Vaihingen/Enz, and Unterriexingen were tried for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Tribunal Général of the French Military Government in Rastatt sentenced 7 of the accused to death. Of the 4 executions that were carried out, 2 involved defendants from Kochendorf: SS-Unterscharführer Richard Maurer, a dog handler who had trained his dog to attack prisoners and tear off their flesh, had also allegedly buried a prisoner alive; the second person to be executed was Obergefreite Joseph Kaiser (nicknamed the "African"), an Africa Corps soldier, alleged to have killed at least three prisoners. Furthermore, the Rastatt Trials imposed one life sentence, and 11 received either maximum or normal-security prison terms.

Subcamp commander Büttner had commanded the Natzweiler Quarry subcamp from the spring of 1941. In the summer of 1944, he became the commander of the subcamp at Thil-Longwy and served from September 3, 1944, as Waffen-SS Oberscharführer commander of Kochendorf. At the end of 1945, a denazification court in Berlin exculpated him as a follower (*Mitläufer*), but in 1949, a Soviet military tribunal in Berlin sentenced him to forced labor for life, which he served in penitentiaries in Berlin and Bautzen. In 1954, a French military court in Metz sentenced him in absentia to death. After he was released from prison in 1956, the Stuttgart state prosecutor began investigations in 1962, during which he was interrogated twice, once in 1962 and then in 1969. The proceedings ceased in November 1970 because of insufficient evidence. Büttner died in 1975.

**SOURCES** Kochendorf is listed as a Natzweiler subcamp in ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), 1:204.

Detlef Ernst and Klaus Riexinger have described the history of the subcamp and its connections with the German armaments industry in *Vernichtung durch Arbeit. Die Geschichte des KZ Kochendorf/Aussenkommando des KZ Natzweiler-Struthof* (Bad Reichenhall: Welker, 1996). The book contains many reproductions of documents on the camp history, witness reports, and pictures, as well as a comprehensive bibliography.

Collection RG-50.042\*0007, Acc. 1994.A.447 of the USHMM in Washington, DC, contains the witness statements of Shony Braun about his odyssey through German

concentration camps. Among other things, he reports on the death of his father in the Kochendorf subcamp after severe mistreatment by guards and the SS. These archives also contain a report by George Freshman about his experiences as a prisoner at Kochendorf, Vaihingen, and Vaihingen/Unterriexingen in Collection Acc. 1997.A.0829. Furthermore, at USHMM, Collection Acc. 1998 A.0045, Reel 44, has the names of 700 prisoners transferred from Sachsenhausen to Kochendorf in October 1944. The BA-MA in Freiburg holds documents on Kochendorf in Collection RW 19/1788, RL 3/1172 and R 3/1757.

Files on Ernst Heinkel AG are held in the ASt-Ros. The files of the ZdL (held at BA-L) on Kochendorf are cataloged as IV 419 AR-Z 180/1969. Other documents are to be found in the ASt-B-Fl, which also holds documents on the camp's cemetery.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## LEONBERG

The city of Leonberg is located in Württemberg, about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Stuttgart. It was chosen as the site for a large subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp because an airplane parts manufacturing plant (*Presswerke*) for the firm Augsburg Messerschmitt AG was located there. The workshops were built in the Etlingen area. Next to Leonberg ran a section of the Munich-Heilbronn highway, and a double tunnel had been dug before the war. At the end of 1943, the ends of the tunnel were blocked and the factory was relocated there. Production began at the end of spring 1944. All that was needed was a labor supply. A Natzweiler subcamp (*Aussenlager*) was created for that purpose, just a few hundred meters from the tunnel's entrance. The exact date of the camp's creation is unknown, but it appears that the first transport of prisoners arrived on April 10, 1944, bringing 398 inmates from the Dachau subcamps of Haunstetten and Gablingen. They were put in barracks built on a plot on Seestrass in Leonberg.

New transports of inmates arrived regularly. On June 1, 1944, there were 650 men in the camp; on July 1, 852; July 9, 798; July 12, 1,032; September 30, 1,162; October 31, 1,555. The number of inmates rapidly increased until reaching around 3,000. The largest number of convoys came from Dachau or its subcamps. At least 13 convoys arrived from the Dachau main camp; 5 from Dachau/Augsburg-Pfersee, with a total of 748 men; 2 from Dachau/Kaufering, with 268 inmates; and a single convoy of 129 people from Dachau/Gablingen. At least 1 convoy arrived from Sachsenhausen (216 men) and 1 from Auschwitz (200). It is thus possible to calculate that at least 3,329 inmates were registered at Leonberg. Some were sent back to other camps; for example, 31 of them were sent to Dachau on November 1, 1944; two groups of 60 each to Natzweiler/Vaihingen/Enz, and 258 to Bergen-Belsen on March 11, 1945. The inmates arrived at the train station in

Leonberg, and then they had to walk 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) to the camp. They came from all over Europe, from at least 21 countries (including Switzerland and Spain). The most widely represented nationalities were Polish, Hungarian, French, Russian, and Yugoslav. The categories of inmates present in the camp were also diverse. While the majority were registered as "protective custody" (*Schutzhaft*) prisoners, there were Jews, political prisoners, Gypsies, "asocials," and prisoners of war (POWs). The first Jewish prisoners did not arrive until November 1944. There were in total 659 Jews registered in Leonberg.

The camp was made up of five wooden barracks on concrete foundations; one served as an infirmary (*Revier*). The other buildings each included four sections into which prisoners were crowded. The camp, surrounded by electrified barbed-wire fences, was guarded from about four or six towers. The roll-call yard was small. The surveillance of the camp was in the hands of the SS. On July 29, 1944, there were 12 SS noncommissioned officers (*Unterführer*) and 21 guards assigned to Leonberg. With the number of inmates increasing rapidly, the number of guards was increased to 15 *Unterführer* and 45 guards. During at least the first few months of the camp's existence, certain wardens were not with the SS but were soldiers in the Luftwaffe. It is even possible during the early period that the head of the subcamp himself might have been an officer in the Luftwaffe. Before the evacuation, the head of the subcamp was an SS-Obersturmführer.

The inmates' sanitary situation was relatively adequate in the camp's first few months but rapidly deteriorated after November 1944 with the arrival of a large number of prisoners. The number of deaths increased beginning in November, and the situation was catastrophic up until the evacuation. A typhus epidemic broke out. Numerous inmates were evacuated to the SS hospital camps (*Krankenlager*). Whereas there had only been 1 or 2 deaths a month until October, there were 6 in November, 21 in December, and 51 in January. In February, 162 inmates died. At least 291 deaths were recorded at the city hall prior to the evacuation (including 99 Polish, 49 Hungarians, 41 French, and 39 Italians), but the actual number of dead was higher. The bodies were buried in a mass grave dug near the camp, in a place called Blosenberg. After the war, the grave was opened, and 374 bodies were found.

Some inmates escaped; 13 succeeded in leaving the camp between May 22 and August 16, 1944, of whom 9 were recaptured. Their fate is not known. Three Russian prisoners were sentenced to 15 baton blows for "preparation to escape" (*Vorbereitungen zur Flucht*). On August 6, Russian prisoner Wladimir Golowin succeeded in fleeing. Recaptured, he was hanged in the camp on September 28. On December 1, 1944, a German prisoner was beaten during an attempted escape.

The Leonberg *Schreibstube* sent daily reports on the inmates' work to the Natzweiler camp administration, which, after the evacuation of the camp from Alsace, was installed at Guttenbach/Baden as of November 23, 1944.

The vast majority of camp prisoners worked in the tunnel, manufacturing airplane parts, in particular, wings for Messerschmitt (Me) 262 series aircraft. The majority of the factory's workers were inmates, but there were also German foremen and foreign forced laborers. For this last group, barracks were built at one of the entrances of the tunnel. Messerschmitt AG sent at least one engineer and several technicians to Leonberg. The inmates worked 12-hour periods, with shift changes at 6:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. In December, a single 18-hour workday was imposed, with stoppages of 48 consecutive hours. Some inmates were also employed outside the tunnel. We know, for example, of the existence of a mine clearance team. Other groups worked on small construction sites in Leonberg; another in a nearby quarry. After the aerial bombardments on the city, some inmates were put to work clearing the ruins.

In mid-April 1945, facing the advance of Allied troops, the inmates were evacuated on foot to Stuttgart. The inmates received 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread for the journey. Many among them were beaten during the death march, for example, at Mitterskirchen. At the train station in Stuttgart, they were loaded into freight cars, as many as 100 per car. Some inmates died in the cars. Fights broke out. There was no food distribution. After three days of travel, the train arrived at the Kauferring station, close to Landsberg, about 60 kilometers (37.3 miles) from Munich, where there was a Dachau subcamp. According to the testimony of one of the inmates, Ernst Bornstein, one-fourth of the men died on the train. The majority of the inmates, 1,989, remained in this subcamp; a smaller contingent of 724 men was transported to the Mühldorf subcamp, which was also under the control of Dachau.

Before the arrival of the Allied armies, the barracks of the Leonberg camp were burned down. The remains were razed after the war, and apartment buildings were constructed on the site.

In 1953, the mass grave was opened, and the bodies were buried in the municipal cemetery. In addition to the 291 recorded deaths, 82 bodies were found.

On December 28, 1979, an inhabitant of Leonberg, Margarete Stingle, received a Merit Cross (*Verdienstkreuz*) from the president of the Federal Republic of Germany for the help she had given to the camp's inmates.

**SOURCES** Documentation pertaining to the Leonberg subcamp can be found at ITS (Hängemappe Akdo Leonberg; Zuwachsortner KL Natzweiler); the VVN, Stuttgart (Ordner Leonberg); BA-L (AZ IV 419 AR-Z 171/69). Among the few secondary sources on the camp are Jürgen Klingel, "Zur Funktion und Entwicklung der Konzentrationslager. Das Lager Leonberg," in *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegsführung. Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*, ed. Herwart Vorländer (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978), pp. 19–69; Friedrich E. Wolf, ed., *KZ in Leonberg. Eine Dokumentation* (Leonberg: Haus der Begegnung Erwachsenenarbeit der Evang. Kirchenbezirke Leonberg/Ditzingen, 1980). A former Jewish inmate of Leonberg wrote a memoir:

Ernst Israel Bornstein, *Die lange Nacht. Ein Bericht aus sieben Lagern* (Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1967).

Jean-Marc Dreyfus  
trans. Gina Cooke

## MANNHEIM-SANDHOFEN [AKA MANNHEIM-WALDHOF]

On September 27, 1944, a subcamp of the concentration camp Natzweiler was opened at Sandhofen, a suburb of the city of Mannheim, in Baden. This subcamp was also known by the name Mannheim-Waldhof. A convoy of 1,060 men arrived from Dachau on that September day. Some inmates had only briefly passed through Dachau, like the Pole Zdzisław Siwak, who came from the transit camp of Pruszkow and who left a testimony of his internment at Mannheim-Sandhofen. The journey lasted three days, despite the short distance between the two camps. The inmates were allocated prisoner numbers from 29241 to 30300. Once they arrived at the train station in Mannheim, they went through town on foot, in rows of five, to reach their new camp. On October 7, the camp management asked the administration of the Natzweiler main camp for seven German Kapos and a doctor for the inmates (*Häftlingsarzt*). A doctor arrived at the camp. His name was Andreas Barhard, and he was an Iraqi, born on November 13, 1914. He had internment number 14903. The camp elder (*Lagerältester*) was Karlus Walter. There were some Jewish inmates in the camp, including survivors of the Warsaw ghetto. A group of Polish prisoners had taken part in the Warsaw Uprising in August 1944.

The camp was established in three schools. The main school was the Friedrich School (Friedrich Schule), located at Kriegstrasse 28 in Sandhofen. The two other schools were on the same street, at numbers 15 and 18. Five supplementary Kapos who spoke Polish were sent to the camp. Surveillance was provided by 40 soldiers from the Luftwaffe and by a few SS men. The main building, the former Friedrich School, consisted of eight classrooms on each of the two floors, each room measuring about 60 square meters (646 square feet). There were 13 toilets on the first floor and two small administrative offices. The inmates were crowded into the classrooms, with more than 60 per room. Behind the building there was a courtyard and a gymnasium (*Schulturnhalle*) where a kitchen was installed for the inmates. Siwak reports in his testimony that a small orchestra was formed around that time, to entertain the guards.

The inmates' sanitary situation was quite poor. They would arrive at the camp already weakened and in poor health. They were frequently beaten. Their uniforms were only washed one time during the camp's entire existence. The prisoners were able to take advantage, however, of a weekly shower or bath, in the school's facilities. The guards carried out death sentences by hanging prisoners from a tree in the camp's courtyard. A box would be placed under the inmate's

feet, and the youngest prisoner, who was 14 years old, would have to push it away. Some children from the neighborhood attended the hangings. For example, inmate Marian Krainiski, born in 1914, was hanged, accused of having sabotaged production at the Daimler-Benz factory where he worked. He was executed on January 4, 1945. The camp's dead were buried in the Mannheim cemetery. Frequently the prisoners faced sadistic treatment from the guards who "amused" themselves with the inmates. Abuse of prisoners declined following intervention from the management of the Daimler-Benz factory where the inmates worked, due to dissatisfaction with low productivity. There were escapes from the camp: a group of three prisoners in November 1944 and an isolated escape, that of one of the Kapos dressed in the uniform of an SS guard.

The majority of inmates worked in the Daimler-Benz factory in Luzenberg, about 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) away from the camp. They went there on foot and returned each night to the camp. The workweek was six and a half days, at a rate of 11 hours a day. One Sunday night in three was idle, but the day was taken up with interminable roll calls in the courtyard, accompanied by forced marches and poor treatment. Daimler-Benz AG paid the SS 6 Reichsmark (RM) for a day of work by a skilled laborer and just 4 RM for an unskilled laborer. In October 1944, the company paid 106,181.20 RM to the management of the Natzweiler concentration camp. The inmates of Mannheim-Sandhofen worked in manufacturing crankshafts and trucks. They were employed as lathe operators or on an assembly line. The factory supplied the camp with supplementary food rations, which were frequently stolen by the guards.

A few days before Christmas 1944, Mannheim and Ludwigsburg were bombed. A bomb fell on the camp's kitchen, killing the inmates who worked there and injuring several others. The school was damaged, and some inmates were temporarily housed in a bunker that had originally been intended to serve as a civilian shelter.

Starting in December 1944, on Christmas, several hundred inmates were removed from the camp and sent to Buchenwald. The rest of the prisoners were housed in the building of the preschool next door, which until then had housed Italian forced laborers. Space was lacking. Inmates lived under the roof, where the temperature was terribly low. In mid-March, a selection took place, and inmates deemed unfit for labor were sent to the Vaihingen/Enz camp. About 400 men remained at Sandhofen. They were evacuated on March 20, 1945, to the camp at Kochendorf, another Natzweiler subcamp, located near Stuttgart. They were put to work in an airplane factory built inside a salt mine. The camp was evacuated on March 30, with the 1,500 surviving inmates. The death march lasted eight days, until reaching Dachau. Only 175 men made it there alive. There were a small number of survivors, just a few hundred, from the Mannheim-Sandhofen camp. When American troops entered Mannheim on March 26, 1945, the camp had been entirely evacuated.

**SOURCES** Little literature exists on the Mannheim-Sandhofen subcamp; see Jürgen Ziegler, *Mitten unter uns. Natzweiler-Struthof: Spuren eines Konzentrationslagers* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986), pp. 161–182.

Jean-Marc Dreyfus  
trans. Gina Cooke

## MARKIRCH

The Markirch (French: Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines) subcamp is first mentioned in the Natzweiler concentration camp files on March 13, 1944. According to Robert Steegmann, the subcamp was opened with 25 prisoners on this date. Immediately thereafter a transport of 500 prisoners arrived from Dachau, of whom 36.6 percent were Italians, 23.4 percent were Soviets, and 22.6 percent were Yugoslavs. Some 96 percent of the prisoners were political prisoners; 12 were "asocials"; 7 were security prisoners; 1 was a prisoner who refused to serve with the Wehrmacht; 2 were foreign civilian forced laborers; and 2 were prisoners of war (POWs). By the autumn of 1944, 59 of these prisoners are thought to have died in the Markirch subcamp. Initially the camp consisted solely of the Markirch site; later Bayerische Motoren Werke (BMW) established a second camp in Otto-Hütten, with the camps being known as Camp I and II. From the end of April 1944 to the end of December 1944, the Markirch camp commander was Eugen Wur.; Andreas Göb. was senior Kapo (the abbreviated names have been taken from the court proceedings).

According to Steegmann, a second transport of 500 prisoners arrived at the end of March 1944; 48.7 percent of the prisoners were Italians, 26.4 percent were Yugoslavs, 24.6 percent were Soviets, and 10.1 percent were Germans; but there were also 25 French and 28 Greeks. The overwhelming majority of prisoners, 96.7 percent, were political prisoners. The men from both transports were set to work in Markirch, constructing the camp and preparing a disused railway tunnel as the production site for aircraft engines by BMW. Supplies and production material mostly came from the Dachau/München-Allach (BMW) subcamp, which had been largely destroyed during Allied bombing raids.

Other transports arrived in the following months: 56 prisoners on May 25, 1944; 16 on June 1; 60 on June 17; and 537 on June 18. All the transports originated from München-Allach and consisted mostly of Soviet political prisoners, who had been chosen for their professional skills—construction workers and metalworkers. Two other transports from München-Allach arrived in Markirch between July and August 1944: on July 19, 223 prisoners; and on July 23, 139 prisoners (61.3 percent Italian, 6.3 percent Yugoslav, 18.5 percent Soviet, 8.2 percent Dutch). Documents from the Natzweiler concentration camp reveal that these prisoners were not chosen because of their professional skills. A final, large transport from München-Allach arrived in the camp in August 1944—57.3 percent of the prisoners in this trans-



port were Soviet citizens. The 226 prisoners did not remain in Markirch but were distributed between other Natzweiler subcamps in Neckartal, including camps of the Gruppe “Wüste” and the subcamp in Spaichingen. Steegmann states the source material on the transports to Markirch is generally chaotic and that not all were put together in the Natzweiler main camp.

It is likely that two prisoners were executed in the camp for trying to escape: the execution of Italian prisoner Agsdino Campo (escaped on July 30, 1944; hanged on September 14, 1944) is documented.

On August 14, 1944, there were 1,857 prisoners registered in Markirch as capable of working: 816 for the construction detachment Markirch A9 [Ste Marie A9] and 1,041 for BMW (Elsässische Spezial Grosskellerei). The Markirch A9 work site was a tunnel that was constructed close to Saint-Die. The tunnel was 6,875 meters (about 7,519 yards) long, 6.15 meters (6.7 yards) high, and 7.8 meters (8.5 yards) wide. Under the command of SS-Hauptsturmführer Fritsch and SS-Obersturmführer Losacker, a Mannheim architect, railway track laying, electrical, and concreting work was to be done on the surface of 50,000 square meters (538,195 square yards). Ventilation and heating equipment was also to be installed. After the tunnel was constructed, it was to be prepared so that BMW could commence production of aircraft engines. Work in the tunnel was extraordinarily difficult, and the high humidity resulted in many illnesses. At least 100 prisoners died while working in the tunnel. These numbers do not include those prisoners who could no longer work and who were returned to the main camp, where they were exchanged for new prisoners.

At the end of August 1944, there were between 1,600 and 1,700 prisoners in the camp. However, production in the A9 tunnel never commenced due to the advance of the front line. During September, most of the prisoners were evacuated in different transports to Dachau (mostly to the München-Allach subcamp). At least 62 prisoners died while being transported. Other prisoners were taken to the Neckarelz and Neckargartach subcamps.

**SOURCES** Robert Steegmann describes Markirch in his history of the Natzweiler concentration camp in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 67–69, 276–277. SS-Untersturmführer Eugen Wur. was tried in 1965–1966 before the court (Landgericht) in Hechingen for the execution of a foreign prisoner but was acquitted for lack of evidence. The judgment is to be found in *JuNS-V*, vol. 23, lfd. Nr. 625, pp. 369–426.

Archival material on the Markirch camp can be found in the ACCS as well as in the AAC-C (Collection NAT 55: Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines, 1 box). Records from investigations by the state prosecutor on crimes committed in the Markirch subcamp are held at the BA-L (419 AR 2191/67; 419 AR-Z 33/61).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## METZ

During the German occupation, from 1940 to 1944, there was a Natzweiler subcamp for male prisoners in the city of Metz, which belonged in that period to the German administrative unit Gau Westmark. The first mention of the camp is on August 6, 1943, and the last, a year later, on August 16, 1944.

The prisoners were used by the Waffen-SS Building Administration as well as by the police and SS-Intelligence School in Metz. They were accommodated in the Fort Göben Casemate I.

**SOURCES** The Metz subcamp is mentioned in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), 1:206.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## MÜHLHAUSEN

The Mühlhausen subcamp (French: Mulhouse) was located in the former Reichsgau Bade-Elsass. It came into existence during the liquidation of the Natzweiler main camp, lasting for only a few weeks.

The camp is first mentioned in the Natzweiler files in the period after August 24, 1944. Around 200 male prisoners were taken from Dachau to Mühlhausen on August 30, 1944, to construct a factory for Elsässische Maschinenbau GmbH (Elmag), which was to be used to produce armaments.

Robert Steegmann determined the composition of the prisoners: around 18 percent were Italians, 12.5 percent were Poles, and 48.5 percent were Soviets. The large majority of the prisoners were political prisoners.

The prisoners never commenced work because of the approach of Allied troops. The camp is mentioned for the final time in the files of the main camp on September 29, 1944, when 198 inmates were sent back to Dachau.

**SOURCES** A description of the Mühlhausen subcamp is provided by Robert Steegmann in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos: Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 75, 261. Antoine Greffier states that the Mühlhausen subcamp was a secure Natzweiler subcamp in *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof*, published by the Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg in 2002, at p. 157.

The Mühlhausen subcamp is listed in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), 1:206.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NECKARELZ I AND II

At the end of the war, as Allied bombardments on the Reich intensified, the production of war equipment went underground.

VOLUME I: PART B

The gypsum mine in Obrigheim/Neckar was used as the site for Daimler-Benz workshops to manufacture engines for Messerschmitt planes. Previously, the mine had been operated by the Heidelberg company Portland-Zementwerke. Two subcamps of the Natzweiler concentration camp in Alsace were created to supply labor to the subterranean factories. They were built in the town of Neckarelz, located on the other side of the Neckar River. The first subcamp was set up in the Neckarelz school on March 21, 1944, with the arrival of a convoy of 500 inmates from Dachau, where they had been selected for the work. The lack of security installations permitted 3 inmates to escape shortly after their arrival; quickly, however, the grounds of the school were surrounded by barbed-wire fences. The Neckarelz subcamps were built in the following months, as the Daimler-Benz labor demand increased. In April, three other convoys with prisoners arrived from Auschwitz, Natzweiler, and Gross-Rosen. In May, 600 men were sent from Oranienburg. Between July 22 and 24, 1944, 1,100 inmates, all French, arrived from Dachau, where they had been transported from the camp at Compiègne on July 1. A convoy sent from Markirch brought another 600 men in September 1944.

In the Neckarelz I camp and the three subsubcamps there were 2,129 inmates in June 1944 (1,100 in Neckarelz alone) and 2,944 in September. In Neckarelz II, there were an average of 1,400 inmates. The group of five camps included 3,000 inmates at the time of its evacuation. There were some women among them, mostly French prostitutes imprisoned in France and sent to concentration camps by the Germans.

The Neckarelz camp had a rectangular shape. The school yard served as the roll-call area. The barracks were built around it, 12 in all, with several infirmaries (*Revier*), a warehouse for food, two disinfectant rooms, and another for the block leader (*Blockführer*). The inmates were housed in the school building's eight classrooms where trilevel bunk beds were put up. The inmates' office (*Schreibstube*) was in the cellar, along with the office of the "protective custody" camp chief (*Schutzhaftlagerführer*).

In December 1944, a second camp was built, near the entrance of the Obrigheim mine, designated as Neckarelz II. It was located next to the old Neckarelz train station, beside the tracks. It consisted of one or two housing barracks but depended on Neckarelz I for the rest of its facilities (kitchen, infirmary). Inmates deemed unfit for work were sent to Neckarelz I and replaced by prisoners from there. The camp guard was made up of a few SS men and 300 to 400 Luftwaffe soldiers from the Gotha and Vienna units.

The first commandant, transferred from the Auschwitz camp administration, was SS-Obersturmführer Hössler. He was replaced after two months by SS-Hauptsturmführer Franz Hofmann, who also came from Auschwitz. In October 1945, he was put in charge of the Gruppe "Wüste" camps. The protective custody camp chief replaced him.

The commander of Neckarelz II was an SS man with the rank of Rottenführer. The director of labor named Lutz murdered many inmates and was sentenced to death after liberation by a military tribunal in Rastatt. The camp elder

(*Lagerältester*) of Neckarelz I was Max Schwaiger. A former lieutenant in the Wehrmacht, he had been denounced for seditious intentions and sent to a concentration camp. The *Lagerältester* of camp II was a homosexual, Walter Haufe; according to survivor accounts, he displayed sadistic behavior.

At Neckarelz, there existed the position of Oberkapo to supervise the group of Kapos. The position was held by someone named Hermann, a procurer from Berlin. Some Kapos behaved particularly brutally and killed dozens of inmates. Positions within the camp's administration were held by political prisoners. There was a political department (*Politische Abteilung*) at Neckarelz, directed by a criminal policeman (*Kriminalsekretär*) of the Karlsruhe Gestapo. There were at least six executions, five for attempted escape and one for sabotage.

The prisoners' food was prepared by a group of 11 prisoners in the Neckarelz camp and brought to Obrigheim by truck. The meals at 9:00 A.M. and at noon were taken on the work site. The food was insufficient for the inmates, despite the 2,000 Reichsmark (RM) paid monthly by Daimler-Benz to purchase supplementary rations. Clothing was even scarcer, as the delousing hut at Neckarelz I burned down at the end of August 1944, along with many clothes. The inmates tried to protect themselves from the cold by putting sheets of paper or empty cement sacks under their shirts, even though that was forbidden.

The majority of inmates worked in the old gypsum mine, where they had to enlarge the subterranean chambers to set up workshops. This immense project carried the code name of "A8." The existing subterranean chambers were enlarged, others were dug, the corridors were reinforced with concrete, and electricity was provided. An enormous heating installation, the *Kesselhaus*, was built and fortified to resist bombardments. It was a matter of building workshops for Daimler-Benz to manufacture airplane engines for the Messerschmitt and Heinkel aviation factories. At the end of the war, a floor space of 71,000 square meters (84,915 square yards), together with 34 kilometers (21 miles) of subterranean corridors, had been created underground.

The hardest excavation work was reserved for camp inmates. Forced laborers were employed at the manufacturing plant. They were housed in hospitals and in a requisitioned home for the disabled. In all, 5,000 men and women worked in the mine. Other inmates from Neckarelz were employed in construction work by the SS-Construction Special Inspectorate (*Bausonderinspektion*) III Obrigheim and by different local public works companies, like Dyckerhoff und Widmann (D & W). One group of inmates worked in the galleries of the mines at Obrigheim and Neckarzimmern; another group was employed in a cement factory, and a third in a pickle plant (*Gurkenkonservenfabrik*). Small labor details, often temporary, existed too. There was one at the train station in Neckarelz where the inmates were unloaded from the train cars. The one at Asbach built barracks. The Mosbach detail worked for an Alsatian company where there were free Alsatian workers who when on leave would run small shopping errands for the French inmates.

The official list of deceased French inmates at Neckarelz I and II and at Neckargerach includes 232 names. The bodies of the dead inmates were first sent to the crematory in Heidelberg. Beginning in mid-October 1944, in order to save the costs of cremation and transportation, they were buried in a mass grave in the Jewish cemetery of Binau, situated between Neckarelz and Neckargerach.

At the end of March 1945, the order to evacuate the camps arrived. The inmates of the sub-subcamps of Asbach, Bad Rappenau, and Neckarbischofsheim were sent to Neckarelz I. From there, all of the prisoners left on foot on March 25 or 26. On March 29, they arrived at Kupferzell, where they stayed two days. The death march continued in the direction of Schwäbisch-Hall, where approximately 2,000 prisoners boarded a freight train that took them to Dachau; 1,655 arrived alive. On April 28, 441 additional Neckarelz inmates arrived at Dachau, having covered the distance on foot. A freight train transported another 287 inmates incapable of walking. Because bombardments had destroyed the tracks, the train stopped at Osterburken. After four days of waiting, the prisoners were liberated by American troops.

The machines that were found in the mine were dismantled and sent to the Soviet Union. In 1952, the bodies in the Binau cemetery were exhumed, and those of the French prisoners, after being identified, were sent to the military cemetery in Strasbourg. The other corpses were buried again, near the entrance of the Jewish cemetery.

**SOURCES** A complete description of the history of the camp can be found in Jürgen Ziegler, *Mitten unter uns. Natzweiler-Struthof: Spuren eines Konzentrationslagers* (Hamburg: VSA Verlag, 1986), pp. 183–237. Philippe Bent, a French doctor, wrote a book of memoirs: *L'attente de la mort dans les camps du Neckar* (Montclar-de-Quercy: Dr Philippe Bent, 1957). A member of the Resistance arrested in Toulouse, Bent was first deported to the camp of Compiègne, then to Dachau on July 1, 1944, before July 22, when he was sent to Neckarelz. Another member of the Resistance from Toulouse, Jacques Barrau, was deported on the same convoy. In Neckarelz, with the help of other inmates, he started to make some drawings of daily life in the camp. These drawings were saved and completed after liberation. They are published, with commentaries in both French and German: Jacques Barrau, *Dessins d'un camp. Le camp de Neckarelz, Zeichnungen aus einem Lager. Das Konzentrationslageraussenkommando Neckarelz* (Karlsruhe: Verlag Michael Schmid, 1992). For another survivor testimony, see Alice Landau, *Neuf mois de chirurgie au camp de déportation de Neckarelz* (Toulouse, 1947).

Jean-Marc Dreyfus  
trans. Gina Cooke

## NECKARELZ I AND II/ASBACH

In the Baden village of Asbach, male Natzweiler concentration camp inmates were stationed to erect barracks for employees of the Daimler-Benz company. The camp was part of the

Neckar camp complex, and the work done here was closely connected with the project “Goldfisch,” the relocation of the Daimler-Benz production site from Genshagen to Obrigheim, not far from Asbach, and the “Kormoran” project. After the work was completed, the prisoners were to return to the camps they had originally come from, Neckarelz and Neckargerach. In recent literature—for instance, by Tobias Markowitsch and Katrin Rautnig—the Asbach camp is therefore referred to as Barackenbaukommando (barracks construction detachment).

The original SS plans consisted of erecting 32 barracks for approximately 1,200 Ostarbeiter (Eastern forced laborers), with the construction work to be concluded on August 20, 1944. Due to short supplies of material and slave labor, however, construction work only began on September 14, 1944, when 60 male prisoners from Neckargerach, under the command of SS-Oberscharführer Heinrich Meyer and guarded by 10 SS men, were taken to Asbach, to the camp site in the village forest at Daudenzell. For the first two weeks, the prisoners were taken back to Neckargerach every night. From September 25 on, they were accommodated in the first barracks that was finished in the camp. In the course of fall 1944, the number of inmates increased to 150, now also including inmates from Neckarelz I.

At the same time, other projects within the Neckar camp complex gained a higher priority, and increasing Allied air raids made the construction work harder and harder. In December 1944, the project was mostly complete: The pipeline that brought drinking water into the camp was laid, the kitchen barracks were all but finished, and a wash barracks was under construction, as were 8 to 10 barracks that were to be used as living quarters. Also, the road leading to the camp and the pathways within the camp were completed. By the end of 1944, the plans were reduced: now only 9 barracks were to be erected, and the number of concentration camp inmates in the camp was reduced to 45. Asbach remained a provisional camp. In January 1945, Dr. Jean Andréis, who at that time was the prisoner physician at Neckarzimmern, was called to Asbach to take care of the SS commando leader who had taken a bad fall. As Markowitsch and Rautnig report, Andréis received permission to visit the local pharmacy, and while buying the necessary medication for the SS man, he also bought some medication for the inmates, mainly vitamin pills, and surgical gauze. Besides this doctor's visit, there was no medical care in the camp, which apparently had no infirmary.

On March 23, 1945, the work at the camp officially ceased, and the inmates were transferred back to Neckarelz. Afterward, the camp was dissolved.

**SOURCES** Tobias Markowitsch and Katrin Rautnig deliver detailed information on the role of the Asbach camp within the Neckar camp complex in *Goldfisch und Zebra. Das Konzentrationslageraussenkommando Neckarelz. Konzentrationslager des Verlagerungsprojektes A8 und Aussenkommando von Natzweiler-Struthof* (Neckarelz: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neckarelz e.V., 2005). Robert Steegmann describes the Asbach subcamp in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg:



Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 76, 110. Neckarelz I and II/Asbach labor details are mentioned in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:207.

A reference in the BA-B (NS 4, KL Na, Catalogue 49-102, Häftlingsangelegenheiten) mentions the camp in Asbach as follows: "93—AL Neckarelz: Prisoners Transferred Back to Natzweiler, 93a—AK Neckarzimmern, Neckargerach, Asbach." At BA-BL, see call number 419 AR-1781/67 Asbach-Daudenzell for information on the Asbach camp.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NECKARELZ I AND II/BAD RAPPENAU

A work detachment of the Natzweiler subcamps Neckarelz I and II for male prisoners was located in the Baden town of Bad Rappenau. It was part of the Neckar camp complex and specifically dedicated to the machinery that was to be used by the Daimler-Benz company after its relocation from Genshagen near Berlin to Obrigheim.

According to an official report, the Bad Rappenau camp was opened between September and October 1944 with the arrival of about 15 inmates from the Neckarelz camp in the town of Bad Rappenau, about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) from Bad Wimpfen. Inmates were to prepare a giant machinery park in the old salt pit of Bad Rappenau; therefore, the inmates had to clean the salt pit first to prepare it for storing the machines there. This equipment came from the local SS-Bauhof, which was in charge of paints, engines, machines, air filtration systems, clothing supply, modular barracks, and other items—all of them booty from the occupied areas and evacuated goods from areas that had fallen into the hands of the Allies. Inmates had to unload the arriving equipment and place it in the fabric halls. The prisoners were located in the two former drilling houses of the salt pit: in one of them, they installed two-tier bunk beds; the second building was used as the inmates' kitchen. Most likely, the camp administration and the guards' quarters were also in this second building. The camp was surrounded by barbed wire.

Like the guards, the majority of inmates had come from the Natzweiler subcamp at Wesserling, which had been evacuated in late fall of 1944 to Neckarelz. This transfer is confirmed by the memoirs of Zacheus Pawlak, a Polish inmate first of Auschwitz, then of Wesserling and Bad Rappenau. The criminal inmate Toni, who had been camp elder in Wesserling, also became the camp elder in Bad Rappenau. Pawlak reports that the living and working conditions at the Bad Rappenau subcamp apparently were bearable, depending on the inmates' work assignments. In general, the guards (SS and Luftwaffe) did not mistreat the prisoners, and the local population (including the nuns of the Bad Rappenau orphanage) frequently supplied the inmates with food. Beside the salt pit and the SS-Bauhof, inmates worked at the railway station, where they loaded and unloaded trains; at the Neckar

River, where they loaded and unloaded ships and boats; and for local farmers. For the farm work, inmates were sometimes able to receive some extra food rations. On December 5, 1944, one day after the devastating air raid on Neckarsulm (about 15 kilometers or 9.3 miles away), inmates of the Bad Rappenau subcamp were taken to the town to clean up. The Bad Rappenau salt pit itself had been attacked repeatedly from the air, but no inmates had been killed. Only in March 1945 were four inmates killed, when they were sent to clean up after an Allied air raid, and a bomb exploded. There are no reports on the number of inmates who may have died during the camp's existence; most likely, inmates considered too weak to work were sent to other camps such as Vaihingen/Unterriexingen and died there.

At the end of March 1945, the prisoners were evacuated to the Neckarelz subcamp. From there, they were taken only a few days later by foot and train to Dachau and its subcamps. During this evacuation, on Easter Sunday 1945, their train was attacked by Allied planes, and numerous inmates died.

**SOURCES** Robert Steegmann describes the Bad Rappenau subcamp in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 76, 110, 258; also Tobias Markowitsch and Katrin Rautnig in their *Goldfisch und Zebra. Das Konzentrationslager aussenkommando Neckarelz. Konzentrationslager des Verlagerungsprojektes A8 und Aussenkommando von Natzweiler-Struthof* (Neckarelz: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neckarelz e.V., 2005). An especially important document on the Bad Rappenau subcamp is the memoirs of Zacheus Pawlak, "Ich habe überlebt." *Ein Häftling berichtet über Majdanek* (Hamburg: Hoffmann and Campe, 1979). Only very few survivor statements on this subcamp are available, and Pawlak's memoirs are the only ones of a survivor from Eastern Europe. For further information on the subcamp, see Heinz Tisel, *Das "SS-Arbeitslager Steinbock" in Neckargartach. Augenzeugenberichte—Dokumente—Tatsachen mit Material über Kochendorf und Bad Rappenau* (Heilbronn, 1987). The ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 207, refers to the Bad Rappenau labor detail as part of the Neckarelz I and II subcamp.

At BA-BL, see call number 419 AR-1772/67 for more information on the Bad Rappenau subcamp.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NECKARELZ I AND II/ NECKARBISCHOFSHAIM

The town of Neckarbischofsheim in Baden was the seat of a labor detail of the Natzweiler subcamp Neckarelz I and II and belonged to the complex of the Neckarlager (camps along the Neckar River). According to a decision by the SS-Führungsstab Ost (Leadership Staff East), inmates from Neckarelz and Neckargerach were to erect a barracks camp that was to house a Daimler-Benz workforce that was to be evacuated from their locations in central Germany due to the increasing number of air raids.



The grounds for this barracks camp at Neckarbischofsheim were located on the edge of the city, next to a field and the Schwarzbach Creek. The close proximity to the railway track between Neckargmünd and Obrigheim was another important factor for choosing the site.

Between September 14 and 25, 1944, every day about 80 prisoners were taken from Neckargerach to Neckarbischofsheim, where they started to work on erecting the camp. On September 25, they moved into the first barrack that was completed. In the plans of the SS-Leadership Staff, the amount of workforce needed to erect the camp was estimated at 90 specialists (construction workers) and about 225 unskilled workers. The plans called for the erection of 12 barracks within 70 days; additionally, barracks for special purposes (administration, kitchen, washing, infirmary, delousing, toilets) were also to be built. The building of roads and pathways, of canals, and of fences was also planned. When finished, the camp was to hold about 1,000 Daimler-Benz laborers.

Since the SS-Führungsstab was not able to provide a sufficient number of inmates, all planning became unrealistic. Neckarbischofsheim always remained a small camp, with approximately 200 male inmates. During the construction phase, the conditions in the camp became unbearable quickly. Prisoners had no chance to shower for months; their bathroom consisted of a tree trunk that was laid across Schwarzbach Creek. Very soon, the inmates started to suffer from typhus and typhoid, and only then were some measures taken to slightly improve the sanitary conditions.

In November 1944, it became obvious that other projects within the Neckarlager complex had a higher priority. Additionally, air raids at a number of the camps delayed the construction work significantly. By the end of the war, only six barracks were completed in Neckarbischofsheim; also constructed were the road leading to the entrance of the camp, a provisional bridge crossing the creek, and some pathways. To accomplish this, SS men mercilessly exploited the emaciated and starving inmates. On March 15, 1945, 30 inmates not able to work were exchanged for new prisoners from Neckarelz II. The small size of the detachment even increased the exploitation of the inmates. Only temporarily, between October 1944 and mid-February 1945, a prisoners' physician was present in the camp: Dr. Joseph Leccia, a French resistance fighter, who afterward was transferred to Neckarelz II.

Presumably, the Neckarbischofsheim inmates came from a number of different nationalities, like all inmates in the Neckarlager complex. Among them were French, Poles, Russians, Italians, Germans, Norwegians, Belgians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Czechs, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), Latvians, Hungarians, Luxembourgiens, Dutch, Romanians, Slovaks, Yugoslavs, Spaniards, and Greeks. Robert Stein, one of the few German inmates in Neckarbischofsheim, was the camp Kapo.

By the end of March 1945, Neckarbischofsheim was evacuated, and the inmates were sent back to Neckarelz. From

there, they joined the evacuation marches of the Natzweiler inmates. On March 29, all prisoners still able to walk were taken via Öhringen to Kupferzell. From there, 2,000 inmates were taken by train to Dachau, where they arrived on April 2. Another group of inmates walked from Neckarelz to Dachau, where they arrived almost a month later, on April 27. Sick inmates who were no longer able to walk were to be taken by train to Dachau, but these plans were never realized, and the inmates were set free on April 2, 1945, after their guards had escaped.

There is no clear information as to how many inmates died in the Neckarlager. According to records, the death rate was about 10 percent. But this death rate is unrealistically low since many inmates who were no longer able to work were sent to Vaihingen/Enz, a camp that within the compound of the Neckar camps served the purpose of a camp solely for the dying. The victims of that camp do not show up in any statistical records.

**SOURCES** There are two substantial studies available on the Neckarbischofsheim camp based on recent research: Peter Beisel, "Im schönsten Wiesengrund. Das Arbeitslager Neckarbischofsheim," *Be-Nbh-Hg* 4 (2003); and Tobias Markowitsch and Katrin Rautnig, *Goldfisch und Zebra. Das Konzentrationslageraussenkommando Neckarelz. Konzentrationslager des Verlagerungsprojektes A8 und Aussenkommando von Natzweiler-Struthof* (Neckarelz: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neckarelz e.V., 2005), which gives a detailed analysis of all camps in the Neckarlager complex. In addition, there are two publications by survivors on the Neckarbischofsheim camp. Maurice Voutey published his memoirs under the title *Gefangener des Unwahrscheinlichen oder Ein Traum geht ans Äusserste. Vier Jahreszeiten in Dachau und in den Neckarlageren*, trans. Dorothee Roos (Elztal-Dallau, 2002); it is one of the rare reports by a historian who survived the concentration camps. Former Kapo Robert Stein wrote an article titled "Vom Wehrmachtsstraflager zur Zwangsarbeit bei Daimler-Benz. Ein Lebensbericht," published in 1999, 2 (1987), Heft 4, pp. 20–51, in response to *Das Daimler-Benz-Buch. Ein Rüstungskonzern im "Tausendjährigen Reich"* (Nördling: Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts, 1987), to which Stein wanted to add his own experiences. A further source on the Neckarbischofsheim camp is Robert Steegmann's *Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), but information on the camp is scattered throughout the book. The Neckarelz I and II work detachment Neckarbischofsheim is listed in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 207.

There are some archival sources on the Neckarlager in general and on Neckarbischofsheim specifically. The results of investigations by the ZdL on the Neckarbischofsheim camp can be found in BA-L today (419 AR-1778/67). Also, the ACCS holds some further information.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

VOLUME I: PART B

## NECKARELZ I AND II/NECKARGERACH

A detachment of the Natzweiler subcamps Neckarelz I and II was established in Neckargerach in Baden on April 7, 1944, on the site of a former Reich Labor Service (RAD) camp. In fact, Neckargerach was the first subcamp erected after the establishment of the Neckarelz I and II subcamp. After more and more inmates had arrived at Neckarelz I and II and were to be employed in the construction of accommodations for Daimler-Benz employees, the Neckarelz I and II camp was not able to take in any more prisoners. By the end of April the former RAD camp was confiscated for the purpose of erecting the new subcamp. The camp was located in Neckargerach at Seebach Creek, about 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) down the river from Neckarelz. The RAD camp provided barracks and sanitary installations, as well as access to the Neckarelz-Obrigheim train tracks connecting Neckargerach with its superior camp and the project Goldfisch at Obrigheim, the work site of the inmates as well.

Since early April, inmates of Neckarelz I and II had worked on preparing for the opening of the camp. Most likely, the camp was opened on April 27, 1944, already very crowded. Some 400 of the inmates who arrived that day were sent to work in the underground tunnels of the Goldfisch project, while 450 remained in the camp and continued working on its construction; 4 inmates worked in the kitchen, and 19 were prisoner-functionaries. In May 1944, 600 more inmates arrived in the Neckarelz region from Sachsenhausen. Among the prisoners were 370 Soviets, 163 Poles, 36 Germans, 7 Dutch, 7 Czechs, 6 French, 5 Belgians, 2 Lithuanians, 2 Yugoslavs, and 2 stateless persons. Again, most of the prisoners were political prisoners. On the transport, 31 had died. Of the surviving inmates, about 340 remained in Neckargerach, while the others were taken to Neckarelz I and II. With about 1,240 inmates (the peak was reached on June 18, 1944, when 1,321 prisoners were in the camp), Neckargerach between May and December 1944 was the largest camp in the Neckar area. At that time, there were more inmates in the camp than the barracks could hold, and an additional tent was erected to hold 300 inmates.

Originally, the camp consisted of five barracks, each of them divided into nine rooms (*Stuben*); one barrack was used as the kitchen. The rooms were each equipped with two-tier bunk beds, two tables, benches, and a stove—but no fuel was provided. Outside the camp, there were two more barracks, one for the guards and one used as an office building. Open latrines were placed at the outskirts of the camp. For more than 1,200 inmates, there were only five faucets. Franz Hössler, the commander of all the Neckar camps, was initially also in charge of the Neckargerach subcamp. But within a few days he was replaced by a local camp commander: between April 30 and July 12, 1944, this was SS-Oberscharführer Josef Brandauer, followed by Luftwaffe-Feldwebel Zimmermann until early September 1944. Until September 23, 1944, the staff of the guard unit Spangenberg was in charge, and from October 15, 1944, on, SS-Oberscharführer Steinbach.

Detlef Ernst and Klaus Riexinger state that the guards were part of the 6th Waffen-SS Guard Company, commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Lautenschlager. The 6th Company was responsible for guarding the subcamps and detachments in Vaihingen, Kochendorf, Neckargerach, Hesselental, and Unterriexingen. On the other hand, Tobias Markowitsch and Katrin Rautnig state that, according to a special order of the commander of the Neckar camps, the 5th Guard Company under Wilhelm Streit was in charge of guarding Neckargerach and some other camps in the area.

Two-thirds of the inmates of the Neckargerach camp worked the day shift at the Obrigheim tunnel, to prepare the underground relocation of the Daimler-Benz production site from Genshagen to Obrigheim. One-third of the inmates worked the night shift, and about 45 inmates worked within the camp. The inmates' day started at 4:45 in the morning; roll call was at 5:15 A.M. At 5:30 the inmates were marched to the Neckargerach railway station and from there taken by train to Neckarelz and Obrigheim, where they started to work at 7:00 A.M. Proof of the severe living and working conditions in the camp can be seen in the fact that already by May 1944, less than one month after the camp in Neckargerach had opened, 70 prisoners were transferred back to the Natzweiler infirmary.

Until October 1944, according to survivor statements, prisoners who tried to escape or were accused of sabotage were executed in the camp. Such executions took place especially during the reign of the second commander of the Neckar camps group, Franz Johann Hofmann. For instance, according to Robert Steegmann, 23 prisoners stated to be Polish partisans were executed in June, and 27 were shot in July—either in Neckarelz or Neckargerach (sources differ). One prisoner, Boleslaw Scheszyk, was hanged in June 1944 following an unsuccessful escape attempt. Prisoners Ilja Prokuda (Soviet Union), Rene Brunet (France), and Eugen Florczak (Poland) were shot in August and September 1944, probably while trying to escape.

In December 1944, Neckargerach underwent a transformation: it completely ceased to be a work camp and became a so-called hospital camp (*Krankenlager*) for all camps of the Neckar region instead, while all inmates still capable of work were taken to Neckarelz I and II. In mid-July, a camp physician began to work in Neckargerach; on July 25, 1944, a second physician was sent to the camp; and on August 13, a third one. From November 1944 on, four to five physicians were working at Neckargerach. Thanks to the research of Markowitsch and Rautnig, the names of the inmates-physicians at the Neckar camps are known: they were French inmates Prof. Dr. Francois Rohmer, Dr. Joseph Helluy, Dr. Jacques Garnal, Dr. Stephane Fuchs, and Dr. Jean Bernex, German Dr. Werner Vohl, and Norwegian Dr. Leif Paulson. Originally the *Revier* (infirmary) only held about 25 patients a day—probably because there was no more space or because a larger number of patients were not allowed by the camp commander. In the second half of the year, the number of inmates at the infirmary began to rise to 70 and later 80 to 90 per day.

This number did not significantly increase since sick prisoners were regularly selected and sent to the “dying camp” (*Sterbelager*) Vaihingen/Enz, as happened with 120 inmates on December 20 and a further 2 in March 1945. A local German physician, Dr. Hans Wey, who had been central in saving the lives of inmates in some of the Neckar camps, also helped the prisoners of the Neckargerach camp: by warning them early about upcoming selections, he saved the lives of many prisoners. Markowitsch and Rautnig provide statistical information regarding the number of deaths in the Neckargerach camp: in April 1944, no inmates died; in May, 10; in June, 25; in July, 5; in August, 6; in September, 8; in October, 3; in November, 18; in December, 13; in January 1945, 13; in February, 15; and in March, 21. In total, these are 137 cases of death, not including those Neckargerach inmates who were transported to other camps (like the main camp or Vaihingen) to die or to be killed there.

At the end of March 1945, the evacuation of the prisoners began. By then, the number of inmates in the Neckargerach camp was over 2,000 and included numerous prisoners who had been evacuated from other subcamps to Neckargerach. Those who could walk were taken to Dachau; the last transport with 1,920 prisoners, according to eyewitness statements and files, arrived there on April 10, 1945. Those who could not walk, roughly 900, were taken at the end of March 1945 to Osterburken, where between 250 and 300 of them died. The Allies freed 887 survivors from Neckarelz/Neckargerach, on April 2, 1945.

Hofmann was sentenced in the first Auschwitz trial in 1961 by the Landgericht (Regional Court) München II to life imprisonment with hard labor for 1,938 homicides. The Landgericht Hechingen also sentenced him to imprisonment with hard labor in 1965 for his activities at Neckargerach. The sentence was revoked and the proceedings stayed, as Hofmann had already been sentenced to life imprisonment for killings committed in 1938.

**SOURCES** Tobias Markowitsch and Katrin Rautnig provide detailed information on the Neckargerach subcamp in *Goldfisch und Zebra. Das Konzentrationslagerausienkommando Neckarelz. Konzentrationslager des Verlagerungsprojektes A8 und Aussenkommando von Natzweiler-Struthof* (Neckarelz: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neckarelz e.V., 2005), esp. pp. 68–86, 112, 157–161, 178. Information of the Neckarelz/Neckargerach subcamp can also be found in Robert Steegman, *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 76–81, 110–112. Detlef Ernst and Klaus Rixinger refer to details on the guards in their *Vernichtung durch Arbeit. Die Geschichte des KZ Kochendorf, Aussenkommando des KZ Natzweiler-Struthof* (Bad Reichenhall: D. Ernst, K. Rixinger, 1996). The camp is also mentioned by Jürgen Ziegler, *Mitten unter uns. Natzweiler-Struthof. Spuren eines Konzentrationslagers* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986). The court verdict against camp commander Franz Johann Hofmann is published in *JuNSV* 23, lfd. Nr. 625, pp. 369–426. J.H. de la Teyssonière, one of the few survivors of the Sterbelager Vaihingen who had been an inmate at Neckargerach, published

his memoirs under the title *A la mémoire de . . . Témoignage* (Doullens Somme, 1972).

Archival sources on the Neckarelz/Neckargerach subcamp are to be found at the AAC-C (NAT 56: Neckarelz, 21 boxes; NAT 57: Neckargerach, 8 boxes), the ACCS (Neckar Camps' Collection 4046/19, 4088/61, 4089, and specifically on Neckargerach 4092; 3644 Neckargerach and Neckarelz, 3646 Neckarlager, and 3644 Neckarelz and Neckargerach). The ITS archive lists the Neckargerach labor detachment as part of its Natzweiler Collection, Signatur 494. The following files at the BA-L contain witness statements and investigation reports on Neckargerach; see especially call numbers 419 AR 1833/67 and 419 AR 2192/67, as well as Ordner Verschiedenes 301 AAn 121 (Arbeitstagebuch Neckargerach). The ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 208, mentions the Neckarelz I and II subcamp Unterkommando Neckargerach.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NECKARGARTACH-HEILBRONN

Neckargartach, a subcamp of the Alsatian concentration camp of Natzweiler, opened in August 1944. Neckargartach is a suburb of Heilbronn in Württemberg. The camp was established next to an athletic field, not far from the Neckar River. The chosen site, outlined by Bollinger and Wimpferer Strassen, was surrounded by vegetable gardens. It occupied an area of 100 meters×150 meters (328 feet×492 feet). About 200 inmates were transferred to Neckargartach on September 4, arriving from Kochendorf, another Natzweiler subcamp. The inmates built the first three barracks in just three days. The work was managed by the Higher-SS Construction Directorate (Oberbauleitung) Kiebitz-Stuttgart. The project carried the code name “Steinbock in Heilbronn.” It appears that the Organisation Todt (OT) was not involved in the camp's construction; instead, the work was managed by the SS with the help of civilian foremen.

A second transport arrived around the same time, bringing inmates from the Longwy and Adun-le-Tiche subcamps in Lorraine. As the camp was not yet finished, the convoy was directed to another subcamp. On September 15, a transport of 600 inmates from the Markirch subcamp in Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines in Alsace arrived in Neckargartach. The prisoners had worked in the construction of Bayerische Motoren Werke (BMW) airplane engines in a factory installed in a railroad tunnel. The convoy was composed of 150 skilled and 450 unskilled laborers. Another convoy arrived from the camp of Wesserling, also in Alsace. Neckargartach thus served as the evacuation link for several of Natzweiler's subcamps under the threat of advancing Allied troops. The exact number of camp inmates is not precisely known; it was probably around 1,200.

The camp's organization included a political department (Politische Abteilung), controlled by the Gestapo. According to oral accounts, included among the inmates were labeled



Night-and-Fog (*Nacht-und-Nebel*) prisoners, common criminals, political prisoners, Gypsies, and at least one homosexual. One inmate was a former deputy in the German parliament (Reichstag). Jews were probably not very numerous among the inmates; 2 deceased were buried in the Jewish cemetery of Heilbronn-Sontheim. Polish inmates were the most numerous. There were also Italians, Russians, Yugoslavs, Germans, and French, as well as others from Luxembourg and Alsace-Moselle. The number of dead is also not known in detail, but there were at least 295 dead, of which 31 were cremated in the Heilbronn crematorium; others were buried in a mass grave. The highest number of deaths occurred in January 1945. At least two escapes are recorded. The final fate of the escapees is not known, but they were not returned to the camp.

A doctor worked in the camp, a Polish inmate. A German doctor from Neckargartach treated the guards and wrote the death certificates. Sick inmates were sent to the hospital camp (*Krankenlager*) in Vaihingen, another subcamp of Natzweiler, most often to die there. The camp elder (*Lagerältester*) was a German, a bookseller from Heidelberg. He was later replaced by Vally Greska, a Jehovah's Witness.

The camp's commander was Johannes Gillbert, an SS-Oberscharführer and a native of the Duisburg area. Accounts indicate that he did not beat inmates. He even tried at times to improve the condition of the prisoners' lives, in particular by providing them with shoes. This was a necessity to enable them to report to their work site. The camp was protected by about 80 guards from the SS and soldiers from the Luftwaffe. Many guards were ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) who had previously been stationed in the concentration camps of Radom (a subcamp of Lublin-Majdanek) and Lublin. About 20 brutal Kapos inflicted cruel treatment on the inmates. There were no regular executions of inmates; instead, they died of weakness and exhaustion. Some residents of Heilbronn attempted to come to their aid by giving them food. For example, apples were left along the path the prisoners had to take to get to work. Their poor physical condition was visible to the residents. It was even possible to see inside the camp from the neighboring streets. The camp had been built in Neckargartach because of its proximity to a salt mine, which was used as a shelter for the workshops necessary to the war industry. The inmates worked at digging a second entry tunnel, then a third, for the mine chamber, where a workshop was built.

Accounts differ on the work carried out in this underground chamber. In any case, it was a matter of war production, perhaps spare parts for airplanes or even for V-2 rockets. Inmates worked there in three shifts of eight hours each. The work took place six and a half days per week. Other inmates were employed in the fields, in groups of 8 or 10. The main employers for manual labor in the camp were the OT and the local excavation company Julius Berger. On December 4, 1944, the city of Heilbronn suffered extensive aerial bombing. The work in the mine was stopped, and the inmates were employed to clear the rubble, to bury the corpses, and to disable unexploded bombs. When the neighboring town of Neckars-

ulm was hit by bombs on March 1, 1945, the inmates of Neckargartach were sent there as well.

The subcamp was evacuated between March 28 and April 1, 1945. At the time of their departure, the SS burned the camp archives. On April 1, the local management of the OT moved to Rosenheim, in Bavaria, bringing 100 men in seven trucks. On April 2, American troops entered Heilbronn. The inmates had already been evacuated to Dachau, one part by railroad convoy and another on foot. The death march was punctuated by several massacres. The inmates of Neckargartach were registered in Dachau on April 10, 1945. At the end of the month, some had to undergo the evacuation of Dachau to Tyrol. The camp commander Gillbert was arrested by American troops and interned at the camp of Ludwigsburg. Handed over to the French army, he was tried in the Natzweiler trial before the general tribunal of Rastatt and sentenced to death. He was pardoned and returned to settle in Duisburg. Former camp wardens came back to live in Heilbronn, where they had formed relationships with local women.

**SOURCES** As the camp files were destroyed before the evacuation, only fragmentary documentation remains at ITS (Hängemappe Akdo Neckargartach) and BA-L (IV 419 AR-Z 171/69). More has been published on the Neckargartach commando than on other small camps in southwest Germany. A complete description of the camp based on interviews can be found in Heinz Risel, *KZ in Heilbronn. Das "SS-Arbeitslager Steinbock" in Neckargartach. Augenzeugenberichte-Dokumente-Tatsachen mit Material über Kochendorf und Bad Rappenau* (Nordheim: Heinz Risel, 1987). The same author wrote a shorter history of the camp titled "Das Lager Neckargartach," in *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegsführung. Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*, ed. Herbert Vorländer (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978), pp. 109–130; as well as articles: Risel, "Die Konzentrationslager Neckargartach und Kochendorf," *LgUr* III-23 (1982): 23–32, 75–88; "Das KZ Neckargartach bei Heilbronn," *SchwH* 1 (1983): 29–33. Information on the camp is also included in Uwe Jacobi, *Das Kriegsende. Szenen 1944/1945 in Heilbronn im Unterland und in Hohenlohe* (Heilbronn: Verlag Heilbronner Stimme, 1985); Michael Schmid, "Das Konzentrationslager-aussenkommando Neckarelz. Seine Entstehung und Bedeutung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der kriegswirtschaftlichen Bedingungen und der Funktionserweiterung der Konzentrationslager" (Ph.D. diss., Heidelberg, 1981). See also the testimony of an inmate from Luxembourg: Jean Nothar, "Die Flucht," *Rappel* 12: 6 (1948): 917–920.

Jean-Marc Dreyfus  
trans. Gina Cooke

## NECKARZIMMERN

Few details are known about Neckarzimmern, a Natzweiler subcamp in the Neckarelz complex of camps. Tobias Markowitsch and Katrin Rautnig confirm that Dr. Jean Andréis, a pri-



soner physician, was also in Neckarzimmern for a short time to take care of sick inmates unable to work. Despite being the camp physician, he had to work like all the other inmates and had no medical instruments or medication for treatment available.

**SOURCES** Tobias Markowitsch and Katrin Rautnig provide some information on the Neckarzimmern subcamp in their study *Goldfisch und Zebra. Das Konzentrationslager aussenkommando Neckarelz. Konzentrationslager des Verlagerungsprojektes A8 und Aussenkommando von Natzweiler-Struthof* (Neckarelz: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neckarelz e.V., 2005). The camp is listed in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 1827.

The camp is not mentioned in the ITS list kept in Arolsen, nor was it the subject of an investigation by the ZdL in Ludwigsburg or any other German prosecutor's office after the war. The German Bundesarchiv in Berlin holds a few documents that verify the existence of the camp: BA-B collection NS 4, KL Na (Natzweiler) refers to the camp in the subgroup 49-102: Häftlingsangelegenheiten. In List 85 there are documents on the creation and inspection of some labor details. The labor detail Neckarzimmern is listed, along with Neckargartach and Asbach, in 93a. At BA-BL, call number 419 AR-1833/67 provides some further information on Neckarzimmern.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NEUENBÜRG

The Baden-Württemberg town of Neuenbürg an der Enz was traditionally the site of iron ore, quartz, and fluorite mined in the Neuenburger Revier and processed in a nearby IG Farben factory. Toward the end of World War II, these raw materials became vital for the German war effort.

In the spring of 1945, around 170 foreign forced laborers were held in Neuenbürg, but the exact site where they worked is uncertain. Eventually they were put to work in the Neuenburger Revier mining raw materials; beginning in the autumn of 1944, they were also exploited for the project "Dachsbau" to relocate the Daimler-Benz factory at Gaggenau. For this purpose, a provisional camp was established in a forest near Neuenbürg. It held around 90 prisoners from Natzweiler who were to prepare a permanent camp built by the Organisation Todt (OT). The so-called Waldwerk was not finished by the end of the war. It is not known when this provisional camp was established and dissolved.

Antoine Greffier mentions Neuenbürg as a probable Natzweiler subcamp, as the prisoners could have originated from the Natzweiler Vaihingen I subcamp, while Robert Steegmann does not refer to the camp in his monograph on the Natzweiler concentration camp.

**SOURCES** A brief description of the camp in Neuenbürg and its significance for the war effort can be found in *Heimatgeschichtlicher Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstandes und der Verfolgung 1933–1945*, vol. 5, *Baden-Württemberg, Regierungsbezirke*

*Karlsruhe und Stuttgart* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für akademische Schriften, 1991), p. 22. The question as to whether Neuenbürg was a Natzweiler subcamp remains unanswered. Antoine Greffier deals with the uncertain state of research on Natzweiler in his *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof* (Stuttgart: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, 2002), p. 315.

The camp is mentioned neither in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen, 1979) nor in Robert Steegmann's *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NIEDERBRONN

Niederbronn's (French: Niederbronn-les-Bains) status as a Natzweiler subcamp remains uncertain. Niederbronn is located in the French Vogesen in present-day Département Bas-Rhin. Although Antoine Greffier mentions Niederbronn as a possible Natzweiler subcamp, there is no supporting evidence for this classification.

**SOURCES** A short essay by Antoine Greffier, *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof* (Stuttgart: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, 2002), pp. 319–320, refers to Niederbronn. However, Robert Steegmann in his *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), does not list Niederbronn as a Natzweiler subcamp. The same applies to the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen, 1979); also "Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG," *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, as well as its 1982 edition.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## OBEREHNHEIM

The Oberehnheim subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp was created in December 1942 in Obernai, a small town of 7,000 inhabitants located in Alsace, west of Strasbourg, in the foothills of the lower Vosges Mountains. Designated as Aussenkommando Oberehnheim, the camp was set up at a small manor, the Oberkirch manor, surrounded by a large park located on the outskirts of town. The plot of land was 30 hectares (74 acres); the proprietors, the Hell family of Oberkirch, had left Alsace, and the manor had been requisitioned. In February 1942, Heinrich Himmler ordered the setup of a school to train female communications assistants for the SS (SS-Nachrichtenhelferinnenschule) on the property. Young German women—3,000 in all—were trained

there, starting in June of 1942. In conjunction with the school, it was seen necessary to renovate the chateau and to build additional structures. The school had a total of 13 requisitioned properties at its disposal in Obernai or in the surrounding villages, including the Leonardsau manor and the city's elementary teacher training college. The labor supply necessary to carry out the construction work explains the creation of the subcamp, which was set up on the construction site itself. Himmler visited the school on June 5, 1943.

The camp itself was established in the manor house, which was surrounded by barbed wire. There was a guard station at the entrance, and the guards had police dogs.

A convoy of 200 inmates arrived at the camp. They were housed in the stables of the manor, where they slept on straw. The living conditions were harsh, due to malnutrition and maltreatment. Over the course of a year, 80 of the prisoners died. New inmates were sent to Obernai at the end of 1943 as part of frequent prisoner transports between the Obernai subcamp and the main camp. The total number of dead is estimated to be around 100. Bodies were sent back to the main camp. There was no doctor or infirmary in the subcamp—only a nurse. The wounded and the ill were sent to the infirmary (*Revier*) in Natzweiler. At least 2 prisoners were shot by guards as they were trying to flee. A third was killed at the Obernai train station because, according to testimonies, he had either stolen or received a bottle of alcohol from a local resident.

The inmates were, for the most part, registered as political prisoners. They were from Poland, Russia, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg. They were all skilled laborers who worked to move furniture from manors and properties that had been requisitioned for the school. In the courtyard of the manor, they built barracks to house students of the SS school as well as an air-raid shelter. The inmates also worked to repave roads, to clean a river, and to paint and maintain the school buildings. According to one account, they also refurbished individual houses in Obernai. Some inmates who worked outside the camp could establish contacts with the local population.

The Natzweiler construction management (Bauleitung) organized the work. The camp architect was August Schlachter, who was sent to Kiev. His successor was named Heider.

According to one account, the camp elder (Lagerältester) was named Böhler, a German from Mannheim, where he had been a Communist member of the city council.

The camp surveillance was provided by about a dozen SS men who were housed in a building outside the estate. The majority of them were from the southwest of Germany. One of the SS men was a dog handler, an Alsatian by the name of Fuchs.

The first camp commandant was SS-Hauptscharführer Seuss, a native of Nürnberg. He was the brother of Rapportführer Wolfgang Seuss, who was responsible for the administration of the main camp. It was under his direction that the living conditions in the subcamp were at their harshest. He showed sadistic behavior toward the inmates, forcing them to

remain standing against a wall for hours, beating them, and commanding his dog to bite them. After his departure in the spring of 1944 took over direction of the Natzweiler subcamp created in Leonberg near Stuttgart, he was replaced by SS-Oberscharführer Nikolaus Busch, a native of Saarbrücken, who only remained in the position for about six or eight weeks. His successor was Herman Stiefel, who came from Erfurt. After Seuss's departure, the living conditions improved somewhat, and mortality rates decreased. The subcamp's workforce was judged to be insufficient, and a camp for Soviet prisoners was set up in the building of the teacher training college. The camp's dead were buried in a mass grave dug in the Jewish cemetery in Obernai.

The subcamp was dismantled in two steps: on September 29, 1944, facing the advance of Allied troops, 91 inmates were sent to the Dachau concentration camp. The remaining inmates, about 20, left the camp on foot on November 22, 1944, just before the liberation of the town. They arrived at the camp of Geislingen, where they stayed several days, then were evacuated to the Heidenheim subcamp, near Ulm. The school of communications was evacuated at the same time and reestablished near Berchtesgaden, where it functioned until the end of the war. Wolfgang Seuss was tried by an American tribunal at Landsberg, sentenced to death, and executed.

**SOURCES** References to Oberehnheim can be found in the following publications: *Le camp de concentration du Struthof. Konzentrationslager Natzweiler. Témoignages* (Schirmeck: Es-sor, 1998), 3:245–246; Bernard Le Marec and Gérard Le Marec, *L'Alsace dans la guerre 1939–1945* (Horvarth: Le Coteau, 1988), pp. 107–108; Charles Béné, *L'Alsace dans les griffes nazies*, vol. 5, *Organisations policières nazies, prisons et camps de déportation en Alsace* (Raon-l'Étape: Fetzter, 1980), pp. 203–204. Source material is held at ITS (Hängemappe Akdo Oberehnheim) and BA-L (IV 419 AR-Z 170/1969).

Jean-Marc Dreyfus  
trans. Gina Cooke

## PELTERS

In Pelters, south of Metz (1940–1944: Gau Westmark; present-day Peltre, Moselle department, France), there existed a subcamp of Natzweiler. It was opened at the end of March 1942 and is last mentioned in a letter of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) dated August 17, 1944. The camp leader (Lagerführer) was SS-Oberscharführer René Roman. The average number of prisoners in Pelters was 50 (reaching at one point a maximum of 60), and they were initially housed in an ancillary building of a local company and later in another nearby building in the center of the settlement. The main function of the camp and its prisoners was to take care of the horses of the SS-Cavalry Remount School (Remonte-Schule) in Pelters. According to the testimony of one of the prisoners, however, the inmates were also used for digging a large hole in the ground some 12 meters×20 meters (39 feet×66 feet) at an excavation site about 15 minutes away from the camp. It is suspected that this excavation was inten-

ded for use as a swimming pool by the SS, once completed. The work may have been conducted under the authority of the construction department of the Waffen-SS and Police (Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei). Antoine Greffier suspects that 1 prisoner died while serving in the subcamp.

At the end of August 1944, the camp was dissolved, and the inmates were sent back to the main camp on a forced march that lasted three days.

**SOURCES** Antoine Greffier summarizes the state of research in his *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof* (Stuttgart: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, 2002), p. 185. Pelters is mentioned in Robert Steegmann, *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), p. 256; and ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:209.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Martin Dean

## **RASTATT**

It is unresolved whether Rastatt really was a subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp. The male prisoners housed there were possibly attached to the “security camp” at Schirmeck-Vorbrück instead.

According to Antoine Greffier, the Rastatt subcamp could also have been under the dual administration of both Natzweiler and Schirmeck-Vorbrück. Greffier adds that the camp may also have been called Iffezheim, which seems unlikely in view of Iffezheim’s location (10 kilometers [6.2 miles] south of Rastatt). The notion that the Rastatt subcamp is the same as the one in Iffezheim probably arises from the fact that—as Robert Steegmann states—at least in the summer of 1944, prisoners from the subcamp in Iffezheim were working for the Wehrmacht, bottling liquor in the Müller spirits factory located in Rastatt. According to the current state of research, however, these prisoners were not housed in a separate subcamp in Rastatt.

The first mention of a subcamp in Rastatt can be found in documents of the Natzweiler concentration camp dated November 6, 1943, and the last reference is on December 30, 1943. No detailed information is known about the camp, such as its location, its layout, the number of prisoners, or their work deployments.

There is a second reference to Rastatt in connection with the Natzweiler concentration camp at the end of 1944. From October 1944, several transports of prisoners were brought to Rastatt for a short period from the security camp in Schirmeck-Vorbrück. The camp in which they were housed was located on parts of the site of the Labor Education Camp (AEL) Niederbühl (established at the end of 1941/beginning of 1942), as well as in redoubt number 12 of the Rastatt fortress, the former fortress prison.

It is very likely that prisoners from various Natzweiler subcamps were also temporarily housed here, since at this time individual Natzweiler subcamps were being cleared before the advancing Allied troops. Rastatt was one of the evacuation points for prisoners coming from the Natzweiler subcamps located in Alsace. For the prisoners from the security camp in Schirmeck-Vorbrück, it is known that they were transferred on to Haslach (Vulkan factory), where they had to work for Daimler-Benz. Haslach was a Natzweiler subcamp, which again demonstrates the close connection between the camps of Schirmeck-Vorbrück and Natzweiler, with respect to the camp in Rastatt.

**SOURCES** Antoine Greffier, *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof* (Stuttgart: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, 2002), p. 355, describes the camp in Rastatt as a Natzweiler subcamp in 1943. The *Heimatgeschichtlicher Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstandes und der Verfolgung 1933–1945*, vol. 5, *Baden-Württemberg, Regierungsbezirke Karlsruhe und Stuttgart* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für akademische Schriften, 1991), pp. 123–128, refers to the use of the AEL Niederbühl and the former fortress prison for housing the prisoners from Schirmeck-Vorbrück and Natzweiler. Robert Steegmann, *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), does not mention Rastatt as a subcamp in his history of the concentration camp but only the subcamp Iffezheim (p. 257). The ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:209, lists the subcamp of Rastatt (in 1943).

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Martin Dean

## **SCHÖMBERG**

The Schömberg concentration camp, the first concentration camp devoted to the extraction of shale oil, was established only a few weeks after the founding of the Deutsche Ölschieferforschungsgesellschaft (German Oil Shale Research Association, DÖLF), at the Schömberg railway station next to the DÖLF administration building. On December 16, 1943, the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) made available 120 concentration camp prisoners and promised 180 more to DÖLF for the construction of a test facility for the production of shale oil in Schömberg.<sup>1</sup> However, the chief executive of DÖLF, Fortmann, demanded still more prisoners: at the beginning of February 1944, he requested 540; only three weeks later, 611 workers.<sup>2</sup> In March 1944, there were 230 prisoners in the camp.<sup>3</sup> The number of inmates then increased after the start of Operation Desert (*Unternehmen Wüste*), reaching 788 prisoners by the end of October 1944, as more workers were necessary for the construction of the shale oil factory code-named Wüste 9.<sup>4</sup> At this time, some 50 SS men guarded the camp.<sup>5</sup>

The prisoners mostly came from the Natzweiler and Dachau main camps and from the Natzweiler subcamp at Ste.



Marie-aux-Mines (Markirch), which, like the main camp, was evacuated in the fall of 1944.<sup>6</sup> Among the prisoners there were many from France, Luxembourg, and Alsace-Lorraine but also some East Europeans (above all Russians) and Scandinavians. The prisoners from Luxembourg occupied the central positions in the “prisoner self-administration.” During the initial months, the number of deaths was comparatively small: from January 1 until mid-July 1944, 11 prisoners died there. However, the situation deteriorated from the summer of 1944 on, with the start of Operation Desert. In the autumn and winter of 1944, the number of victims at the Schömberg concentration camp climbed rapidly. In total, between mid-July 1944 and April 1945, nearly 300 prisoners died.<sup>7</sup> The first corpses at the Schömberg camp were burned in the crematorium in Schwenningen; most of them, however, were buried in a mass grave, which was exhumed after the end of the war. Alongside the concentration camp prisoners, DÖLF also exploited Eastern forced laborers (Ostarbeiter), as well as forced laborers from Italy and France.<sup>8</sup>

Since the test facility in Schömberg was intended to provide the technical basis for the running of all 10 planned factories of Operation Desert, its completion was accelerated, and the prisoners from the Schömberg camp were primarily deployed there.<sup>9</sup> On the instructions of Edmund Geilenberg, a senior figure in the Armaments Ministry, the Organisation Todt (OT) took over responsibility for construction of the test facility.<sup>10</sup> Among the civilian workers were also members of the Baltic Oil Limited Company, who had been deployed in Estonia producing shale oil and were transferred to DÖLF after the evacuation of Estonia by the Germans in the summer of 1944.<sup>11</sup> From the end of July until the end of December 1944, the DÖLF test facility produced 228 metric tons (251 short tons) of shale oil. The Wüste 9 plant only came provisionally online on March 11, 1945.<sup>12</sup>

Starting on October 20, 1944, the camp leader was SS-Oberscharführer Helmut Schnabel. He joined the SA in 1933 as an unemployed workman, entering the SS in 1936. He served initially in the Buchenwald and Fallersleben concentration camps, before being appointed in 1942 as head of the administration (Verwaltungsführer) in the concentration camp and ghetto camp for Jews in Debica in the General Government. From the summer of 1943 and into 1944, he was a camp commandant (Lagerführer) at the concentration camp at Vaivara, Estonia, and in various of its subcamps (Vivikoni, Ereda, Lagedi), as well as deputy commandant in Narva. In Estonia, Schnabel took part in “selections” of Jewish prisoners and personally murdered countless Jews. In addition, he directed a shooting *Aktion* (operation), in which Jewish children were among the victims.<sup>13</sup>

At the end of 1944, camp commandant Schnabel together with Eugen Wurth ordered and carried out the shooting of at least 2 prisoners who had been captured while attempting to escape. Two additional Russian prisoners who also tried to flee were hanged in the presence of two Gestapo men on the orders of Schnabel and Wurth.<sup>14</sup> This execution is also mentioned by the camp elder (Lagerältester), Roger Hoffmann, who kept a journal of events at the Schömberg concentration

camp from March 3, 1944, until April 17, 1945. On January 21, 1945, he recorded: “Two Russians were hanged in front of all the prisoners of the camp.”<sup>15</sup> Hoffmann listed other special events in the camp, for example, on March 28, 1944: “Alexandrow Wasili put into the dog pound by SS-man Reichenbach, biting wounds”; on May 31, 1944: “Matwejo shot while trying to escape.” Just between September 9 and October 11, 1944, a total of 10 prisoners escaped, of which 2 were brought back to the camp and one “drowned during the escape attempt.” A prisoner died following the amputation of his leg; another hanged himself in a shed. On the other hand, 9 Norwegians were released from the camp following the intervention of the Red Cross, on March 22, 1945. According to the records kept by the senior Kapo, 63 prisoners were occupied working within the camp itself; of these, 16 belonged to the “prisoner self-administration,” 26 camp inmates worked as craftsmen, 6 as cooks, and 15 as potato peelers. One of the two prisoner doctors was Léon Boutbien, later highly decorated as a French Resistance fighter and doctor, who was interned at Natzweiler, Schömberg, Erzingen, and Dachau.<sup>16</sup>

The prisoners were subjected to chicanery from their supervisors not only in the camp but also on the construction site. The German in charge of construction, Kirchhardt from Metzingen, who arrived in Schömberg in 1943 and worked on behalf of DÖLF, was notorious for the fact that he physically abused the roughly 30 prisoners assigned to him as workers.<sup>17</sup>

At the Rastatt Trial in 1947, a French military tribunal sentenced a block leader (Blockältester), the report leader (Rapportführer), the head of the kitchen, and a craft supervisor (Werksmeister) to death and also gave three SS guards 5 years in prison.<sup>18</sup> In 1966, a German court in Hechingen sentenced Schnabel to 10 years in prison for crimes committed at the concentration camps in Vaivara and Vivikoni; he was not punished for the crimes at the Schömberg concentration camp.<sup>19</sup> Wurth was also acquitted of the killings at the Schömberg camp, as the court assumed in his favor that these were possibly the “implementation of legal verdicts.”<sup>20</sup>

**SOURCES** Several publications contain information on the Schömberg concentration camp, including Immo Opfermann, *Das Unternehmen Wüste. Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager entlang der Bahnlinie Tübingen-Rottweil 1944/45* (Balingen: Oberschulamt Tübingen, 1997); and Michael Grandt, *Unternehmen Wüste. Hitlers letzte Hoffnung. Das NS-Ölschieferprogramm auf der Schwäbischen Alb* (Tübingen: Silberburg Verlag, 2002).

A considerable amount of documentation regarding the Schömberg concentration camp can be found in StA-L (both investigative and trial files). At the BA-B, BDC records, there are additional details concerning the SS in the camp, while in the BA-DH the documents of the Deutsche Bergwerks- und Hüttenbau Gesellschaft (DBHG) reveal certain aspects of everyday life and forced labor in the camp. Finally, the Schömberg concentration camp is also mentioned in the files of the District Food Supply Office (Kreisernährungsamt), located in StA-S.

Christine Glauning  
trans. Martin Dean



## NOTES

1. Letter of Pohl to Himmler, December 21, 1943, in BA-B, NS 19/1386 (first mention of the concentration camp).
2. Letter of Fortmann to Krüdener, February 24, 1944, in AOC, AP/PD, c. 1304, p. 15 bis, d. 4, p. 52.
3. List of supplies provided by the community in Kreis Balingen, 60th distribution period [March 1944], in StA-S, Wü 65/4 Bd. 2, Nr. 1412.
4. Letter of DÖLF to Wirtschaftsamt Balingen, November 30, 1944, in StA-S, Wü 65/4, Bd. 2, Nr. 1418, Ordner Deutsche Ölschieferforschungsgesellschaft Schömberg/Ost-arbeiter, KZ-Häftlinge. Appendix to the camp internment reports of KZ Natzweiler, September 30, 1944, and October 31, 1944, in StA-L, EL 317 III, Bü 1312, pp. 219, 222.
5. Request for supply coupons for 49 SS-Wachmänner for the 68th distribution period (October 1944), in StA-S, Wü 65/4 Bd. 2, Nr. 1418, Ordner SS-Wachkommando Schömberg.
6. Translation of the witness statement of Henri Muller before the Tribunal/District Court in Metz, February 9, 1961, in StA-L, EL 317 III, Bü 1249, pp. 2632–2635. Interrogation of an (unnamed) witness, in *ibid.*, Bü 1260, pp. 4974–4978. Journal (Kalendarium) of the Lagerälteste, published in Immo Opfermann, *Das Unternehmen Wüste. Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager entlang der Bahnlinie Tübingen-Rottweil 1944/45* (Balingen: Oberschulamt Tübingen, 1997), p. 25.
7. Table on the development of the number of deaths in the Schömberg camp, undated [after 1945], in StA-L, EL 317 III, Bü 1250, Bl. 28598 (in total 305 deaths).
8. Letter from DÖLF to Wirtschaftsamt Balingen, January 30, 1945, in StA-S, Wü 65/4 Bd. 2, Nr. 1418, Ordner DÖLF. Letter from DÖLF to Wirtschaftsamt, May 3, 1945, in *ibid.*, Ordner DÖLF/Mappe Werk Schömberg.
9. File note of DBHG, July 30, 1944, in BA-DH, R 121/1527.
10. Note of DBHG regarding the transfer of the responsibility for the construction of the test facility in Schömberg to the OT, August 5, 1944, in BA-DH, R 121/1523.
11. Interrogation of Wilhelm Baryga, February 23, 1961, in StA-L, EL 317 III, Bü 1251, p. 2880. Interrogation of Arno Schreiber by the Landespolizei Balingen, February 1, 1961, in *ibid.*, Bü 1287, pp. 774–775.
12. Report of Dönitz on Unternehmen “Wüste,” February–March 1946, in *ibid.*, Bü 1250. Letter from DÖLF to Hauptbergamt Stuttgart, January 2, 1945, Bergamt Freiburg.
13. Verdict of Schwurgericht Ulm, September 8, 1969, pp. 6–8, in StA-L, EL 317 III, Bü 1237. Indictment from the Hechinger trial, pp. 60–64, 115–128, in *ibid.*, Bü 1236.
14. Indictment from the Hechinger trial, *ibid.*, pp. 158–160.
15. Journal of the Lagerälteste, in Opfermann, *Wüste*, p. 25.
16. *Ibid.*; obituary of Boutbién in *JA*, February 26, 2001.
17. Investigation by Staatsanwaltschaft Rottweil of Franz Helmer-Sandmann, 1950/51, in StA-S, Wü 29/2 Bd. 2, Acc. 9/1985, Nr. 1048, p. 417.
18. Verdict of February 1, 1947, published in Michael Grandt, *Unternehmen Wüste. Hitlers letzte Hoffnung. Das NS-Ölschieferprogramm auf der Schwäbischen Alb* (Tübingen: Silberburg Verlag, 2002), pp. 181–204. The death sentence for the Werksmeister was declared invalid on January 27,

1947, and converted into a life sentence of forced labor. See *ibid.*

19. Verdict in the Hechinger trial, pp. 3, 130–133, 139, in StA-L, EL 317 III, Bü 1236.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 227–232.

## SCHÖRZINGEN

At the end of 1943, the company management of the Kohle-Öl-Union (KÖU), that is, the manager Hübner and his secretary Hagedorn, as well as mining engineer Bockhorst, requested from Office D II of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) that concentration camp prisoners be made available for work underground.<sup>1</sup> Around the same time, a KÖU report from the town hall in Schörzingen confirms the work deployment of prisoners there. In his letter to Heinrich Himmler on December 21, 1943, Oswald Pohl stated under point three: “From the middle of January 1944, three hundred prisoners will be directed to the underground facility of the Kohle-Öl-Union von Busse KG (a subsidiary of the Göring Works) in Schörzingen near Rottweil, as the housing facilities will not be completed before this time.” Pohl wanted to ensure “that from the start it was clear, how much oil would be available to the SS from the plant’s production.”<sup>2</sup> In return for providing the concentration camp prisoners, however, the SS demanded for itself the entire future production of shale oil from the plant, so that up to the beginning of February 1944 it still remained unclear how many prisoners would be made available to the KÖU. After a lengthy period of negotiation, in which the KÖU director, von Busse, also intervened, the 300 prisoners that were already in Schörzingen were permitted to remain. The deployment of prisoners was no longer “to be dependent on the benefit accruing to the SS.”<sup>3</sup>

From January 1944, between 20 and 50 prisoners were in Schörzingen, so that the “official date” for the establishment of the concentration camp may have been February 1, 1944. The establishment of the Schörzingen subcamp accordingly took place only in connection with the underground carbonization operations of the KÖU, whose management requested prisoners from the SS, although in this factory, which operated like a coal mine, only civilian workers, “including some requisitioned from the mine in Pegnitz,” were supposed to be deployed.<sup>4</sup> The Numbers Book (*Nummernbuch*) of the Natzweiler concentration camp, however, indicates for Schörzingen, abbreviated as “Schz,” other categories of workers. These were designated on the list as “AZA [foreign civilian worker] Poles,” “AZA Russians,” and “Kgf Russians (POWs [prisoners of war])” who were sent to Schörzingen from the Natzweiler main camp. It has not been possible to clarify whether the prisoners were treated any differently on account of these separate designations. The reality of work in the underground carbonization plant or on the construction of the camp erases any differentiations indicated by the Numbers Book.

The prisoners constructed the camp on the road to Wilflingen at the end of the village of Schörzingen, first working on the building for the SS, then on the barracks for the prisoners, which were “made from wooden planks” with “floorboards simply laid loosely on the ground.” The site of the buildings was adapted to the terrain, as demonstrated by British aerial photographs. The camp was surrounded by a double “security fence;” the inner fence was electrified with high-voltage current, as shown on a sketch of the entire campsite. Outside the fence there was one barrack containing the administration and quarters for the SS; inside, four barracks (Blocks I to IV), each intended for “one hundred prisoners,” were planned; of these, Block I housed the camp office and the room of the camp elder (*Lagerältester*). Directly at the camp gate there was a dog cage, opposite the kitchen and the entrance to the mine.

In the triangle formed between the kitchen and two of the barrack buildings was the parade ground, which was enclosed to the south by the “clothes store.” The sketch dated October 29, 1944, indicates four guard towers, one directly by the exit onto the Wilflinger Strasse, on both sides of which today small bunkers still make it possible to discern the former entrance to the concentration camp, as well as the entrance to the mine and air-raid tunnels. The site of the KÖU’s above-ground facilities was also protected by a 3-meter-high (9.8-foot-high) fence constructed of wood and barbed wire. Located outside, directly on the road in the direction of Schörzingen village, were also an additional “residential camp” and “kitchen,” which perhaps confirms that, outwardly and qualitatively, certain distinctions were made between the prisoners and the civilian workers. Perhaps the kitchen located close to the KÖU building also supplied the civilian workers of the factory.

The aforementioned sketch also makes clear one very important change at the Schörzingen camp: it designates an “expansion for Zepfenhan,” as the KÖU camp was expanded by a new section for “Wüste 10” (Desert 10), the “external work detail Zepfenhan.” Wüste 10 was the most southerly of the Wüste production facilities, which was constructed by Schörzingen concentration camp prisoners from September 1944. Two large barracks in the style of “horse stables” served as housing for the Zepfenhan prisoners: they extended the wedge-shaped concentration camp complex to the southwest. At least 500 of the Wüste prisoners were housed in one of the barracks; the other was subdivided into an infirmary (*Revier*), a quarantine section (*Schonungsblock*), and a section for sick prisoners given up for dead (*Totenblock*).

The expansion for the Wüste 10 construction site created two classes of prisoners at the Schörzingen concentration camp: one group comprised those who worked underground in the KÖU shale mine, a task that entailed the breaking up and piling up of the shale by hand. These prisoners worked from 10 to 16 hours in two shifts, going down into the tunnels via steel steps. The prisoners assigned to the Zepfenhan work detail had to cover the 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) to the building site at Eckerwald twice a day: the very heavy labor

in the mud and cold between these marches cost many prisoners their lives. From the continually rising death rate, it can be seen that the SS implemented its program of “destruction through work.” The categories of prisoners also changed over time: out of a transport of 1,000 Polish political prisoners—noted in the Numbers Book as “pol.Pole(n),”—that arrived from Auschwitz on August 24, 1944, 164 were sent to Schörzingen. On September 16, 1944, a transport comprising 500 men of various nationalities arrived in the Schörzingen camp from Dachau.<sup>5</sup> An alphabetical list with the names of 50 men, partly from the French region of La Petite-Raon, demonstrates how real and alleged political opponents were treated, especially in the later period of the Third Reich.<sup>6</sup>

A payment demand (no. 148/44) dated October 1, 1944, issued by the Natzweiler office with regard to the “deployment of prisoners” for the “Fa, D, B, H, G, Balingen/Württemberg” calculates the charge to be made for the use of about 100 prisoners in September 1944, indicating that the SS profited from the exploitation of the prisoners. For this reason, too many deaths would be inconvenient, and therefore the payment demand requested that a new tally be made of how many “sick and non-working” prisoners there were in Schörzingen, also due to a “lack of clothing.”

As a Wüste camp, Schörzingen was subordinated to the Natzweiler main camp. The hierarchy within this camp complex can be seen from the signature of the Natzweiler camp commandant, SS-Sturmbannführer Hartjenstein. Subordinated to him was SS-Untersturmführer Eugen Wurth, who was the commander of the 9th SS-Guard Company in Natzweiler and also the leader of the Operation Desert detachment. Subordinated to Wurth in turn was SS-Rottenführer Herbert Oehler, who became the subcamp commandant in Schörzingen. Oehler and Lagerältester Walter Günther Telschow were the first to be mentioned at the Rastatt Trial, since they both “behaved like real tyrants, tormenting and torturing the inmates.”<sup>7</sup> The “Journal Officiel” additionally names the Kapo Lorentz Stach (the head cook in the camp); SS-Sturmmänner Johann Dornauer and Winterbauer (as block leaders); SS-Hauptscharführer Jakob Hermann (head of the guard company); SS guards Rolf Pfefferkorn, Jakob Link, and Wolfgang Danek; and the head of the Zepfenhan work detachment, Josef Patollo, who worked for the Organisation Todt (OT). All of them were accused of having beaten and tortured prisoners.<sup>8</sup>

The Schörzingen camp existed until April 17, 1945; on Wednesday, April 18, the “evacuation transport” of 650 prisoners set off on foot in a southeasterly direction, guarded by about 40 SS men. The death march took them toward Lake Constance in columns varying in size from 50 to 300 men; the SS had carts to transport their own families and the weakest prisoners, which the other prisoners had to drag along. As the front line approached, the SS guards deserted, and the death march was redirected toward Ostrach and Königseggwald, where the prisoners from Schörzingen were liberated.

**SOURCES** The basis for much of the information in this entry is the brochure prepared by the author for the third exhibition on Operation Desert (after those in Balingen and Rottweil): *Das Unternehmen "Wüste": Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager entlang der Bahnlinie Tübingen-Rottweil 1944/45* (Balingen: Oberschulamt Tübingen, 1997). The book by Michael Grant, *Unternehmen "Wüste"—Hitlers letzte Hoffnung* (Tübingen: Silberburg Verlag, 2002), draws partly on the publications of the author of this entry. The findings and recollections of former camp recorder (Lagerschreiber) Julien Hagenbourger have also been incorporated here; see Julien Hagenbourger and Gerhard Lempp, *Aus schwerem Traum erwachen: Bericht des ehemaligen KZ-Häftlings Julien Hagenbourger, Lagerschreiber im Aussenlager Schörzingen mit der Natzweiler-Nummer 7244* (Deisslingen-Lauffen: Initiative Gedenkstätte Eckerwald, 1999). Other relevant publications include Rudi Holoch, "Das Lager Schörzingen in der 'Gruppe Wüste,'" in *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegführung. Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*, ed. Herwart Vorländer, (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978); and Gertrud Graf, *Gedenkpfad Eckerwald: Das südwürttembergische Schieferölprojekt und seine sieben Konzentrationslager: Das Lager Schörzingen und sein Aussenkommando Zepfenhan* (Deisslingen-Lauffen: Initiative Gedenkstätte Eckerwald, 2001).

The StA-S also contains numerous unpublished sources concerning the "Central Administration for the Württemberg Shale Oil Factories" from the postwar period, as well as original documentation on Operation Desert from the Nazi period.

Immo Opfermann  
trans. Martin Dean

## NOTES

1. Julien Hagenbourger and Gerhard Lempp, *Aus schwerem Traum erwachen: Bericht des ehemaligen KZ-Häftlings Julien Hagenbourger, Lagerschreiber im Aussenlager Schörzingen mit der Natzweiler-Nummer 7244* (Deisslingen-Lauffen: Initiative Gedenkstätte Eckerwald, 1999), p. 35.

2. Rudi Holoch, "Das Lager Schörzingen in der 'Gruppe Wüste,'" in *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegführung. Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*, ed. Herwart Vorländer (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978), p. 231.

3. Ibid., p. 231.

4. Gertrud Graf, *Gedenkpfad Eckerwald: Das Lager Schörzingen und sein Aussenkommando Zepfenhan* (Deisslingen-Lauffen: Initiative Gedenkstätte Eckerwald, 2001), p. 9.

5. Hagenbourger and Lempp, *Aus schwerem Traum erwachen*, pp. 37–38.

6. Ibid., p. 37.

7. Published in Immo Opfermann, *Das Unternehmen "Wüste": Ölschieferwerke und Konzentrationslager entlang der Bahnlinie Tübingen-Rottweil 1944/45* (Balingen: Oberschulamt Tübingen, 1997), p. 43.

8. Hagenbourger and Lempp, *Aus schwerem Traum erwachen*, p. 45; and "Journal Officiel," in Opfermann, "Wüste," pp. 107–108.

## SCHWÄBISCH HALL-HESSENTAL

In 1936, a military airport was built in the town of Schwäbisch Hall, in an area called Hessental. Schwäbisch Hall is located north of Württemberg, near Heilbronn. A Reich Labor Service (RAD) camp provided the labor for the excavation and maintenance work. On September 13, 1944, the airport was almost entirely destroyed by an aerial bombardment. Its reconstruction was immediately undertaken, and to help the effort, a subcamp of Natzweiler was set up there. The decision to establish the Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental subcamp was made at the same time as the main camp was evacuated to the interior of the Reich. The first major inmate transport arrived on October 14, 1944; it included 600 men who had come from the Radom subcamp, after passing through another camp in Vaihingen an der Enz (other inmates may have arrived earlier, to prepare the barracks, but this has not been confirmed). In November and December, further transports, also coming from Vaihingen, brought an additional 200 men. The inmates were almost all Polish Jews, with a few German and Hungarian Jews. When they arrived, their physical condition was already quite poor. Many had no shoes. On December 8, 1944, 53 inmates who were unfit for work were sent to the so-called hospital camp (*Krankenlager*) at Vaihingen.

The Hessental camp was built on a piece of land belonging to the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways), and the prisoners were housed in barracks that had previously been used by the RAD. A new barrack was added at the end of 1944. The camp was in the shape of a rectangle, monitored by four towers. Outside of the perimeter, which was marked by barbed-wire fences, stood several small buildings: the offices of the SS guards, their kitchen, a small warehouse, and an office for three employees of the Organisation Todt (OT), including a Frontführer.

The camp was under the control of the OT initially, but on October 17, 1944, SS-Hauptscharführer August Walling, formerly a Luftwaffe officer, took over as commandant; he would remain in control until the camp's evacuation. The guards for the camp itself consisted of five SS men. According to testimonies, Walling's attitude was rather ambivalent: he made some effort to improve daily life for the prisoners, even authorizing some of them to go into town to bring back medicine, lenses for glasses, and cobbler's tools. Days off were organized, and a disinfection room was installed. On the other hand, he imposed cruel punishments on the inmates, such as standing up for hours between two rows of barbed wire. One of the inmates, Alexander Donat, left a long account in which he tells how Walling shot his revolver at a young inmate to punish him for straying from his work site to beg for food. The inmate was only wounded, and Walling then spent long hours at his bedside, watching him in his struggle against death. When the prisoner's condition had improved, Walling brought him an apple.

The guards for the external work details were soldiers in the Luftwaffe. Their number varied, reaching as high as 70. During the last months of the camp's existence, Ukrainian



guards worked at Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental. Inmates were subjected to maltreatment and were constantly beaten.

There were two Polish prisoner physicians (*Häftlingsärzte*) for the inmates that arrived with the first convoy. Walling approved the installation of an infirmary (*Revier*) and a shower room. The two physicians were allowed to establish contact with the airfield hospital, whose doctor provided them with bandages and medical instruments. The infirmary occupied four rooms in Block I, of which two were recovery rooms and one a treatment room. The sanitary situation stabilized somewhat, until the arrival of a second convoy of inmates who were quite weak. Between 100 and 150 inmates a day were declared to be unfit for work. A special barrack was built to accommodate them; the inmates called it "U" (for *unfähig*, "incapable"). Donat was put in charge of inmate health at the airfield, where he reported each day. There, on premises used as an ammunition depot, he received inmates who needed first aid. This place rapidly became a restful haven, and the prisoners could benefit from a few minutes' break.

Inmates worked 9 hours a day, instead of the usual 11 or 12 hours in the concentration camps, but they walked to work.

Weekly reports preserved in the Ludwigsburg archives describe the work carried out in the early weeks of the camp's existence. The large majority of the inmates, 364, worked at the airfield, 80 others in construction work, 50 in a nearby quarry, and 20 in the construction of a railroad track. On the airfield, inmates repaired runways and removed snow. Some worked assembling airplane parts in a workshop in Hasenbühl, a wooded area near the airport. The others remained in the camp, where they were kept busy with the upkeep of the barracks, cooking, or clerical work (*Schreibstube*), or were declared sick. Inmates were also given the responsibility of clearing the rubble after aerial bombardments on the airport and on the town of Schwäbisch Hall. They buried the dead bodies. Some were also employed by businesses in Schwäbisch Hall and Hessental and on neighboring farms.

The mortality rate in the camp climbed with time. A total of 182 corpses were buried in 18 mass graves in the town cemetery. Hunger was the leading cause of death; 32 inmates died following maltreatment, and at least 16 were shot, including 7 for attempted escape. The camp's SS subjected inmates to a number of sadistic ordeals, for example, marching the sick through the snow. They entertained themselves by throwing food in front of the inmates gathered for roll call; the inmates had to restrain themselves from pouncing on the food under the threat of murder.

On March 3, 1945, the airport was bombed again, and the runways were destroyed. A few days later, the town's train station was likewise destroyed. All the residents of Schwäbisch Hall were mobilized to clear the ruins. The inmates only worked for one day, because, as Donat recounts, the town council did not want them to mix too closely with the residents.

In March, a typhus epidemic broke out in the camp. The inmate sanitation team burned mattresses and embarked on a disinfection and delousing campaign. The epidemic was thus limited but still killed 15 inmates. On April 5, 1945, the Hes-

ental camp was evacuated on the order of an SS officer from Stuttgart. The destination was München-Allach. A train arrived at the gates of the camp, and the inmates were loaded onto it. They had to wait three days in the cars without food. The inmates of Kochendorf, another of Natzweiler's subcamps, were in the front cars. A few kilometers after departing, the train was bombed, and the locomotive was hit; 6 inmates were killed, and 6 or 7 others were wounded. The evacuation continued on foot, and inmates had to march in rows of five. They made stops in small villages, where the residents made an effort to feed the inmates, for whom no food had been planned. During the distributions, fights broke out. The SS guards intervened violently. There were some deaths; 4 inmates were buried in the cemetery in Bühlertann. During a stop at the Neunheim quarry, between 27 and 30 inmates died and were buried on the spot. There were 42 deaths at the stop in Zöbingen. The survivors reached Augsburg. From there they were sent in livestock cars to Dachau, where they were liberated by American troops on April 19, 1945. The death march had cost at least 170 men their lives.

In November 1947, Walling was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment by the French Tribunal Général in Rastatt for crimes against humanity. He served 10 years.

**SOURCES** Published sources include the booklet by Folker Förtsch and Siegfried Hubele, *KZ-Gedenkstätte Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental* (KZ-Gedenkstätte Hessental e.V., n.d.; based upon the research of Liselotte Kratochvil). A local journalist of the *HT* wrote a complete and detailed book about the airport compound and the concentration camp of Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental: Michael S. Koziol, *Rüstung, Krieg und Sklaverei. Der Fliegerhorst Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental und das Konzentrationslager. Eine Dokumentation* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1986); the camp is described on pp. 92–128. A survivor of the camp, Michael Berg, wrote an account of his journey through numerous camps, under his new name, Alexander Donat, *The Holocaust Kingdom. A Memoir* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, 1965); a revised version was published by USHMM (Washington, DC, 1999). After surviving in the Warsaw ghetto until its final liquidation, the author was sent to the Majdanek subcamp in Radom, then to the Natzweiler subcamp of Vaihingen. He spent five months in Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental (see pp. 258–279). See also Elke Schabet-Berger, "Der Lager Hessental," in *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegführung. Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*, ed. Herwart Vorländer (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978), pp. 71–107.

Archival sources can be found at ITS (Hängemappe Akdo Hessental) and the BA-L (AZ. IV 419 AR-Z 171/69).

Jean-Marc Dreyfus  
trans. Gina Cooke

## SCHWINDRATZHEIM

Schwindratzheim in the former Gau Baden-Elsass, present-day Bas-Rhin (France), was a Natzweiler subcamp. It was



most likely a construction camp, and its approximately 600 male prisoners did road work as part of the so-called A-Massnahme 11. They were accommodated in the ZEH gypsum factory outside the town of Schwindratzheim.

The Schwindratzheim subcamp existed for only a short period of time; it is mentioned for the first time in the Natzweiler concentration camp files on August 29, 1944. According to an official report, the camp was evacuated in October, possibly on October 21, 1944.

**SOURCES** Antoine Greffier details the state of research on Schwindratzheim in *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof* (Stuttgart: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg, 2002), p. 347. Robert Steegmann refers to the camp in *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005). The ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 210, lists Schwindratzheim as a Natzweiler subcamp.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## SENNHEIM

The Sennheim (French: Cernay) subcamp was located in the then Gau Baden-Elsass, which is in the present-day District Haute-Rhin (France), 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) to the east of Mulhouse. It was established as part of an SS training camp (*Ausbildungslager*) that had been in the same location since at least 1942 to train low-ranking non-German SS members. It is known that SS members from France, Norway, the Netherlands, Croatia, and Ireland were drilled there and received infantry and ideological training.

The Sennheim subcamp was opened in 1943 (probably on October 1, 1943, according to Robert Steegmann) or March 1944 and consisted initially of 80 male inmates, later increasing to 250 (other sources refer to 300), most of whom came from the Soviet Union and Poland. According to Antoine Greffier, the inmates were accommodated in the attic of a Luftfahrtgesellschaft (Lufag) building. However, Henri Mounine states that Italian military prisoners were brought from Natzweiler to Sennheim and were first used to construct the barracks.

According to Mounine, who cites the report by Luxembourg resistance fighter and Natzweiler prisoner Roger Hildgen, the subcamp's prisoners built accommodations for the local police and the Waffen-SS and Police Construction Directorate (Bauleitung) and administration barracks for the SS. Several Alsatian firms were also involved in the construction project. Hildgen also describes the difficult working conditions as well as the physical mistreatment of the prisoners. The camp commander in Sennheim was SS-Unterscharführer Witzig; the camp elder (Lagerältester) was the criminal prisoner (green triangle) Telschow; and the construction administration lay in the hands of an engineer named Nicolas Wilgé. According to Hildgen, the camp had a small infirmary (*Revier*)

and a “bunker” that functioned as a prison. According to prisoner statements, Sennheim was a particularly brutal camp with up to 25 deaths among the prisoners.

Hildgen states that the camp was evacuated on September 10, 1944, and that the prisoners were taken to Dachau. Greffier dates the evacuation as September 20, 1944. The SS-Ausbildungslager Sennheim was dissolved in November 1944.

Greffier states that there were in Sennheim from January 23, 1944, Norwegian students, following an order by the Reichsführer-SS that they should be given lectures at the SS-Forschungs- und Lehrgemeinschaft “Das Ahnenerbe.” Additionally, Norwegian students were transferred from the Buchenwald concentration camp to Sennheim from July 1944; in December 1944, they were sent back to Buchenwald. Whether these Buchenwald prisoners were inmates that were sent to work in the Sennheim subcamp or, as is more likely, were foreigners who had been recruited by the Waffen-SS cannot be ascertained from the files.

After the war, Kapo Telschow was sentenced to death and executed.

**SOURCES** Henri Mounine's monograph *Cernay, 40–45: Le SS-Ausbildungslager* (Ostwald: Polygone, 1999) is to date the only work on the SS-Ausbildungslager in Sennheim; on pp. 410–415, Mounine provides a report on the “Les Déportés—Travailleurs Forces,” quoting the Sennheim prisoner Roger Hildgen, the Dutch SS volunteer Andréas Terveer, and a newspaper report from *L'AI* dated May 29 and 30, 1946, on the work and living conditions in the camp. Greffier deals with the state of research on the Sennheim subcamp in *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof* (Stuttgart: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2002), p. 61, but without referring to Mounine. Robert Steegmann describes the Sennheim subcamp in his *Struthof. Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 72, 256–257. The ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 210, lists the Sennheim subcamp.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## SPAICHINGEN

Spaichingen in Württemberg was the site of a subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp. The Spaichingen subcamp for male prisoners was located in the Gewinn Lehmgrube (a clay pit formerly part of a strip field), which is presently the Spaichingen city center.

The Spaichingen camp was part of the German effort toward the end of the war to relocate German armaments manufacturing. In the summer of 1944, the Metallwerke Spaichingen put a plan before the city of Spaichingen to construct three barracks (one with two levels) to hold concentration camp prisoners who were to work in its metal factories.

According to files from the Natzweiler concentration camp, the Spaichingen subcamp is referred to for the first time on September 26 or 29, 1944. Historians Herwart Vorländer and Gudrun Schwarz put October 1944 as the time when the camp opened. The camp remained operational until April 18, 1945. It held 300 to 400 political prisoners who were used to construct housing. The prisoners originated from a variety of European countries including Hungary, Italy, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, France, Switzerland, Austria, and the Soviet Union.

The exact number of prisoners who died in the Spaichingen subcamp is unknown. Numbers vary between 80 and 110.

When the camp was closed, there were two completed barracks and one still under construction. Metallwerke Spaichingen probably never commenced production. The prisoners did preparatory work, metal processing, and transport and construction work on the campsite in the clay pit.

According to a prisoner's statement, the camp was evacuated between April 15 and 18, 1945, in the direction of Wurzach. Schwarz puts the date the camp was closed as April 18, 1945.

After the war, SS members, guards, and detachment leaders from the Spaichingen subcamp were charged with murder, accessory to murder, theft, and war crimes and tried in the spring of 1946 in the Rastatt Trial, the first Allied war crimes trial that occurred in the French Occupation Zone. Of the seven accused, three were sentenced to death, one to life imprisonment with hard labor, two to 20 years' imprisonment with hard labor, and one to 5 years in jail. The director of the Metallwerke, Hartmann, received a prison sentence, as he was responsible for the miserable food provided to the prisoners. The camp leader Schnabler was not tried, as he had not been captured at this time.

**SOURCES** The Spaichingen camp is described in Alte Synagoge Hechingen, ed., *Möglichkeiten des Erinnerns: Orte jüdischen Lebens und nationalsozialistischen Unrechts im Zollalbkreis und im Kreis Rottweil* (Bisingen, n.d.), p. 80; and in Herwart Vorländer, *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegführung: Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978), p. 12; and in Julius Schätzle, *Stationen zur Hölle: Konzentrationslager in Baden und Württemberg 1933 bis 1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg-Verlag GmbH, 1980), p. 66. It is also mentioned in Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand, ed., *Heimatgeschichtlicher Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstands und der Verfolgung 1933–1945, Baden-Württemberg I, Regierungsbezirke Freiburg und Tübingen*, vol. 5/2 (Frankfurt am Main, 1997). Gudrun Schwarz refers to the Spaichingen subcamp in *Die nationalsozialistischen Lager* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus-Verlag, 1990), p. 181. Journalist Jochen Kastilan has researched the history of the Spaichingen subcamp in several articles, including his essay "Das Konzentrationslager in Spaichingen," *Spai-Sc* (1990); and in a series of articles in *HeuBo*, January 22, 1982. The Spaichingen subcamp is mentioned in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter*

*dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 211.

Original documents on the Spaichingen subcamp are located in the AKr-TUT, Kreisarchiv Tuttlingen, Schriftensammlungen F 389 and D 1645. Documents on the Rastatt Trial are held in AOC, in the collection Tribunal Général du Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation en Allemagne, Série AJ, no. 4028, cartons 2A, 2B, 3, 4, 5, dossier no. 3/46, but are subject to a 100-year access bar, and only selected documents may be seen with special permission.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

### **THIL ("ERZ") [AKA ARBEITSKOMMANDO LONGWY-DEUTSCHOTH, LONGWY-THIL, LONGWY-THIL-AUDUN-LE-TICHE]**

The Thil subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp was located outside the small town of Thil in a narrow valley close to the Luxembourg border in the Département Meurthe-et-Moselle in the northeastern part of France that Germany annexed in 1940 under the name of Lothringen. The camp was established on June 15, 1944, on the initiative of Volkswagen chief executive officer (CEO) Ferdinand Porsche after agreements with Heinrich Himmler and the Fighter Staff (Jägerstab). It was a subcamp of the Natzweiler main camp under the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). The Thil concentration camp is mentioned in contemporary sources under various names: Arbeitskommando Longwy-Deutschoth, Longwy-Thil, Longwy-Thil-Audun-le-Tiche, and Erz (after the project code name). The camp was evacuated in early September 1944, when Allied forces approached, and the prisoners were transported to other concentration camps.

Thil was a slave labor camp with the main purpose of providing manpower for the construction of underground production facilities for the Minette GmbH, a Volkswagen daughter company, and for its manufacturing of Fi 103 cruise missiles (V-1) and fighter aircraft. The Thil facility consisted of a system of mines that belonged to the Syndicat de Tiercelet and were part of the Minette iron ore district. The underground production facilities were to cover an area of 230,000 square meters (275,078 square yards). Volkswagen was in charge of V-1 series production and used its special status to expand into other lucrative high-priority armaments programs like the manufacturing of fighter aircraft. There were plans to occupy 10,000 workers at the facility, and Porsche's vision was that all laborers except for German foremen and guards would be concentration camp inmates.

On March 4, 1944, Himmler promised him 3,500 concentration camp prisoners for the project. Production lines from the air-raid-vulnerable Volkswagen main factory in Fallersleben as well as machinery looted in France were

transferred to Thil and to other Minette facilities in Dernau and Eschershausen. Several trains with equipment arrived in Thil, as did thousands of forced laborers from various occupied countries meant to serve as labor for the construction project under the coordination of the Organisation Todt (OT).

The first concentration camp prisoners in Thil erected huts for the SS's and prisoners' accommodation as well as barbed-wire fences surrounding the prisoners' barracks and a crematorium intended for the burning of corpses. In the beginning, some of the prisoners were brought to work in the Deutsche Erzbergwerke AG iron ore mines in Longwy. Soon, most prisoners had tough refurbishing assignments such as concrete work and the laying of railway tracks, piping, and cables in the underground spaces under the supervision of Volkswagen and OT specialists. They worked alongside Germans, voluntary and forced laborers from other occupied countries, and local French labor. By early August, a growing number of prisoners worked in manufacturing V-1 parts, while others—as construction was interrupted due to lack of building materials—were commanded to work in a quarry under the guards' excessive brutality and at road construction and cable work in the nearby town of Deutschoth (present-day Audun-le-Tiche).

The commandant of the Thil concentration camp was SS-Oberscharführer Eugen Büttner. The first 12 prisoners arrived on June 15, 1944, from the Natzweiler main camp and were assigned to prisoner-functionary (*Funktionshäftlinge*) posts. On June 20, a transport of 500 Hungarian Jews that had been selected by a Volkswagen engineer in Auschwitz followed. An additional 51 non-Jewish prisoners arrived on June 29 and July 3, and on July 6, the total number of prisoners rose to 861, at the arrival of a transport of 300 Jews who had been selected and deployed to V-1 manufacturing at the Volkswagenwerk main factory until this facility was damaged by Allied bombing. No provisions had been made to receive this group, so the prisoners were accommodated in primitive tents with almost no food or drink for days in a fenced-in area while having to erect additional huts under a most brutal guards' regime. The Thil camp had only male prisoners, 85 percent of whom were Hungarian Jews. The total prisoner strength remained stable until the evacuation, as only 3 prisoners died, while 1 escaped and 1 was returned to the main camp.

The 66 guards in the Thil camp (as of August 5) were SS and Luftwaffe soldiers. The prisoners' living conditions were awful, and accommodations were primitive. The diet was poor, so even if the prisoners were in good shape when they arrived after having spent only a few days in Hungarian ghettos and in Auschwitz, some reached the "Muslim" (*Muselman*) stage in the course of their short stay in Thil. By early August, some 30 prisoners were constantly stationed at the camp infirmary, and some 40 convalescent prisoners (*Schoonungshäftlinge*) were allowed to stay in the camp and perform easy maintenance tasks. Many survivors and local witnesses report that guards practiced random beatings and elaborate,

sadistic ways of torture, but due to the priority given to construction progress and manufacturing, there was no systematic killing of prisoners.

Prisoners from the later transport were considered "bearers of secrets" (*Geheimnisträger*), and they were banned by threat of death from communication with other prisoners and other laborers. Their camp elder, Gyula Gross, had gathered well-educated, older Hungarian Jews around himself as Funktionshäftlinge. Some survivors remember their regime as brutal and authoritarian; others appreciate what they consider their attempt to protect the prisoners against the SS. Non-Jewish Funktionshäftlinge were in charge of the early arrivals.

In the traditionally Socialist mining community, miners and their families provided help by placing food and fruit, tobacco, newspaper clippings, and encouraging notes along the prisoners' marching route and at the work site. Survivors recollect a feeling of the camp being watched by protective locals, and prisoners managed to establish contact with the anti-Nazis outside. An escape attempt by a group of young Jews was partly successful since they got away and—helped by French resistance—crossed the front line in order to provide the Allies with secret V-1 information. As collective punishment, the rest of the camp had to stand at alert an entire night without food or drink, and the escapees' closest friend was beaten unconscious and left for days on the roll-call square; the conspiracy, however, remained undisclosed.

Allied advances on the Western Front thwarted plans of a collective breakout supported by local resistance, as prisoners were ordered to dismantle manufacturing equipment quickly, load it onto railway cars, and evacuate—the 300 "specialists" to another Volkswagen facility in Dernau, the rest to the Kochendorf concentration camp.

**SOURCES** This description of the Thil concentration camp is based on research by the author and Peter Lessmann for Hans Mommsen et al., *Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf, 1996), p. 803; Eugene Gaspard, *Les Travaux du IIIe Reich entre Alzette et Fensch* (Thil, n.d.); Gaspard and Alain Simne, *Le canton du fer* (Metz, 1978); *Le Camp de Thil* (Nancy, n.d.); and the Luxembourgian journal *Hém* (1985); central documents in Klaus-Jörg Siegfried, *Rüstungsproduktion und Zwangsarbeit im Volkswagenwerk 1939–1945* (Frankfurt am Main, 1986); preliminary data in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990). A chapter on the camp is included in the author's forthcoming book, *The Volkswagen Jews*.

Archival material on the Thil concentration camp is rich but scattered. The VWA and the ASt-WOB hold company records and copies of documents from APMO, NARA (CIOS reports), BA-B, BA-MA, and ZdL (now BA-L). The Thil Memorial (AMRCCT-L, [www.outoftime.de/thil](http://www.outoftime.de/thil)) holds copies of documents from French archives, as does the ACCS. Witness and survivors' accounts can be found in Dezső Schön, *As*



Örökseg (Tel Aviv, 1960), p. 158; and at the VWA, the ASt-WOB, the AMRCCT-L, YVA, VHF, and USHMMMA.

Therkel Straede

## UNTERSCHWARZACH

It is questionable whether there was a Natzweiler subcamp in Unterschwarzach. It is likely that the connection to the Natzweiler concentration camp has more to do with an auxiliary hospital (*Hilfskrankenhaus*) that was established there in 1944.

Since 1936, the “Schwarzacher Hof” in Unterschwarzach, Neckar-Odenwald-Kreis, had been part of the Institute for the Education and Care of the Mentally Ill (*Erziehungs- und Pflegeanstalt für Geisteskranken*) in Mosbach, an institution operated by the Innere Mission. In the early summer of 1944, Daimler-Benz insisted that part of the Schwarzacher Hof be evacuated and made available as a Hilfskrankenhaus for Project “Goldfisch”—Goldfisch was a code name for the underground relocation of Daimler-Benz AG production of aircraft engines in Genshagen to the “Friede” mine at Obrigheim. Those responsible at Daimler-Benz AG for the project had inspected Schwarzacher Hof, which at the beginning of 1944 accommodated more than 200 children, youths, and adults, to check its suitability as a Hilfskrankenhaus for Project Goldfisch.

The Institute’s management protested against the planned takeover and urged relatives of patients who were in the Institute to take their relatives home; 71 patients were rescued, but despite the protests, another 49 were “transferred,” which meant they were sent to institutes where they were killed. The remainder of the patients remained in the Schwarzacher Hof in a much more confined area so as to create space for the Hilfskrankenhaus.

The research on prisoners housed at the Schwarzacher Hof—their number and categories, and indeed their very presence—remains inconclusive. If German and foreign forced laborers were brought to the Hilfskrankenhaus, then according to regulations they would have been accommodated in separate areas. The *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler* refers to Unterschwarzach as a company hospital for Project Goldfisch; if this is so, then it is questionable whether there would have been concentration camp prisoners in the building. Even if the hospital in theory was planned for the medical care of the prisoners, it could have functioned as a type of death camp (*Sterbelager*), holding prisoners who could no longer work without care and food.

Also unknown is the number of dead: there are no reports for 1944; in 1945 the deaths of 12 forced laborers were registered in Unterschwarzach—8 in the Hilfskrankenhaus: 7 from typhus and 1 from a lung inflammation. The dead were buried in the local cemetery.

**SOURCES** The use of the term “Hilfskrankenhauses” Unterschwarzach is taken from Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand, ed., *Heimatgeschichtlichen Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstandes und der Verfolgung 1933–1945*, vol. 5, *Baden-*

*Württemberg, Regierungsbezirke Karlsruhe und Stuttgart* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für akademische Schriften OHG, 1991), pp. 105–106. Antoine Greffier’s, comp., *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler* (Stuttgart, 2002), p. 274, lists Unterschwarzach in a list of the camp’s establishments and production sites, but with the note that the company hospital for Project Goldfisch was located in Unterschwarzach and that it did not treat prisoners. This contradicts details in the Unterschwarzach Register of Deaths, which states that eight prisoners died in the Hilfskrankenhaus. Robert Steegmann does not refer to Unterschwarzach in *Struthof: Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005). The ITS’s *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), does not refer to Unterschwarzach; but it is listed in “Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1501.

Archival documents on Unterschwarzach are held in the Unterschwarzach Register of Deaths (AGe-USZ), which lists the dead who died in 1945 in the Hilfskrankenhaus.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## VAIHINGEN/ENZ

The reason behind the choice of the town of Vaihingen/Enz—located between Ludwigsburg and Pforzheim—to establish a Natzweiler subcamp is not precisely known. The existence of an unused quarry belonging to Baresel AG had drawn the attention of the armaments sector, which was directed by Albert Speer, who was responsible for the displacement of factories to places protected from aerial bombardment. The quarry was already being used as a test site for V-1 rocket engines. For the most part, inmates worked in underground rooms on several levels in the quarry, where workshops had been installed and the construction of which had begun even before their arrival in the camp. At the beginning of the summer of 1944, work on the construction of the camp began. A wheat field, located on the outskirts of Vaihingen on the road to Ensigen, was chosen. Attaining the level of a proper SS camp, the road was blocked by trees and framed by police posts. The camp was just one small part of a larger project. This subcamp occupied a 150×80-meter (492×263-feet) plot. The camp was surrounded by a double row of barbed-wire fences, and its four corners were flanked by watchtowers. At night, it was lit up by floodlights. Inmates came from the Radom camp, which had been evacuated in the face of the advance of Soviet troops; 3,000 inmates had left the camp on foot: men, women, and children. The women, the children, and the sick were separated from the convoy at Tomaszow. The men were transported in livestock cars to Auschwitz, where a selection was made. Around August 15, 1944, 2,188 men arrived in Vaihingen. The majority of the inmates were Polish Jews who had passed through several different concentration and work camps.





French troops and survivors at the newly-liberated Vaihingen subcamp of Natzweiler, April 7–15, 1945.  
USHMM WS #18094, COURTESY OF ECPAD

The inmates were housed in four wooden barracks, with 500 prisoners per barrack. After the war, the detention conditions were described as more favorable than those known by inmates in Poland. Alexander Donat, a Polish Jewish journalist from Warsaw, spent two months in the Vaihingen camp and left his published memoirs as a testament. The camp was composed of one building for the inmates' kitchen, an infirmary (*Revier*), and open-air latrines. On the outside of the barbed wire stood the buildings for the SS guards, the secretary's bureau (*Schreibstube*), and—according to one account—workshops for the camp, including a sewing workshop. The camp commandant had the use of a small house built for him by the Organisation Todt (OT). He belonged to the 215th Panzergrenadierersatzbataillon of Reutlingen, which was put at his disposal in June 1944 by the SS construction management, the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), centered at Oranienburg. He was part of a group of 200 officers, all intended to support the framework of the ever-expanding concentration camp system. He was sent to Natzweiler. At the end of July, he received orders to report to Vaihingen, where the construction

of the camp had not yet been completed. The surveillance of Vaihingen was provided by 80 men, soldiers in the army, in the Luftwaffe, and the SS. An assistant physician (*Assistenz-Artz*) of the Luftwaffe was responsible for the health of the guards. The internal administration of the camp was in the hands of Polish Jews who had arrived with the first convoy. The camp elder (*Lagerältester*), Friedman, had already fulfilled the same function at the Radom camp. On October 15, 1944, 600 inmates from Vaihingen were sent to the new subcamp at Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental. Between November 8 and 16, 1944, 1,200 more inmates were transferred to other Natzweiler subcamps at Dautmergen, Bisingen, and Unterriexingen. At the end of November, only about 380 men remained in Vaihingen, half of whom were unfit for work. In the meantime, the camp had been transformed into a camp for the dying (*Krankenlager*); however, no changes in the camp's facilities were put into effect until December 1944, when a fifth barrack was built, with running water, bath, and toilet facilities. The plan to build a permanent structure, with an operating room and real medical facilities, was never carried out.

Two prisoner physicians, Dr. Boogaerts, who was Belgian, and Dr. Paulson, a Norwegian, arrived at the camp in the month of January. They had previously been interned at Neckarelz. Dr. Paulson was actually a dentist. Starting in November 1944, sick inmates arrived from different Natzweiler subcamps, from Dautmergen, Schörzingen, Bisingen, Schömberg, Frankfurt, and so on. In December 1944, a total of 1,500 sick inmates had arrived in Vaihingen. The last patient transport, which had come from Mannheim-Sandhofen, took place on March 11, 1945. In all, 2,442 inmates were transferred there from 17 different subcamps. The physical condition of the new arrivals was terrible. Many died en route. A detachment was established to handle the corpses (Leichenkommando). The camp population, until then relatively homogeneous, became far more diverse with the arrival of the convoys of sick inmates—25 nationalities were represented. The living conditions for the weakest inmates were extremely harsh, the food as insufficient as the medicine. In Block 5, an isolation ward was set up for contagious patients. Block 2 received inmates who had been excused from work and were officially in convalescence. Even they were subjected to two roll calls per day. In mid-February 1945, a typhus epidemic broke out in the camp. The disease spread rapidly. The entire health-care staff was contaminated. Block 4 in Vaihingen was used to isolate infected prisoners. Beginning on March 11, 1945, no more transports of sick inmates were directed to Vaihingen, perhaps because of the epidemic. A convoy from the Leonberg subcamp was sent to Bergen-Belsen. The general mortality was quite high, even if the archives do not permit a precise breakdown of all the deaths. There were at least 1,578 deaths. The camp at Vaihingen was a hospital in name only. It primarily served to empty out the other subcamps of their sick inmates who were unable to work. Despite Vaihingen's status as a hospital camp, inmates who were capable of work were put to work.

Camp inmates mixed with forced laborers of different nationalities, Poles, Soviets, and French. Germans who were forced to work acted as foremen. Exchanges took place, measured in number of apples or loaves of bread. The inmates at Vaihingen found themselves responsible for the hardest chores, such as continuing to dig out halls in the mine and to reinforce their infrastructures. Thus, they performed excavation work. A group of inmates worked outside to remove stones. Some groups of prisoners were also employed in a soap plant, a shoe factory, a foundry, and in agricultural work in Kleinglattbach. After the bombing of Stuttgart, some inmates were sent there to clear the ruins.

The Vaihingen camp was evacuated toward the beginning of April 1944. Inmates unable to walk were left behind. Some inmates were registered at Dachau. Two groups were registered at the München-Allach subcamp. On April 7, the First Free French Division entered Vaihingen, liberating the inmates left behind, whose exact number could not be determined. Many died in the days between the evacuation and the liberation. On the order of French officers, the civilians of Vaihingen were required to care for the surviving patients and to take them to the Vaihingen hospital. The barracks were al-

most immediately burned to limit the risk of epidemic. At least 31 inmates died after the liberation, as well as 7 residents of Vaihingen, who had contracted typhus in caring for the sick.

The work supervisor, SS-Oberscharführer M., who had terrorized the inmates and boasted of having participated in the Operation Harvest Festival (*Aktion Erntefest*) massacres in Lublin-Majdanek, was imprisoned and handed over to Poland. He was sentenced to death and executed in Lublin on October 6, 1948.

**SOURCES** The secondary literature on Vaihingen is more extensive than that on other subcamps in southwest Germany. See Bärbel Böckle, "Das Arbeits- und Krankenlager Vaihingen (Enz)," in *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegsführung: Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*, ed. Herwart Vorländer (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978), pp. 175–223. Steven Tenenbaum, the son of Holocaust survivors, told of his pilgrimage to Vaihingen, where his uncle had died: "In the Valley," *Tog* 11 (December 2000): 11. See also *Initiative KZ-Gedenkstätte Vaihingen-an-der-Enz* (Vaihingen, 1996).

Primary sources on Vaihingen begin with ITS, HM Akdo Vaihingen, Ordner KL Natzweiler-Aussenkommando Vaihingen/Enz; ZdL (now BA-L), AZ. IV 419 AR 1267/67, p. 243; Sta. Heilbronn, Ermittlungsakten, 1 JS 10942/59. Published testimonies and contemporary accounts include Arthur Crockett and David Parr, "Mass Grave Near Vaihingen Holds 1,500 Victims of Miniature Dachau," *The RR* 2, Vaihingen, First Bn (1945), pp. 1–8. Alexander Donat, a survivor of the Warsaw ghetto, was an inmate of Vaihingen, among several other camps. He left a book of memoirs, *The Holocaust Kingdom* (1963; Washington, DC: USHMM, 1999). On Vaihingen, see pp. 252–258. A collection of oral and written testimonies can be found in Manfred Scheck, *Das KZ vor der Haustüre: Augenzeugen berichten über das Lager "Wiesengrund" bei Vaihingen an der Enz* (Vaihingen an der Enz, 1995). Roger Audibert, a French soldier, wrote a few pages in his memoirs on the liberation of the camp by the French: *De la prise de Notre-Dame de la Garde à la libération du camp de la mort de Vaihingen* (Marseille: Autres temps, 1994), pp. 151–155. A member of the French Resistance wrote his recollections of Vaihingen: Jean-Henry de la Teyssonnière, *A la mémoire de . . . Témoignage* (Paris, 1972). See also Emile Juillard, "Vaihingen, le camp-Revier," in *Tragédie de la déportation 1940–1945: Témoignages de survivants des camps de concentration allemands*, ed. Olga Wormser and Henri Michel (Paris: Hachette, 1954), p. 330.

Jean-Marc Dreyfus  
trans. Gina Cooke

## VAIHINGEN/UNTERRIEXINGEN

### [WITH GROSS-SACHSENHEIM]

Unterriexingen was a subcamp of Vaihingen (a subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp in Württemberg), located some 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) outside Vaihingen and 30 kilo-

meters (18.6 miles) northwest of Stuttgart. It was established on the road between Unter- and Oberriexingen and enclosed by a double barbed-wire fence 3 meters (almost 10 feet) in height. On an area of approximately 7,000 square meters (8,372 square yards), between 400 and, at maximum, 550 prisoners were to be accommodated here. Of the two barracks, one was never completed; in addition, there was a barrack for the guards on duty and a lodging barrack for the guard unit. The camp had no running water; a small wooden shed outside the camp grounds served as a kitchen (the food was delivered by the Organisation Todt [OT]).

For 500 inmates, many of them afflicted with dysentery, there was only one four-seated latrine. Jules Schelvis, a prisoner in Unterriexingen, provides a description of the resulting drastic conditions:

Already before you reached the pit, the ground was covered with excrement. Many of the prisoners had not managed to reach the seat in time and relieved themselves beforehand. I hadn't even reached the latrine when my wooden clogs got stuck in the shit. But these shoes were indispensable, so I took them with me anyway. I had to wait for one of the seats to be vacant. There was a slapping and a spraying in the pit on account of the dysentery, a disease to which everyone had gotten accustomed and with which you lived until you could not go on any longer. After all, what other choice was there. There was no paper to wipe oneself. Like everyone else, I used the middle finger of my left hand for this purpose. . . . My bare feet covered with excrement, my wooden clogs in hand, I returned to the barrack. . . . Who can imagine such a situation? From this instant on, I knew that Unterriexingen was a death camp.<sup>1</sup>

The Unterriexingen camp was opened on or after November 16, 1944. The camp was guarded by the 6th Waffen-SS Guard Company under SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Lautenschlager, the lead of the Vaihingen/Enz concentration camp. According to historian Herwart Vorländer, there were also other organizational links between the two camps: for example, Unterriexingen had been constructed by Vaihingen/Erz prisoners, and in November 1944, 500 Jewish prisoners were transferred from Vaihingen to Unterriexingen. In early 1945, 150 to 200 Polish prisoners, survivors of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, were transferred to Unterriexingen from the Mannheim-Sondhofen camp, as well as a group of approximately 50 to 100 Italian military internees (IMIs). Thus, the overall number of prisoners will presumably have far exceeded the prisoner number of 300 cited by author Julius Schätzle.

Schelvis, p. 66, states that the camp leader's name was SS-Hauptscharführer Bruno Fedrowitz. Like a proportion of the prisoners themselves, Fedorowitz would have come to Unterriexingen from Radom with the Romanian SS guard unit.

Schelvis also said that 40 of the SS men in Unterriexingen had been supplied by the Vaihingen camp and 10 by the Natzweiler main camp.

The prisoners, all males, had their lodgings in barracks. They worked for the "Gallinit" construction project and the Eple Company. Gallinit was the code name for an underground construction project in the context of which parts of the Mannheim Daimler-Benz production operations were to be moved to a tunnel in Gross-Sachsenheim. The prisoners moreover built barracks and worked in the Unterriexingen/Gross-Sachsenheim quarry (between Enz Bridge and Gross-Sachsenheim airfield), where at least 80 prisoners were on duty. There they had to break stones for repair work at the airfield and on nearby roads. Other inmates worked at the Gross-Sachsenheim air base; occasionally, they were sent to Stuttgart and vicinity, for example, Pforzheim and Kornwestheim, to carry out clearing work following air raids.

The last mention of the Unterriexingen camp is found in an official report of April 1945. At this time, the inmates were evacuated to Vaihingen and, later, from there in the direction of Dachau. After the war, 250 corpses were found on the camp grounds—testimony to the horrendous living conditions in the camp. Due to the fact that, until a few months before the dissolution of the camp, the bodies of the prisoners who perished in the Unterriexingen camp had been transported to the Vaihingen subcamp, it can be assumed that many more than 250 prisoners died in the Unterriexingen camp.

From October 6 to November 21, 1947, within the context of the Rastatt Trial, 42 members of the camp administration and guard units from the Natzweiler subcamps Hessental, Kochendorf, Vaihingen/Enz, and Unterriexingen were charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Rastatt Trial before the Tribunal Général (supreme military court) of the French military administration was the first Allied war crimes trial to be carried out in the French-occupied zone. Altogether 7 death sentences were imposed (of which 4 were enforced); 1 defendant was sentenced to life imprisonment and 11 to prison and penal servitude.

**SOURCES** The Vaihingen/Unterriexingen subdetachment is described in Herwart Vorländer, ed., *NS Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegsführung: Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des KL Natzweiler/Elsass* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1978), p. 12. Detlef Ernst and Klaus Riexinger mention details pertaining to the guard operations at Vaihingen/Unterriexingen in *Vernichtung durch Arbeit: Die Geschichte des KZ Kochendorf/Aussenkommando des KZ Natzweiler-Struthof* (Bad Reichenhall, 1996), p. 18. Further mention is found in Julius Schätzle, *Stationen zur Hölle: Konzentrationslager in Baden und Württemberg 1933 bis 1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg-Verlag GmbH, 1980), p. 66. The Unterriexingen subcamp is mentioned in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 211.

In USHMMMA, a four-page typewritten report by George Freshman on his experiences as a prisoner in Kochendorf,



Vaihingen, and Vaihingen/Unterriexingen is to be found under File No. Acc. 1997.A.0289. Documents pertaining to the Rastatt Trials are located in the AOC, in the file Tribunal Général du Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation en Allemagne, Série AJ, no. 4028, cartons no. 2A, 2B, 3, 4, 5, dossier no. 3/46. A 100-year prohibition was imposed on access to these files, and they can only be inspected with special permission and only in parts. A striking description of the living and working conditions at the Unterriexingen subcamp is found in Jules Schelvis, "Eine Reise durch die Finsternis: Die Lager Vaihingen und Unterriexingen," in *Das KZ vor der Haustüre: Augenzeugen berichten über das Lager "Wiesengrund" bei Vaihingen an der Enz*, ed. Manfred Scheck (Vaihingen an der Enz, 1995), pp. 57–80.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Judith Rosenthal

## NOTE

1. Jules Schelvis, "Eine Reise durch die Finsternis: Die Lager Vaihingen und Unterriexingen," in *Das KZ vor der Haustüre: Augenzeugen berichten über das Lager "Wiesengrund" bei Vaihingen an der Enz*, ed. Manfred Scheck (Vaihingen an der Enz, 1995), pp. 57–80.

## WALLDORF

The Walldorf subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp was officially in operation from August 27, 1944 (the date August 22, 1944, occasionally cited in the literature refers to the arrival of the first prisoner transport), to October 31, 1944. It was part of the complex of camps set up around the Rhine-Main Airport. Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) had been put to work at this airport as early as 1942. Disguised as lumberjacks, they worked on the expansion of the airport and the creation of shelters for the fighter formations stationed there. Beginning in the autumn of 1944, interceptors of the type Messerschmitt (Me) 163B were stationed at this site, making it necessary to build an additional runway, a project requiring the employment of additional workers.

For this reason, the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) commissioned Construction Administration V (Heidelberg) of the Organisation Todt (OT), in cooperation with the construction company Ed. Züblin & Cie., with the construction of the Walldorf subcamp, which was placed under the administration of the Natzweiler concentration camp. The subcamp was located between Nordenstrasse on the northern periphery of the town of Walldorf and the Rhine-Main Airport, on the grounds of a former chicken farm that had been seized from its Jewish owners and used in the 1930s as a Reich Labor Service (RAD) camp. The prisoners were guarded by male and female guard units from Natzweiler as well as by members of the OT. According to testimony by former prisoner Susanne Farkas, the camp consisted of five

barrack blocks in which the women slept on bunk beds without blankets, as well as a kitchen building, an infirmary, and administration rooms.

On August 22, 1944, 1,700 female prisoners arrived in Walldorf from the Auschwitz concentration camp. The majority of them were Hungarian Jews; many of the others came from Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. According to accounts by witnesses, the women were between 14 and 65 years of age. As early as the first day, one of the women died—officially of heart failure, but according to witness accounts, she had been shot to death. The women began working on August 24: approximately 80 of them worked in the camp; at the request of the Züblin AG company, about 40 of them were put to work breaking stone in Frankfurt am Main. All of the others worked at the Rhine-Main Airport, where they cut down and transported trees, unloaded railroad cars, dug ditches for cables and tank facilities, carried out foundation work, and leveled runways.

According to an expert report by journalist Anette Raab-Neff, the prisoners in the Walldorf subcamp were subjected to harsh treatment. The rations provided the women working for the Züblin company were completely inadequate. During air raids, the women were left to lie on the earth on the airport grounds entirely unprotected, while the guard units sought shelter. Former prisoner Helena Halperin recalls:

We carried out various types of work at the airport. We unloaded large stones from railway cars; they were wet from snow and rain in October. When one of them fell beneath the car, we had to retrieve it. Then we uncovered cables in the forest. We dug up the earth, uncovered the brick, lifted them, and inside there were cables. Then we, many girls and women, took the cables and assembled them in one place. At the airport we were often shot at and bombed. One time there were six women under a tree; one of them was killed, one of them was hit by a bullet, one of them was grazed by a bullet; I had a head shock and couldn't hear anything for three days. During attacks we had to stay seated, were not permitted to move from the spot, and the SS guards ran under the trees and watched where the bombs were falling, where the bullets were falling, and they protected themselves and we were not allowed to move from the spot. Sometimes there were deaths; sometimes there were no deaths.<sup>1</sup>

When there was nothing else for the prisoners of the subcamp to do, the guard units gave them senseless tasks such as raking the forest soil. Officially only 6 women met their deaths during the camp's existence. Due to the working and living conditions prevailing there, however, only 500 of the 1,700 prisoners were still fit for work by the end of October 1944. The subcamp was dissolved on November 23, 1944, and the work taken over by Soviet POWs. Already in



October 1944, 34 pregnant women had been transported to an unknown destination; they were presumably murdered.

The remaining women, numbering approximately 1,650, were taken to the Ravensbrück concentration camp between mid-November and mid-December. When Ravensbrück was dissolved, many of them died on death transports and marches to Zillertal, Grosswerten, Reichenberg, Theresienstadt, Mauthausen, and Gurskirchen-Wels.

In the second half of the 1970s, the Darmstadt Public Attorney's Office instituted proceedings against the former camp leader Reinhold Loehs (born 1909) and others on charges of murder and aiding and abetting murder. The proceedings were suspended in June 1980 due to the fact that, according to the Public Attorney's Office, "no proof of participation in criminally relevant, still prosecutable acts can be ascertained for any of the defendants."<sup>2</sup>

**SOURCES** The brochure *Nichts und niemand wird vergessen: Zur Geschichte des KZ-Aussenlagers Natzweiler-Struthof in Walldorf* (Mörfelden-Walldorf, n.d.) provides a wealth of information on the Walldorf subcamp, including excerpts from the expert report by Anette Raab-Neff (pp. 10–13) and witness accounts by former prisoners (Helena Halperin, pp. 14–16; Jan Freifeld, pp. 17–18; Susanne Farkas, pp. 19–22). The camp is moreover mentioned in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 211; and the Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand, ed., *Heimatgeschichtlicher Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstandes und der Verfolgung 1933–1945, Hessen I, Regierungsbezirk Darmstadt* (Frankfurt-Bockenheim, 1995). Further mention can be found in Gudrun Schwarz, *Die nationalsozialistischen Lager* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus-Verlag, 1990), p. 181.

Evidence of the existence of the Walldorf subcamp is found in BA-BL, File No. NS 4, KL Na [Natzweiler], 49–102 Häftlingsangelegenheiten, above all in 80—Walldorf. Information on the legal proceedings against camp leader Reinhold Loehs and others is available in the files of the Sta. Darmstadt at the LG Darmstadt, File No. 2 Js 590/76.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Judith Rosenthal

## NOTES

1. Helena Halperin, quoted in *Nichts und niemand wird vergessen: Zur Geschichte des KZ-Aussenlagers Natzweiler-Struthof in Walldorf* (Mörfelden-Walldorf, n.d.), p. 14.

2. Sta. Darmstadt, 2 Js 590/76.

## WASSERALFINGEN

A subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp was located in Wasseralfingen near Aalen in Württemberg. A camp for male inmates, it was first mentioned in the Natzweiler concentration camp files on September 27, 1944, when 400 inmates from the Dachau concentration camp arrived in Was-

seralfingen. In November 1944, another transport to Wasseralfingen took place, consisting of 200 to 300 Polish prisoners arrested in the wake of the defeat of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The prisoners were lodged in a barrack camp along the street then called Moltkestrasse.

The prisoners worked for various companies and institutions, among them the Organisation Todt (OT) Higher Construction Administration Kiebitz in Heilbronn, the companies Heilmann & Littmann, Staud and Suka, and the Alfing Kessler KG machine works. One of the prisoners' chief tasks was the expansion of underground tunnels to accommodate a Hamburg crankshaft factory. When the plant went into operation in the winter of 1944–1945, the men were also put to work directly at the machines. The harsh working conditions cost at least 33 prisoners their lives. Moreover, on each of two transports in January and mid-February 1945, 30 prisoners "unfit for work" were transferred to the Vaihingen subcamp.

The guards for the subcamp were supplied by the 6th Waffen-SS Guard Company, which was under the command of SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Lautenschlager, the commandant of the Vaihingen subcamp. In May 1944, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler had issued an instruction to the effect that a large number of soldiers unfit for field duty were to be integrated into the Waffen-SS. Accordingly, this unit consisted not only of members of the Waffen-SS but also of Luftwaffe soldiers, members of the Afrika Korps, and several Ukrainian SS men. According to historians Detlef Ernst and Klaus Riexinger, altogether 8 SS-Unterrührer and 26 members of the 6th Guard Company performed guard duty at the Wasseralfingen camp.

The last mention of the subcamp in Wasseralfingen is to be found in the records of the Natzweiler concentration camp pertaining to February 2, 1945. An official report confirms the evacuation of the subcamp to the Neckarelz subcamp.

**SOURCES** Detlef Ernst and Klaus Riexinger mention several details on the Wasseralfingen subcamp in *Vernichtung durch Arbeit: Die Geschichte des KZ Kochendorf/Aussenkommando des KZ Natzweiler-Struthof* (Bad Reichenhall, 1996), esp. pp. 18–19. Barbel Böckle refers to Wasseralfingen subcamp in her essay "Das Arbeits- und Krankenlager Vaihingen (Enz)," in *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager im Dienst der totalen Kriegsführung: Sieben württembergische Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Natzweiler/Elsass*, ed. Herwart Vorländer (Stuttgart, 1978), pp. 175–224; a brief description of the camp is found on p. 13. Gudrun Schwarz includes the camp in *Die nationalsozialistischen Lager* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus-Verlag, 1990), p. 181. The Wasseralfingen subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 212.

In the holdings of USHMMA under Acc. No. 2004.35.1, Manfred Macuse Papers, there is an archive pertaining to the Wasseralfingen subcamp.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Judith Rosenthal

## WESSERLING (“KRANICH,” “A10”) [AKA URBES, HÜSSEREN-WESSERLING, COLMAR]

The Natzweiler subcamp in Alsatian Wesserling (French: Urbes) is also referred to in the literature as Hüsseren-Wesserling, Colmar, and Urbes. Wesserling is one of the subcamps to have emerged in the phase of the dissolution of the Natzweiler main camp. The prisoners of the camp, which was located near Thann in Alsace, were to prepare a tunnel located between the towns of Urbes and Bussany in order to accommodate Daimler-Benz armaments production operations. In this tunnel, the company intended to undertake the production of propeller parts under the code name “A10 Kranich.”

The camp was first mentioned on March 25, 1944. On that day, 300 male prisoners from Dachau arrived. Nearly 90 percent of the prisoners on this transport were political prisoners; as for nationality, one-third of them (36.3 percent) were Italians, followed by Soviet citizens (26.3 percent), Poles (13 percent), Yugoslavs (5.3 percent), Frenchmen (8.5 percent), Germans (5.6 percent), Greeks (3 percent), and Luxembourgers (3 percent). A second transport of 200 prisoners followed on March 29.

In the weeks that followed, further prisoner transports arrived in Wesserling, among them 502 prisoners from Lublin-Majdanek on April 4; 1,350 prisoners on May 5; and 1,350 on May 31, 1944. Most of the prisoners were Polish forced laborers and Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) or forced laborers. On June 6, 550 prisoners came from Auschwitz, including 302 Poles and 248 Soviet citizens. Nearly all of the inmates on this transport were classified as political prisoners. One of the inmates arriving was Zacheus Pawlak, who described that the camp was located about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from the railway station and that the inmates had to walk to the camp from the station. The camp consisted of a number of barracks—three of them were accommodation for the inmates—and was fenced with barbed wire. Guards and administration were housed in a building outside the inmates’ camp. The camp was guarded by SS men and Luftwaffe soldiers, and in the beginning, it had no infirmary and no camp physician. The camp elder was Toni, a criminal prisoner.

According to Pawlak, the barracks of the camp had been erected on top of a former camp that had been burned down, and right behind the barbed wire that surrounded the subcamp there was another camp for civilian workers from Poland, Russia, and Italy. The tunnel where the inmates were put to work was located about 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) from the camp. Already since 1935, the French had worked on building the tunnel through the Vosges Mountains and had made about 7 kilometers (4.4 miles) of progress.

In the summer of 1944, according to Pawlak, about 20 inmates tried to escape. They had arranged contact with the civilian population, organized maps, and bribed the guards. But their attempt to escape failed; 5 inmates were hanged in the subcamp, the other ones sent back to the Natzweiler main camp. At about the same time, in August 1944, 50 Soviet

women arrived in the camp, presumably having been sent there with the intention of having them carry out kitchen, laundry, and cleaning tasks. On August 31, 1944, the final transport to arrive in Wesserling brought 465 Jews from Flossenbürg, including 444 of Polish nationality, 9 Soviet, and 11 German Jews. These prisoners had worked for Daimler-Benz as “labor Jews” in the Reichshof (Rzeszów) ghetto and subsequently in Dębica and had come to Wesserling by way of Krakau-Plaszow, Wieliczka, Auschwitz, and Flossenbürg. In Wesserling, they were lodged in the so-called Block 3.

The management of the construction project was assigned to the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), Section C (Construction), SS-Command Staff A10, Wesserling. SS-Hauptsturmführer Josef Janisch was responsible for overseeing the prisoners’ work; the camp commandant was SS-Untersturmführer Arno Brendler. According to Luxembourg Ernest Gillen, a prisoner in Wesserling, the commander of the construction site goaded the prisoners on, screamed at them, and beat them, while—according to Pawlak—the camp commander was good-natured and never mistreated the inmates.

Gillen describes the working conditions in the camp as being harsh: the prisoners worked in 12-hour shifts or, when the shifts were changed, even 24-hour shifts. The tunnel had not been broken all the way through and had only one entrance. Due to the fact that the base of the tunnel was under water, the prisoners often worked standing in water. The air circulation in the tunnel was poor, since there was no ventilation, and to make matters worse, a diesel engine was constantly driving in and out. Survivor Pawlak worked with a group of inmates who had to clean the tunnel and to prepare it for pouring the concrete floor. Afterward, he and his comrades worked on covering the ceiling with plates of fiber cement. While these preparations were still going on, machines, equipment, and personnel already arrived to begin production. Once production commenced, inmates began to work with the German Messerschmitt personnel in armament production. They were put to work in 12-hour shifts that changed weekly between day and night.

Pawlak indicated that there were also other work commands within the Wesserling subcamp: one group of inmates worked at the railway station, loading and unloading gravel, sand, stones, and machinery. Another group in summer 1944 began to work at the Wesserling Castle, where they worked in the kitchen and cleaned the park. A further command of inmates began to construct barracks next to the tunnel entrance. According to Pawlak, there were many French and Russian inmates in this work detachment, and they suffered enormous hunger and unbearable conditions. Most likely, the erection of these barracks can be seen in the context of more and more prisoner transports that arrived from Dachau and Buchenwald and temporarily brought the number of inmates to about 3,000.

Gillen describes the administration of Wesserling subcamp as being relatively humane. The food supply came from the Messerschmitt company and was better than in the Majdanek camp where Gillen had come from. In the morning

the prisoners received bread and margarine; at lunch, soup and bacon; in the evening, another substantial soup—and twice a week, even a salad. Pawlak reports that there were regular delousings and disinfections for the inmates, which took place in a public bath in nearby Rothau, and that the inmates' clothes and bedlinen were changed weekly. Survivors confirm that there were a good number of Alsatian civilian workers at the construction site who behaved decently toward the prisoners and even provided them with food.

Due to the advancing front, the relocation project was discontinued in October 1944; October 10, 1944, is the date of the subcamp's last mention in the concentration camp files. It is not known how many prisoners were in the camp at the time of its evacuation. At least 300 prisoners had already been transferred to the Neckar camp complex (Project "A8") in late August–early September 1944, as confirmed by Pawlak. Another 300 prisoners were sent to the Schwindratzheim subcamp (Project "A11"), and 465 prisoners—probably the last remaining inmates of the camp—were taken to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. As historian Robert Steegmann reports, from there they were taken to Elster GmbH in Kamenz, Saxony, to work.

**SOURCES** The most comprehensive description of the camp can be found in the memoirs of former inmate Zacheus Paw-

lak, *"Ich habe überlebt." Ein Häftling berichtet über Majdanek* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1979). Robert Steegmann also describes the camp in *Struthof: Le KL-Natzweiler et ses kommandos. Une nébuleuse concentrationnaire des deux côtés du Rhin, 1941–1945* (Strasbourg: Nuée Bleue, 2005), pp. 69–72, 275. In *Ich habe immer nur den Zaun gesehen. Suche nach dem KZ-Aussenlager Cochem* (1992; Koblenz, 1996), p. 158, Ernst Heimes quotes a survivor of Wesserling camp, prisoner Ernest Gillen of Luxembourg. Gillen provides numerous details on the working conditions in the tunnel. Antoine Greffier describes the Wesserling camp in the LPB-BW, ed., *Materialien zum Stand der Forschung über die Aussen- und Nebenlager des KL Natzweiler-Struthof* (Stuttgart, 2002), pp. 217–218. In the Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand, ed., *Heimatgeschichtlichen Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstandes und der Verfolgung 1933–1945*, vol. 5, *Baden-Württemberg, Regierungsbezirke Karlsruhe und Stuttgart* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für akademische Schriften OHG, 1991), pp. 119, 161, the Wesserling tunnel construction site is mentioned. The Wesserling subcamp is mentioned in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 212.

At BA-L (formerly ZdL), there is an investigation file on Wesserling subcamp. Ernst Gillen's testimony is in ACCS.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Judith Rosenthal





# NEUENGAMME



The main entrance to the SS camp at Neuengamme, 1941–1942.  
USHMM WS #55243, COURTESY OF AG-NG

## NEUENGAMME MAIN CAMP

The Neuengamme concentration camp was established in 1938 as a Sachsenhausen subcamp. In the spring of 1940, it became an independent concentration camp, the central concentration camp for northwest Germany. By 1945, around 104,000 people were held in the main camp and its more than 75 subcamps, including 13,500 women. The Gestapo also brought around 2,000 additional prisoners to Neuengamme to be executed.

The Neuengamme site was chosen, as with Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Flossenbürg, and other concentration camps, because it was connected to the economic interests of the SS: the prisoners were to work in a brickworks where clinker would be produced for the transformation of the Hansestadt Hamburg. On August 31, 1938, the SS acquired for the Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke GmbH (German Earth and Stone Works, DESt) an unused brickworks with 50 hectares (123.6 acres) of land in the Hamburg suburb of Neuengamme on the Dove Elbe, a dead-end branch of the Elbe River, no longer used by ships. The first 100 prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp arrived there on December 12, 1938, via Berlin, to work in the factory and to expand it. A decision to establish a larger concentration camp had not been made at this time. Critical for the decision to establish a concentration camp was a visit by Heinrich Himmler to Hamburg in January 1940. The Reichsführer-SS was looking for new places to accommodate concentration camp prisoners as a result of the large number of people arrested after the outbreak of war. He appointed SS-Sturmabführer Walter Eissfeld as commandant, who in February began to expand the camp.

At the end of 1940 and the beginning of 1941, there were just about 3,000 prisoners; in 1941–1942, 4,500 to 4,800; in August 1943, around 10,000; and in April 1945, 53,000 to

54,000, of whom 12,000 were women (including subcamps). At the end, there were 13,000 to 14,000 people in the hopelessly overcrowded main camp and around 40,000 in the subcamps.

The prisoners were guarded by SS-Totenkopf (Death's Head) units. The Neuengamme concentration camp was classified in Camp Category II (*Lagerstufe II*) in 1940. As a practical matter, this distinction had little significance. The camp held all three categories of concentration camp prisoners.

The composition of the prisoners reflected, albeit belatedly, the course of the war. Until 1940, mostly German prisoners were brought to Neuengamme from other concentration camps, including a large number sent as punishment detachments. In the following years, Neuengamme held mostly people from the occupied countries. From March 1941, Poles and, from 1942–1943, Soviet prisoners formed the largest group in Neuengamme. Many of the detainees were foreign laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) from different camps in northern Germany who, having either breached the work rules or after trying to escape, were sent to the concentration camp. Other than for prisoners sent directly to the camp by the Gestapo, most of the prisoners came from other concentration camps. Just from Auschwitz, Neuengamme received more than 10,000 prisoners in 1943–1944. Judicial authorities also transferred many prison inmates to the concentration camp.

Initially, there were only a few hundred Jews in Neuengamme. It was only with the numerous transports of Jewish prisoners from the east in April 1944 that thousands of Jews, the majority of whom were women, arrived in Neuengamme and its subcamps. It is estimated that there were around 13,000 Jewish prisoners in the Neuengamme concentration camp.

As resistance increased in the occupied western and northern European countries, large transports of prisoners arrived from these countries in 1944, especially from France and Denmark. The mass arrests in the occupied countries, often at random, during the German retreat showed that the SS leadership had identified a method to recruit forced labor. In the last weeks of the war, thousands of Danish and Norwegian prisoners were transported to Neuengamme. The Swedish Red Cross successfully negotiated with Himmler for Scandinavian prisoners from all camps and prisons in Germany to be brought to Neuengamme. From there they would be evacuated as the front got closer.

Until February 1940, the conditions in the camp were more bearable than later: there was enough to eat and scarcely any serious mistreatment. This changed dramatically when Commandant Eissfeld took over at the beginning of 1940 and transformed Neuengamme into an independent concentration camp. His successors Martin Weiss (April 1940 to August



Prisoners work beside the fence separating the "protective custody" section of Neuengamme from the industrial section. In the distance the crematorium and the Walther armaments works can be seen, n.d. USHMM WS #83540, COURTESY OF AG-NG



A view of Neuengamme concentration camp, 1943.  
USHMM WS #06024, COURTESY OF AG-NG

1942) and Max Pauly (September 1942 until the end of the war) made sure that violence, hunger, cold, sickness, and death ruled the lives of the prisoners.

Beatings and arbitrary punishments accompanied the prisoners from early morning until late evening. Countless commands, regulations, and prohibitions gave the SS overseers and the prisoner-functionaries (above all, the camp elder, block elders, and Kapos) the opportunity to mete out punishment as they wished, to beat and kill the prisoners, without the need to justify their acts. Official punishments such as standing to attention for several hours at the camp entrance, arrest, beatings, hanging from posts, and transferal to punishment companies were handed out less frequently but were especially feared.

During the war, hunger was the worst scourge of the prisoners. In 1940–1941 the food supply was better than in the other concentration camps; obviously, the authorities felt that all the prisoners' strength was needed to erect the camp. In 1941 the portions declined; they no longer were sufficient to maintain the prisoners' strength. Rations were reduced in April 1942, and the number of emaciated prisoners increased dramatically. In the autumn of 1942 the death rate jumped dramatically. In the winter of 1942–1943, it reached at times more than 10 percent of the inmates per month. In the following winters, it was lower as a result of measures introduced by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), in particular, permission granted to receive packages, the increased allocation of extra rations for heavy labor, and hygienic and medical improvements. However, in 1944–1945, the food supplies in the main camp and in most of the sub-camps were further reduced. Even tradesmen, armaments workers, and other skilled workers were living mostly on the bare minimum to survive. Most of the other prisoners died as a result of hunger and its effects, as they did not have the chance to "organize" other food supplies, that is, to steal.

During the first three years, the prisoners wore striped concentration camp uniforms that scarcely gave protection

against the cold and the wet. In 1943–1944, there were improvements for some prisoners, especially for important laborers. Used civilian clothes, owned by murdered Jews and from concentration camp prisoners in Eastern European countries, were distributed, first in the main camp and later in many subcamps.

The camp was heavily overcrowded. From 1944 on, often 2 prisoners had to share a bed; later it was 3. In the blocks where the new prisoners were held, the camp leadership sometimes crowded 800 to 1,000 prisoners into 400 square meters (478.4 square yards).

The hygienic conditions were terrible. When the camp was established in 1940–1941, the prisoners, who wore wooden shoes, often sank knee deep into the mud in the swampy ground during the rain. Dirt and dampness were carried into the barracks. Water could only be obtained from hand-operated pumps located close to the latrines. The conditions improved in the summer of 1941 when the sewage system was built, and the roll-call square was covered with concrete. However, as the number of inmates increased markedly, there were soon, once again, catastrophic hygienic conditions. One of the biggest problems was washing clothes. The prisoners often got very dirty when working. During the day they were not allowed to go to the toilet, so that their trousers were smeared with urine and excrement. It was practically impossible to wash clothes. Many prisoners stank of urine and fecal matter; there was an unbearable smell in the barracks.

The majority of the prisoners suffered from illnesses and injuries. Simple colds often developed into high fever and lung inflammations. Common were diarrhea, hypothermia, and stomach and intestinal problems caused by the poor quality of the water and the eating of rotten food, scraps, and grass. Many prisoners suffered from circulatory problems and dropsy (*Wassersucht*). Tuberculosis, an exception in 1940, took hold in 1941 as the prisoners weakened. In the winter, the prisoners often suffered from chilblains, and their limbs froze. Vermin spread due to the poor hygiene. At the end of 1941, a louse-borne typhus epidemic broke out, and the camp had to be put under quarantine. Work accidents and mistreatments resulted in wounds that did not heal, and sometimes there were severe injuries. Medical care was a farce. The operating theater was relatively well equipped and was often shown to visitors. But as everything else was missing, the efforts by many prisoners in the infirmary to help their comrades as best they could were useless. New sick barracks were established between November 1943 and the summer of 1944 so that there was enough room for the sick. At the end of July 1944 the commandant ordered the evacuation of two infirmaries, despite the increased numbers reporting sick, so as to make room for prominent prisoners from France. At the same time, he had a new crematorium built.

Until 1943, the long-term ill and weakened prisoners were regularly transported away by the SS to Dachau and in 1944–1945 above all to Lublin-Majdanek and Bergen-Belsen. A medical commission visited Neuengamme in April 1942 to select weakened prisoners and to a lesser extent handicapped



prisoners, Jews, and other “useless eaters,” as part of *Aktion 14f13*. A few weeks later, the chosen prisoners were sent to Bernburg an der Saale to be gassed.

At the beginning of 1942, weakened prisoners in Neuengamme began to be murdered by injection, at first in a separate area of the camp for Soviet POWs but soon even in the main infirmary. This murderous campaign generated such fear in the prisoners that often the seriously ill would not dare go to the infirmary. The killing stopped in the summer of 1943.

From the autumn of 1944 on, the Neuengamme main camp developed into a sort of death camp. In 1944, a large number of subcamps were established. As the economic enterprises attached to the subcamps did not want the sick and weakened prisoners, the SS returned them to the main camp and replaced them with new prisoners who were capable of working. At the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945, the majority of prisoners in Neuengamme were incapable of working: they were left to themselves in appalling hygienic conditions in the so-called *Schonungsblocks* (convalescent blocks) with reduced rations. In the last months of the war, the death rate (including the subcamps) was around 5 percent.

Beginning in 1942, in the main camp the prisoners were used for different medical experiments including trials with medicines to combat louse-borne typhus and with water poisoned with gas. The SS doctor Kurt Heissmeyer conducted experiments with tuberculosis bacteria on 20 Jewish children brought to Neuengamme from Auschwitz. To hide the traces of this crime, members of the SS murdered the children in April 1945 at the Bullenhuser Damm School in Hamburg.

Between 1940 and 1942, most of the prisoners were used in excavation work for the camp, for the clinker factory, for deepening the Dove Elbe (“Kommando Elbe”), and for transport work. The work was in the open air. Later the majority of the inmates worked on construction sites around the camp. Mistreatment and arbitrary treatment made life hell. Prisoners worked regardless of the weather so that the concentration camp prisoners often wore wet clothes the whole day. Those who could not keep up with the pace of the work were tortured and beaten. Just about every day when returning to work, those who had collapsed were put on carts that were pulled into the camp. The sick, weak, and dead were put aside at the roll-call square until the evening roll call was complete.

Around 10 to 20 percent of the inmates worked in the prison camp or the SS camp or did administrative duties with the construction companies and the old clinker factory. Here the conditions were better. The erection of the new industries and of the industrial administration of the construction management resulted in an increase in the number of prisoners in the main camp who worked on production or other areas with bearable conditions. By the end of 1944, the number of such people in the main camp was around 25 percent.

Until 1942, except for Kommando Elbe, few prisoners worked outside the camp territory. At times the work detach-



Neuengamme prisoners dig the Dove-Elbe Canal, 1941–1942.  
USHMM WS #06027, COURTESY OF AG-NG

ments were assigned to tradesmen and salesmen located close by, who supplied the concentration camp, including the Ohde Bakery, the ironmonger Glunz, and the timber merchant Behr. From time to time the prisoners were assigned to rural work.

The SS was ruthless in dealing with the slightest sign of help or resistance. The SS built a network of spies to uncover resistance in the camp. It used national and political tensions to stir up the prisoners against each other. Although each prisoner was fighting for his survival, there were many attempts to work together to improve conditions. Friends grouped together, as did other small groups to support each other. Groups of the same nationality, based on the same language and culture, developed a broad consciousness of what they had in common, which in turn led to the will to assert themselves. Language differences were a great barrier to understanding the other groups; it was always difficult to



The camp commandant, SS-Obersturmbannführer Max Pauly (far right), conducts a tour of Neuengamme, n.d.  
USHMM WS #83703, COURTESY OF GÜNTHER SCHWARBERG





"Punishment Drill," n.d. by Hans P. Sorensen, a Holocaust survivor.  
USHMM WS #27519, COURTESY OF FRIHEDSMUSEET

maintain connections across national barriers. It was mostly the Communist prisoners who spoke of attempts to make contact across international barriers. Jehovah's Witnesses showed strong solidarity based upon religious motives.

Chances to escape the terror by flight were small. It was almost impossible to escape the main camp. No known escape attempt was successful before April 1945.

It was in the infirmaries that the prisoners organized assistance and solidarity despite the terror. In the main camp the infirmary Kapo, Mathias Mai, would step in to protect prisoners from seizure by the SS. In 1942, several prisoners who worked as orderlies in the infirmary refused to participate in killing prisoners with injections. Sometimes an endangered prisoner would exchange his number with a prisoner who had just died to give the impression that he was no longer alive.

There were prisoner-functionaries who did office work and who were prepared to help their comrades in need by sending them to the better work detachments. Worthy of mention are Arbeitsdienstkapo Albin Lüdke and Belgian prisoner André Mandrycx. On the other hand, the camp elder Jakob Fetz followed the orders of the SS and personally participated in hangings.

Neuengamme prisoners remember the assistance given to Soviet prisoners in the autumn of 1941. When these completely weakened prisoners arrived in the camp and were fed worse than the other prisoners and treated more inhumanely than the normal concentration camp inmates, there was a broad attempt to help, which involved collecting bread.

It was possible on a few work sites in the main camp and the subcamps to commit acts of sabotage. No real damage was done; the acts were more symbolic. If there were gaps in the controls, work slowed down, machines were incorrectly set, supplies disappeared, and there were other disturbances. Skilled tradesmen sometimes took on prisoners without the necessary skills to protect them from certain overseers. In the repair shops, the prisoners sometimes illegally listened to foreign radio broadcasts.

From the beginning of 1945 on, as the front approached, more and more of the Neuengamme subcamps were dissolved. At the end of March 1945, the main camp, which held 14,000 inmates, was in such a catastrophic state that the SS shunted the prisoners off to other camps, especially to Bergen-Belsen, Sandbostel bei Bremervörde, and Wöbbelin bei Ludwigslust. There the accommodation and food supplies were inadequate, so that thousands died within a few days from hunger, cold, filth, and disease.

The final command to evacuate the main camp was given on April 19. Most of the prisoners were taken by rail or by foot to the Lübecker Bucht, where they were put on ships no longer capable of maneuvering. More than 7,000 concentration camp prisoners drowned in the Baltic as a result of an attack by British aircraft on May 3, 1945.

It is difficult to determine the number of prisoners who survived the liberation of the Neuengamme concentration camp, as during the years an unknown number of prisoners were transported to other camps. Some were completely emaciated; it can be assumed that there was a high death rate among these prisoners. It is likely that around 44,000 to 55,000 of those held in Neuengamme and its subcamps did not survive.

About 120 SS members of the Neuengamme concentration camp and its subcamps were tried between 1946 and 1948 in the main proceedings and more than 20 subsidiary proceedings before British military courts. The main trial, from March 18 to May 3, 1946, in the Hamburg Curio-Haus (located at Rothenbaumchaussee) resulted in death sentences for the commandant Max Pauly, the camp leader Anton Thumann, two SS doctors, and seven other SS members. They were executed in October 1946 in the Hameln Prison. In later proceedings there were approximately another 15 death sentences that were carried out. Other perpetrators, including the former commandant Weiss, gave evidence against the SS in other concentration camps. Most of those convicted waited for a few years in prison and were pardoned at the beginning or the middle of the 1950s.<sup>1</sup>

Many of those less involved, who were, for example, in the concentration camp administration or the guard force, had to answer before denazification courts in the British occupation

zone. In the main, the courts were lenient. Only a few of the accused were sentenced to prison.<sup>2</sup>

The state prosecutors attached to the German district courts focused from 1946 on the criminal acts committed in the Neuengamme concentration camp and its subcamps. There were a considerable number of investigations, but the number of convictions was small. For example, by the end of the 1980s, there were more than 80 investigations in Hamburg, but only seven were charged; there has been no conviction since 1953.<sup>3</sup> Many perpetrators escaped punishment by living under assumed names or overseas. Others were safe because the judicial authorities did not commence investigations. According to the Zentrale Stelle zur Aufklärung von NS-Verbrechen in Ludwigsburg, the number of investigations began to increase in 1958, but most proceedings went nowhere because the evidence for individual crimes was often not supported by sufficient witness statements. Witnesses living overseas were rarely questioned. The accused were also helped by the fact that at the end of the war the majority of files were destroyed to wipe out the traces of the crimes. From the middle of the 1960s, all crimes, except murder, were subject to the statute of limitations. This had the result that the proceedings were stopped against two SS block leaders accused of aggravated mistreatment in the Neuengamme concentration camp.<sup>4</sup> The commander of the Hamburg-Eidelstedt women's subcamp was acquitted by a Hamburg court in 1982 even though he had been convicted in connection with the death of a newborn child; his acts were not treated as murder.<sup>5</sup> Altogether only a small proportion of the more than 4,000 SS in the Neuengamme concentration camp were the subject of investigations. Less than half of those mainly responsible, for example, detachment and block leaders and the commanding officers, were tried.

**SOURCES** The following works, among others, contain information on this camp: Detlef Garbe and Harriet Scharnberg, eds., *Häftlinge im KZ Neuengamme: Verfolgungserfahrungen, Häftlingssolidarität und nationale Bindung: Eine Tagung der KZ-*

*Gedenkstätte Neuengamme, in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Freundeskreis KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme, der Amicale Internationale KZ Neuengamme und der Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg 1.–3. September 1998* (Hamburg: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme, 1999); Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1997); Ulrich Bauche et al., eds., *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945; Katalog zur ständigen Ausstellung im Dokumentenhaus der KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme* (Hamburg: VSA, 1986); Jorgen H. Barfod, *Helvede har mange navne* (København: ZAC, 1969); Werner Johe, *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg* (Hamburg: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1981); Edgar Kupfer-Koberwitz, *Die Mächtigen und die Hilflosen*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1957); Hans Mommsen and Manfred Gieger, *Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf: Econ, 1996). See also the student paper by Matthias Hütgens, “Das Aussenlager Eidelstedt des KZ Neuengamme: Der Alltag im Lager und Berichte von Anwohnern” (unpub. MSS, AG-NG, Hamburg, 1982).

The most important archival collections are to be found in AG-NG. The British Neuengamme cases are found in PRO, WO 235. One published memoir of this camp is Marcel Prenant, *Toute une vie à gauche* (Paris, 1980); there are many others.

Hermann Kaienburg  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. The trial files are held in the PRO (WO 235), in particular: Neuengamme Concentration Camp Case and 9 succeeding trials.

2. The files are held today in BA-BL, Bestand Z 42.

3. Aufstellung der Sta. bei dem LG Hamburg v. 3.9.86 (AG-NG).

4. Sta. beim LG Hamburg, Aktenzeichen 147 Js 32/65.

5. LG Hamburg, Verfahren 2000 Js 19/77. Also Matthias Hütgens, “Das Aussenlager Eidelstedt des KZ Neuengamme: Der Alltag im Lager und Berichte von Anwohnern” (unpub. MSS, AG-NG, Hamburg, 1982), p. 31.

## NEUENGAMME SUBCAMP SYSTEM



With more than 75 subcamps, the Neuengamme concentration camp was one of the medium-sized camp complexes that deployed prisoners for the benefit of the German war economy, and it also played an important role in the first attempts to do so: at the beginning of the spring of 1942, Staatsrat Walther Schieber (Reich Ministry for Armaments and Munitions, later War Production) suggested, as one of the first projects, that a Neuengamme subcamp be established at the Francke factory in Bremen.<sup>1</sup> This suggestion was not implemented, and the subcamp was established at the Phrix factory in Wittenberge. This was the first Neuengamme subcamp. When it was constructed in August 1942, it was also the first subcamp in Germany located within a privately owned company. The Salzgitter-Drütte camp at the Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG) was also one of the early detachments within Germany.

Eventually the expansion of the Neuengamme subcamps almost came to a halt: in 1943 there were “only” two new camps. At the insistence of the navy, one camp was established in Hannover-Stöcken so as to guarantee the production of U-boat batteries at the Akkumulatoren-Fabrik (battery

factory), and the other was in Bremen-Farge for the construction of the U-boat Bunker “Valentin,” the most important of the naval projects at the time. It was only at the beginning of 1944, when it became obvious that with the retreat of the Wehrmacht the Generalbevollmächtigter für den Arbeitseinsatz (General Plenipotentiary for Labor Allocation, GBA) Fritz Sauckel would no longer be able to supply new foreign forced laborers, that concentration camp prisoners were seen as the last available labor force, thereby becoming a much desired resource. As a result, a net of subcamps spread across northern Germany like a plague: if at the beginning of the year there were only 4 subcamps, by the end of the year there were around 70. The majority of the camps were established in the second half of 1944: in the first quarter, there were 4 new camps; in the second, 11; and in each of the third and the fourth quarters, 24. In the last year of the war, another 9 new camps were established. Three-quarters of the Neuengamme subcamps only came into existence in the 12 months prior to the capitulation of the German Reich.

The more than 75 camps can be roughly grouped as follows, with some overlap. There were approximately 30 production





Prisoners' bunks at the Wöbbelin subcamp of Neuengamme, May 5, 1945.

USHMM WS #10262, COURTESY OF NARA

camps in which the majority of the prisoners were used in the industrial production of armaments. Further, there existed about 20 construction camps, where the majority of the prisoners constructed factories, accommodations, or bunkers. Then there were 6 subcamps in which the type of work was similar to that in the construction camps—the prisoners were put to work in constructing military fortifications, that is, antitank ditches for the so-called Friesenwall (a set of fortifications ordered by Hitler). Likewise, there were 7 subcamps in which the prisoners worked underground, where they did both construction and production work. In 20 camps the prisoners had primarily to remove unexploded ordnance and rubble. Ten of the Neuengamme subcamps can be classified as *Kleinlager* (small camps), with fewer than 100 prisoners. (Only a few of the *Kleinlager* have been included in the totals above.) Women were held in 25 subcamps.

The death rate in four of the six male camps for the construction of the Friesenwall was the highest. The Ladelund camp existed for 11.5 months. During this time, 300 of the 2,000 prisoners died; in Aurich-Engerhufe, 200 of the 1,500 prisoners died within 3 months; and in Husum-Schwesing, 300 prisoners died within 3 months. (In all three camps, the number of exhausted prisoners who were taken to Neuengamme and died there is at least as high. In Husum, for example, 750 ill prisoners were sent back to Neuengamme before the camp was dissolved after 3 months.)<sup>2</sup> In the 4 months the Meppen-Versen camp existed, almost 600 prisoners died, making this short-lived camp the one with the highest death rate in the Neuengamme system. (There were a larger number of prisoners who died in Salzgitter-Drütte, but that camp lasted for almost 3 years as well as functioning as the death camp for the nearby camps in Braunschweig and Salzgitter.) A few of the construction subcamps had a relatively high death rate (e.g., Bremen-Farge, with a camp population of around 2,000, had around 400 deaths within 1.5 years), as did a few of

the bomb disposal and rubble removal camps—especially Hamburg Hammenbrook (Spaldingstrasse), with a camp population of around 2,000 and almost 500 dead within 6 months. On average, the death rate in the production camps was lower. The chances of survival were especially high in the *Kleinlager*, where there is not known to have been more than 1 fatality in any of the 10 camps. The women's camps had a significantly lower death rate than the men's camps. One of the reasons for this is that of the 25 women's camps, about 15 were production camps. Even compared to the men's production camps, though, the death rate was considerably lower.

It is useful to look at the figures for the quarter from December 26, 1944, to March 25, 1945, which are best verified by a report of the Neuengamme SS-Standortarzt. During the reporting period, there were on average 40,393 male and 11,768 female prisoners in the Neuengamme camp system. In that period, 6,129 male prisoners and 95 female prisoners died. Thus while the female prisoners constituted 20 percent of all prisoners, less than 2 percent of the deceased were female. During the period, around three-quarters of the male prisoners were in the subcamps. Of the 6,129 deceased male prisoners, however, just over 50 percent (3,089) died in the main camp. (The death rate in Neuengamme and its subcamps climbed rapidly to this high level only from November 1944 on. Between January and October 1944 there were, on average, between 70 and 350 deaths in the main camp, with a similar number in all the subcamps.)<sup>3</sup> The main camp remained the central death camp for the subcamp system until the end of the war. It was only with the evacuation of the subcamps that the collection camps at Wöbbelin and Sandbostel developed similarly shocking conditions as in the death zone of the main camp.

There were 52,000 prisoners in the Neuengamme system. At the beginning of 1945, there were 2,211 SS members guarding the prisoners, of whom 1,800 were stationed in the subcamps. In addition, there were 2,400 guards in the subcamps who were not part of the SS.<sup>4</sup> As the naval war economy was largely based in north Germany, and there were subcamps at the most important naval construction projects and naval shipyards, naval soldiers formed a large part of the non-SS guards. However, older or injured soldiers from other branches of the armed forces, customs officers, members of the Volkssturm, and employees of firms where the subcamps were located were also called up to guard the prisoners.

In administering the subcamps, the Stützpunktleiter (base commanders) were installed between the Neuengamme command and the commanders of each subcamp, as an additional administrative level. In March 1945, there were eight Stützpunkte, to which almost all the subcamps were subordinated. (The Stützpunkte were: Hamburg, Bremen, Hannover, Braunschweig, Druette, Watenstedt, Helmstedt, and Porta. The *Todesfallmeldung*, or fatality report, in the SS-Standortarzt's quarterly report lists most of the subcamp deaths according to the corresponding Stützpunkte. Meppen-Versen and Wöbbelin were the only subcamps listed separately, as they were not subordinated to any Stützpunkt.) It would seem that Max Pauly, commandant of Neuengamme, established the role of



Stützpunktleiter, as he wanted to regulate their assigned tasks on the spot. The tasks of the Stützpunktleiter included the collection of the death reports from the subordinate camps and passing on mail and supplies to the camps. The Stützpunktleiter in Hannover also, once or twice, inspected the subordinated camps. In a few cases, injured Wehrmacht officers were appointed as subcamp commanders. However, the commanders of the Stützpunkte were long-serving SS officers. This was most obvious in Bremen: The commander of the largest and oldest subcamp in Farge, Hauptmann Hans Wahl was not appointed Stützpunktleiter, rather, the commander of the smaller and more recent Neuenland camp (later known as Osterort) was appointed, SS-Hauptsturmführer Hugo Benedict.

The evacuation of the Neuengamme subcamps began on March 25 with the evacuation of Meppen-Versen, the most westerly of the subcamps. The evacuation of the largest subcamps is roughly as follows: from Bremen the Jewish prisoners were sent to Bergen-Belsen and the others to Sandbostel or via Neuengamme to the Neustädter Bucht. The majority of prisoners in the Hannover camps, including the non-Jews, were taken to Bergen-Belsen. The majority of prisoners in the area of Braunschweig, Salzgitter, Fallersleben, and Porta were taken to Wöbbelin, while a few of the Salzgitter detachments were sent to Bergen-Belsen. The Hamburg detachments were sent largely in three directions: Sandbostel, Bergen-Belsen, and via the main camp to Neustädter Bucht. Around 9,400 prisoners were sent to the Neustädter Bucht, of whom 7,000 lost their lives on the *Cap Arcona* and *Thielbek*. In Sandbostel, there were 6,800 prisoners alive of around 8,000 to 9,000 prisoners when the camp was liberated, whereas in Wöbbelin around 3,000 to

3,500 prisoners lived to see the arrival of Allied troops. Roughly another 1,000 sick prisoners would die, however. Around 8,000 prisoners were transported from Neuengamme to Bergen-Belsen in the last days of the war. Some 3,000 female Jewish prisoners were liberated at the Salzwedel subcamp. Around 4,200 Danish and Norwegian prisoners were taken by the Red Cross on April 20 to Denmark, in the so-called *Aktion Bernadotte*. The remainder of the Neuengamme prisoners were sent on evacuation marches, where many died, either of hunger or because they were shot or incinerated alive by the SS or were killed during air raids. Others were lucky and were liberated at the end of their march.

**SOURCES** The information in this essay comes largely from secondary sources that are listed under the main camp entry.

Documents useful for this essay may be found in AG-NG and StA-N.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. See “Niederschrift über eine Besprechung im Büro von Karl-Otto Saur am 16.3.1942,” StA-N, KV-Anklage, NO-659; Vermerk für Schieber am 17.3.1942, *ibid.*, NO-2548.

2. The numbers given here are based on an electronic database at AG-NG.

3. See the “Vierteljährige Bericht des SS-Standortarztes des KL Hamburg-Neuengamme vom 29.3.1945,” StA-N, KV-Anklage, 2169-PS.

4. The numbers are taken from the quarterly report in *ibid.*

## ALT-GARGE

The Alt-Garge subcamp existed from August 24, 1944, to February 15, 1945. Alt-Garge was a suburb of the city of Bleckede on the south bank of the upper Elbe River. The concentration camp prisoners were sent to this provincial town to construct the coal-fired power station Ost-Hannover, which was owned by the Hamburgische Electricitätswerke AG (HEW). Building had been taking place since 1941. However, the shortage of labor had lengthened the project. To move the project along, prisoners of war (POWs) from Yugoslavia had been held in what was to become the subcamp.<sup>1</sup> However, there was soon a renewed labor shortage after they lost their status as POWs following the breakup of Yugoslavia.

It would seem that it was HEW that requested concentration camp prisoners.<sup>2</sup> The prisoners arrived in a transport from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Around 500 Polish prisoners, who had been arrested by German army and police detachments during the Warsaw Uprising, were gathered together in the middle of August 1944 in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The prisoners, officially classified as evacuees, were specially treated. As a former prisoner stated: "What was noteworthy was that a few days before our transport to Alt-Garge that we were given a specially prepared form to fill out and sign. The form literally stated that we were not prisoners but had been evacuated from the Warsaw Uprising and were to be interned until the end of the war."<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, there is no evidence to suggest that their special status meant that they were treated better than other Polish prisoners.<sup>4</sup> In addition to the almost 500 Polish prisoners, there were around another 20 prisoners of different nationalities, who mostly had been held in Sachsenhausen for longer periods, who were added to the detachment. The more experienced prisoners were given the essential tasks in prisoner administration. The transport was accompanied by 20 SS men, who remained in Alt-Garge as guards. The detachment reached the empty camp on August 25, 1944, where they received the Neuengamme numbers 46870 to 47370.<sup>5</sup>

The homogeneous composition of the group changed as sick and weak prisoners were transported to Neuengamme and replaced with other prisoners from the main camp. In October and November, three transports arrived with new prisoners, consisting of around 90 Danish and 20 Norwegian prisoners.<sup>6</sup> There were around 70 Danish resistance fighters, mostly members of the Communist or Socialist parties, and around 20 policemen. The intercession of the Danish government resulted in the policemen's release and return to Denmark in January 1945. There were three camp elders in the camp: the first was a young SS man who had been dishonorably discharged from the SS and arrested. He lost this position due to his extreme brutality. He was followed by a Dutch man who left a positive impression in the minds of the prisoners. Finally, until the evacuation of the camp, there was a German with a green triangle (signifying police "protective custody" prisoner), who is remembered mostly for his thefts and em-

bezzlement. Survivors have also not forgotten a few of the other violent prisoner-functionaries.<sup>7</sup>

The subcamp was under the command of SS-Oberscharführer Walther or possibly Walter. He is remembered by the prisoners not for his brutality but because of his ruthlessness in driving the prisoners to work. Not even the sick prisoners were allowed a rest. On the other hand, SS-Unterscharführer Johann Reese is recalled for his extraordinary brutality. Reese, who was noted for his brutality in several other Neuengamme subcamps, was sentenced to death in the British Curiohaus Trial against Neuengamme concentration camp SS guards. A few of the other SS guards were also described by the prisoners as being particularly brutal.

The camp consisted of three larger barracks that accommodated the prisoners; a large stores barracks; four smaller barracks that served as washrooms, toilet blocks, and a store-room for firewood; and a large barracks for the SS guards. The SS guarded the camp from three guard towers, which—as with their accommodation barracks—were located inside the camp's fence.

The prisoners had to do a variety of tasks in constructing the power plant. They were distributed to a number of different construction companies working on the power plant. The larger detachments worked on railway lines, roads, the port, and excavation work as well as earthworks including leveling the ground.<sup>8</sup> The work began each day at 6:00 A.M. and ended at 6:00 P.M., broken only with a short break for a noon meal. In theory, the prisoners had every second Sunday free, but this did not occur often. Just about all work was done in the open air through all types of weather. Accidents were the order of the day, as a former prisoner stated: "Colleague Majewicz witnessed how a few prisoners were squashed by large rocks which fell from the scoop of a crane on a barge on the Elbe. . . . There were such accidents just about every day and sometimes several a day."<sup>9</sup> German foremen also made survival difficult: "The foreman that I knew the best . . . was 64, strong, diligent and conscientious: full of German values but at the same time as full of Prussian meanness as his moustache. In his youth he had worked with slaves in German East Africa—when the German Emperor had demanded more space for the German Reich in the sun. Today . . . this old Prussian was a slave driver again. . . . His bitter hatred forced me to struggle for my life."<sup>10</sup>

A few prisoners tried to escape from the catastrophic conditions in the camp and at work. Three such incidents are described by survivors. In one case the escapee was shot; in the second, two recaptured prisoners were taken to Neuengamme. The third attempt remains etched in the minds of the other prisoners: three prisoners managed to escape. Two were recaptured by the SS. One of those was shot by the SS on the spot. The camp commandant used the case to make an example for the other prisoners in Alt-Garge: the dead prisoner was exhibited in a coffin while his fellow escapee had to stand in front of him. "The poor shoeless man was bound by the feet and his hands were bound behind his back, even though the temperature was several degrees below zero. After he had stood there for several hours he was severely mistreated."<sup>11</sup>

For unknown reasons, the camp was evacuated on February 15, 1945. All remaining prisoners in Alt-Garge were taken by boat to Hamburg and from there transported to Neuengamme. There are different accounts on the number of evacuated prisoners, with estimates varying between 250 and 350 prisoners. According to a Dutch prisoner, there were around 250 prisoners in the camp, but only 150 went on the first transport.<sup>12</sup> This would mean that around 350 prisoners who arrived on the first transport had died in Alt-Garge or had been evacuated because they could no longer work. There were few deaths among the Danes and Norwegians who arrived later, but the death rate among the Polish prisoners was very high. One of the surviving Polish prisoners who compiled a list supports the following supposition: 117 of the 216 identified prisoners on the transport from Sachsenhausen had died before the Allies liberated the others.<sup>13</sup> Around 50 prisoners are buried in the Barskamp Cemetery not far from the subcamp. There are also indications that there is a mass grave of prisoners in a nearby forest.<sup>14</sup> It is probable that most of the other prisoners on the lists of those transported as sick to Sachsenhausen died in the main camp.

**SOURCES** This essay builds on the study of the Alt-Garge subcamp by John Hopp, *Die Hölle in der Idylle: Das Aussenlager Alt-Garge des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme*, 2nd ed. (Winsen/Luhe, 1993). On Polish participants in the August 1944 Warsaw Uprising at Neuengamme, see Georg Erdelbrock, "Das Schicksal der bei der Niederschlagung des Warschauer Aufstandes in das KZ Neuengamme und seine Aussenlager deportierten Polinnen und Polen," in *Häftlinge im KZ Neuengamme: Verfolgungserfabrungen, Häftlingssolidarität und nationale Bindung*, ed. KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme (Hamburg, 1999), pp. 85–92.

Just about all primary information stems from former prisoners' statements, the majority of which are held at AG-NG. A German translation of the published Danish testimony, Niels Jorgensen, *Paa det tyske Slavemarked* (Copenhagen, 1945), is also available at AG-NG.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. John Hopp, *Die Hölle in der Idylle: Das Aussenlager Alt-Garge des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme*, 2nd ed. (Winsen/Luhe, 1993), p. 31.
2. Ibid., p. 143.
3. Completed questionnaires of two Polish prisoners, AG-NG, 2.8/644.
4. Georg Erdelbrock, "Das Schicksal der bei der Niederschlagung des Warschauer Aufstandes in das KZ Neuengamme und seine Aussenlager deportierten Polinnen und Polen," in *Häftlinge in KZ Neuengamme: Verfolgungserfabrungen, Häftlingssolidarität und nationale Bindung*, ed. KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme (Hamburg, 1999), p. 87.
5. Hopp, *Die Hölle in der Idylle*, p. 35.
6. Ibid., p. 38.
7. Ibid., p. 58.

8. Completed questionnaires of two Polish prisoners, AG-NG, 2.8/644.

9. Ibid. The quotation has been orthographically corrected.

10. Niels Jorgensen, *Paa det tyske Slavemarked* (Copenhagen, 1945).

11. Report of a Danish survivor, AG-NG, 2.8/562.

12. AG-NG, 2.8/210.

13. Printed in Hopp, *Die Hölle in der Idylle*, p. 188. Part of the list is based on information extracted from the subcamp's and the Neuengamme main camp's death list. There are no comparable lists of survivors. It is likely that a death rate of more than 50 percent cannot be applied to the whole transport of 500 prisoners.

14. Ibid., p. 123.

## BEENDORF ("AIII") [AKA HELMSTEDT]

Not far from the former inner German border are two salt mines, "Bartensleben" and "Marie," located in the communities of Beendorf and Morsleben in Saxony-Anhalt. The salt mines were owned by the Magdeburg-based Burbach-Konzern (Burbach Group). In the last two years of the war, various vital war industries were relocated underground in caves, adits, mines, railway tunnels, and bombproof bunkers. Armaments suppliers to the aircraft industry were relocated to the salt pits at Beendorf and Morsleben for protection against Allied air raids. Male and female inmates of the Neuengamme concentration camp's subcamp at Beendorf were deployed there, both for the relocation of the facilities as well as for armaments production. They were quartered in two large hangars of the Aerial Ammunition Institute (Luftmunitionsanstalt) aboveground, close to the adits. Hangar No. 13 accommodated 2,000 prisoners—about 800 men on the first floor and roughly 1,200 women on the second floor. In addition, some 500 Jewish women were accommodated in Hangar No. 14. The hangars were massively built and had barred windows. Washrooms, latrines, the infirmary, and the room where the prisoners received their provisions were located along the corridor near the sleeping quarters.

Members of Hermann Göring's Reich Aviation Ministry (Reichsluftfahrtministerium) inspected the two mines, Bartensleben and Marie, in December 1943 and February 1944, respectively, and requisitioned them for armaments production. The Askania-Werke AG (Askania Corporation), based in Berlin-Friedenau, together with some of its subsidiaries and the Luftfahrtgerätewerk Hakenfelde GmbH (Aircraft Instrument Factory Hakenfelde, Ltd.), a subsidiary of Siemens & Halske AG (S&H) and the Siemens-Schuckert-Werke (Siemens-Schuckert-Works, SSW) based in Berlin-Spandau, were to be relocated to the pits. The first male prisoners arrived in Beendorf just a few days after the mine complex had been inspected and began construction to relocate the Berlin Askania-Werke to the Bartensleben pit. By the time the underground factory was completed at the beginning of August

1944, a number of transports of several hundred male prisoners from the main camps at Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen, and Neuengamme had arrived at the Beendorf subcamp. They were all deployed in the Bartensleben pit, to support preparations for the relocation.

Once the factory was completed in August 1944, the Askania-Werke began armaments production on three levels in the Bartensleben mine: II, IIa, and IIIa, each with four large rooms about 100 meters long, 25 to 30 meters wide, and 15 meters high (109 yards long, 27 to 33 yards wide, and 16 yards high). The production area totaled about 30,000 square meters (35,880 square yards), but later it may have been expanded to about 38,000 square meters (45,448 square yards). Initial plans were for the deployment of about 2,000 workers, 1,000 of whom were to be prisoners. However, during the course of production, the number was increased to 2,000 workers per shift, which meant that about 2,000 prisoners were deployed.

The first 500 prisoners to work on production in the Bartensleben mine, mostly German and French women from the Ravensbrück concentration camp, arrived in Beendorf in early August 1944. Further transports of female inmates from Ravensbrück, including numerous Polish women, followed in September and October 1944. Furthermore, around 500 Jewish women from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp arrived in Beendorf at the beginning of December 1944. All the women were deployed in the Bartensleben pit. Among them was Krystyna Razinska, who wrote the following about the on-site work:

The Askania-Werke was located in a former salt mine, about 700 to 800 meters [766 to 875 yards] underground. They were giant two-level halls dug into the salt; a lot of ammunition was lying around. The trip down in the two elevators was very dangerous. Down below, aircraft parts, cannons and weapons were then assembled on precision workbenches. We worked in artificial light on lathes, milling machines, drills, and vises. The halls were very clean and excellently equipped for the work. Because our mouths were always dry and we were allowed neither to drink nor wash, we were plagued with thirst. . . . A civilian German foreman allocated the work. . . . I worked on a lathe. The work was very hard and difficult. I often ruined what I was doing, but the foreman was quite understanding.<sup>1</sup>

The women produced not only air force munitions but also various parts for Hitler's "miracle weapons" (*Wunderwaffen*) the Me 262 and the V-1 and V-2 rockets, such as autopilots, controls and steering mechanisms, or other electromechanical parts. In addition, the Askania-Werke produced periscopes for submarines. The prisoners worked a total of 72 hours a week in two shifts of 12 hours each.

While the female prisoners worked exclusively on manufacturing in the Bartensleben pit, the male prisoners readied

the Marie pit for the relocation of a second factory. The Luftfahrtgerätewerk Hakenfelde plant was supposed to be located on two pads at a floor level of 360 meters (394 yards), one to the northwest and the other to the southeast of the pit. For the factories, the prisoners had to prepare 34 "normal workrooms" (*Normalarbeitsräume*), each with a size of 400 square meters (478 square yards), and two large workrooms—each 3.5 meters high by 67.5 meters wide by 100 meters long (3.8 yards by 73.8 yards by 109 yards.) On each shift, 1,000 people were to work there: 640 in assembly and 360 in the storage facility, in the office, and as supervisors.

The production line and the crew arrived in Beendorf from Berlin in December 1944. By shortly before the end of the war, about two-thirds of the factory was completed. Thus, actual production could be started and maintained for several weeks.

Altogether there were between 700 and 750 male prisoners employed in constructing the Marie pit. One of them was Albert Rohmer, who related the following about his work:

The Salt Column [Salzkolonne], the largest group, did the main work in the mine: the excavating and leveling of the chambers, halls of twenty to forty meters [22 to 44 yards]. . . . There are around one hundred chambers. The men work there in the salt dust under the low roofs (two meters [2.2 yards]), bare from the waist up. Large blocks were blasted away with dynamite, and for an hour after an explosion you look through a thick, dark cloud of salty dust. The salt air at least has the advantage of drying out and damaging nasal passages. . . . The terrible problem of having to blow your nose did not come up until the evening.<sup>2</sup>

Gerhard Poppenhagen was the only camp commander of the Beendorf subcamp. Poppenhagen was born in Hamburg on September 26, 1909. After his elementary and secondary schooling, he was trained as a merchant, whereupon he worked in his father's business until it went bankrupt in 1932. From 1932 to 1934, he was a traveling salesman for various businesses and was intermittently unemployed for a few months. He began training as a member of the Criminal Police in September 1935. He joined the Nazi Party (NSDAP) on August 1, 1932, and the General-SS (Allgemeine-SS) on September 9, 1933. In May 1935, he was appointed administrative leader (Verwaltungsführer) of the 22nd SS Regiment (22. SS-Standarte). From 1936, he worked as a Gestapo official and Criminal Police inspector in Breslau, Lüneburg, and Hamburg. He joined the Waffen-SS on June 26, 1940. In the second half of 1940, he was sent to Neuengamme with the rank of SS-Rottenführer. On September 1, 1940, he was promoted to Unterscharführer, and on May 1, 1942, he became Oberscharführer. He took an officer's training course in 1943 and then assumed command of a guard company in Neuengamme. He took command of the Beendorf camp in 1944, remaining in this position until the end of the war.

Apart from the camp commander, 300 Luftwaffe soldiers and a few SS personnel were in charge of guarding the prison-



ers. In addition, the female prisoners were guarded by about 52 female guards. Some of these guards are known by name: Anton Jansen Brunken, Karl Adolf Brettschneider, and Hans Bloecker, as well as Ilse Riemann, Luise Bongartz, Lottchen Ostermann, Luise Linke, Gertrud Reinl, and Anna Meinel.

In the course of evacuating many camps in the German Reich during the final period of the war, the Beendorf subcamp became the destination for a few transports. As early as January 1945, 600 male prisoners from an operation of the Askania-Werke in Hirschberg (Silesia) arrived at the pits in Beendorf and Morsleben. With the Red Army drawing closer, these men had been transferred from the Gross-Rosen concentration camp to the Neuengamme camp system. Moreover, in late February or early March 1945, about 500 women arrived in Beendorf from the Neuengamme subcamp at the SS-Reitschule (Riding School) in Braunschweig, as well as the female and male prisoners from Porta Westfalica, also a Neuengamme subcamp, which was evacuated in early April 1945. The entire Beendorf camp was probably evacuated on April 8, 1945. According to estimates, about 1,350 male and 3,000 female prisoners left the camp by train, moving northward. The train wandered for days until it arrived in Wöbbelin via Magdeburg, Stendal, Wittenberge, and Sülför. The male prisoners left the train at Wöbbelin, probably on April 16, 1945, and were interned in the local Neuengamme subcamp. The female prisoners, however, were transported further to Hamburg, where, most probably on April 20, 1945, they were distributed among various female subcamps in the city, such as Hamburg-Sasel-Poppenbüttel, Hamburg-Eidelstedt, Hamburg-Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll), and Hamburg-Wandsbek. From there, most of the prisoners were evacuated to Sweden in early May 1945.

**SOURCES** This description of the camp at Beendorf is based on the following publications: Björn Kooger, “Das Aussenlager Helmstedt/Beendorf (SS-Führungsstab A 3),” in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager in Norddeutschland: Kriegsende und Befreiung*, ed. KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1995), pp. 76–83; and Björn Kooger, “Das Aussenlager Beendorf—SS-Führungsstab A,” in *Jahresschrift der Museum des Obkreises: Haldensleben und Wolmirstedt* (Haldensleben, 1995), 2: 50–70.

The AG-NG and the Beendorf Memorial currently hold a few Beendorf survivor interviews and memoirs. The prisoner cards kept by the SS-WVHA have been rediscovered in the last few years and shed new light on various prisoner transports that reached the camp. Copies of these are located at the AG-NG. Information on Gerhard Poppenhagen is to be found in the records of the British Military Court Proceeding, which are held in the BA-K. The same applies to records of other male guards whose names are known. Further information on the female guards named in this article can be found at the USHMM and the ZdL-L. Information on the rest of the guards at Beendorf is to date unavailable. It also remains unclear precisely when the hangars of the Luftmunitionsanstalt were converted into accommodations for the prisoners.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. “Bericht Krystyna Razinska,” in “*Und vielleicht überlebte ich nur, weil ich sehr jung war*”: *Verschleppt ins KZ Neuengamme; Lebensschicksale polnischer Jugendlicher*, ed. Projektgruppe für die vergessenen Opfer des NS-Regimes/KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1999), pp. 92–93.

2. Report by Albert Rohmer, cited by Björn Kooger, “Das Aussenlager Helmstedt/Beendorf (SS-Führungsstab A 3),” in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager in Norddeutschland: Kriegsende und Befreiung*, ed. KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1995), p. 79.

## BOIZENBURG

Boizenburg, a subcamp of the Neuengamme main concentration camp, probably operated between August 1944 and late April or early May 1945. During this period, only female prisoners were incarcerated in the camp. The camp was located directly on top of the Elbburgkuppe at the edge of the small town of Boizenburg in Mecklenburg.

The barracks camp was most likely built at the Elbburg in the early 1940s. Since relevant documents are missing, it is not possible to say when exactly the barracks were built. Until the incarceration of female inmates from Neuengamme, the camp held prisoners of war (POWs). It seems that the camp consisted of four accommodation barracks with two large and two small rooms each, a lavatory, and a toilet, and barracks for the kitchen and a sick bay. In addition, there were SS administration barracks and barracks for accommodation outside the camp.

Approximately 400 Hungarian Jewish women<sup>1</sup> were incarcerated at Boizenburg in the second half of August 1944. They had been transported from Auschwitz to northern Germany. These women were expelled from their Hungarian hometowns in the spring of 1944, incarcerated in various Hungarian ghettos, and from there deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp. Most Jewish women in Auschwitz II-Birkenau were held in Camp C, the so-called transit camp (Durchgangslager), where these women were selected for labor details in Boizenburg.

The Boizenburg female prisoners worked in the armaments industry for Thomsen & Co. Together with German civilian workers and POWs, they had to work in 12-hour day or night shifts, supporting warship production and repairing airplanes. According to reports of survivors, Thomsen & Co. assembled warships on the factory's ground floor, whereas mainly Focke-Wulf wings were repaired on the second floor. Many women working for Thomsen & Co. operated welding devices and drills. As the prisoners were not given any protective clothing, many suffered severe injuries in the factory. Survivor Eva K. reported, for example, that while drilling into the wing of an airplane, a metal splinter got into one of her eyes. As a result of this injury, she went blind in this eye.<sup>2</sup> Other female prisoners doing welding work suffered severe burns and unbearable pain in the eyes.

Production and maintenance at Thomsen & Co. probably discontinued in March 1945, when Boizenburg was increasingly targeted by Allied air raids. Several survivors remember that from this time on female prisoners were deployed to remove rubble caused by air raids at the Boizenburg harbor and on factory grounds.

The names of the Boizenburg camp commandants are not known. According to several survivors, three camp commandants were in charge of the camp. There was a change in the camp leadership in December 1944 and again shortly before the end of the war. Apart from the camp commandants, female SS guards were responsible for guarding the prisoners inside the camp. Male guards, probably members of the Wehrmacht, were on duty outside the camp. Estimates suggest that there were about 20 additional guards.

Boizenburg was evacuated in late April 1945. It is possible that the female inmates left the camp by foot toward Ludwigslust on April 28, 1945. The exact destination of this march remains unclear. It is likely that the prisoners were to march to the so-called receiving camp Wöbbelin, also a Neuengamme subcamp. According to reports of survivors, the Boizenburg prisoners were denied access to the Neustadt-Glewe camp on their evacuation march, a subcamp of the Ravensbrück concentration camp, because of a typhus epidemic.

The inmates from the Boizenburg camp were liberated after a five-day march in Gross Laasch by the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division.

**SOURCES** This account on the Boizenburg camp is based upon Ilse Ständer, *Das Aussenlager Boizenburg des KZ Neuengamme* (Boizenburg: Heimatmuseum der Stadt Boizenburg, 1996). Not far from the former camp grounds, a memorial and a tablet commemorate the history of this subcamp. The camp's remaining kitchen cellar was placed under monument protection in 1991 and restored. The camp's barracks were demolished by the GDR.

A few interviews with female survivors, who report on the camp's history, are located in the AG-NG. The author conducted interviews with several former prisoners of this camp. YV and the BA-L hold further reports, including the records of the preliminary proceedings on Boizenburg during the 1960s and 1970s. Sources reporting on the exact construction date of the barracks, the prisoners' arrival from Auschwitz, and their evacuation in late April–early May 1945 do not exist. The same applies to documents about female and male guards of the female subcamp Boizenburg.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. For the numbers, see the “Krankenbericht über den Krankenstand im KZ Neuengamme des SS-Standortarztes Dr. Alfred Trzebinski vom 29.03.1945,” reproduced in Werner Johe, *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg*, 3rd. ed. (Hamburg: Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1982), p. 76.

2. “Aussage von Eva K,” in Ilse Ständer, *Das Aussenlager Boizenburg des KZ Neuengamme* (Boizenburg: Heimatmuseum der Stadt Boizenburg, 1996), p. 17.

## BRAUNSCHWEIG (BÜSSING NAG)

The Braunschweig Büssing Vereinigte Nutzkraftwagenwerke AG (Büssing United Utility Vehicle Factory, or Büssing NAG) played an important role in armaments production. The factory requested concentration camp inmates to be utilized in the manufacture of trucks for the Wehrmacht. For the Büssing subcamp, five barracks were constructed close to the main factory on Wörthstrasse (later Schillstrasse).<sup>1</sup>

At first, a construction team of 126 inmates was sent to Braunschweig from the Neuengamme main camp. The construction team consisted of 74 French, 42 Soviet, 8 German, and 2 Polish prisoners. All 8 German prisoners wore the green triangle and were thus considered “criminals” by the SS. They occupied key positions as prisoner-functionaries in the camp.

A large number of the prisoners deployed in Braunschweig near Büssing were Polish Jews. They had survived the Łódź ghetto and, after the ghetto's liquidation, were deported to Auschwitz. In Auschwitz, representatives of the Büssing NAG selected them for labor details in Braunschweig. Above all, metalworkers were in demand. In addition to the prisoners' claims of being skilled laborers, their physical appearance was the main criterion for selection.<sup>2</sup> The prisoners arrived at Braunschweig in three transports between September and November 1944. The first transport of 350 prisoners left Auschwitz in mid-September 1944. As the camp at Braunschweig was not completed, around 100 prisoners were accommodated in a nearby forced labor camp. They were deployed to assist the prisoner construction team in building the camp. The remaining 250 prisoners were transferred to the recently completed camp in Vechelde, where they also were to work for Büssing.<sup>3</sup> A second transport of about 500 prisoners arrived in Braunschweig in mid-October, and some 150 of these prisoners were sent to Vechelde. A third transport of 350 prisoners left Auschwitz for Braunschweig on November 3, 1944; again, the majority were Polish Jews, along with a few Hungarian and Czech Jews.

Once the camp was completed at the end of October 1944,<sup>4</sup> the prisoners were deployed in two shifts at Büssing NAG: a day shift from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. and a night shift from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M. The prisoners working on the day shift were awakened at 4:00 A.M. They had to walk about 1.2 kilometers (0.7 miles) to the factory. Bad weather and inadequate clothing made this walk particularly difficult.

At the factory, prisoners received their own time cards, which they had to stamp at the beginning and the end of their working hours.<sup>5</sup> They were deployed in three areas of the factory: parts (*Maschinenteilauswechselabteilung*), repair (*Maschinenreperaturabteilung*), and crankcase locksmithery (*Schlosserei für Motorgehäuse*). To increase the prisoners' motivation, factory management arranged, in consultation with

the SS, a system of bonus certificates that foremen of the respective areas could distribute. Former inmate Jerzy Herszberg summarized the work at Büssing as follows: "The work in the factory, however, was fairly easy, and often, when the supply was low, we had nothing to do. . . . But we had to be alert at all times as a loss of concentration resulted in paying a high price. Clearly, a 12-hour shift, 7 days or nights, in alternate weeks, was exhausting, and I felt an acute lack of sleep."<sup>6</sup>

The prisoners had a 30-minute break, during which they received a bowl of poor-quality soup from the Büssing factory kitchen, where food was prepared for Russian forced laborers. Initially, the Büssing NAG also distributed other meals, but from mid-November onward, the SS gave out the rations in the subcamp. Rations for prisoners progressively decreased, as the SS was also using the supplies.

The subcamp was set up for approximately 300 prisoners, but at times more than twice that number was accommodated. Consequently, the conditions in Braunschweig were very poor. The prisoners were almost constantly covered with lice. There was no soap and only cold water for showers. Moreover, the Kapos were violent. Herszberg, previously interned in Auschwitz, assessed conditions as follows: "Braunschweig was the worst camp I stayed in. . . . The rumors were that the Kapo in charge of the camp had been previously a hangman in Dachau . . . and I can recall at least six [Kapos], memorable for their sadism. . . . They never seemed to tire of torturing and humiliating us."<sup>7</sup>

The commander of the subcamp, SS-Hauptscharführer Max Kierstein, also contributed substantially to the poor conditions in the camp. According to most prisoner reports, he made a far less negative impression as commander of the Wittenberge subcamp. Thus it is likely that his behavior in Braunschweig was also driven by his antisemitic attitude. A former prisoner recalled Kierstein saying: "If a Jew devours too much, then he will become fat, lazy, and finally, cheeky as well."<sup>8</sup> Other prisoners also remember similar statements from Kierstein.

The prisoners' situation deteriorated steadily. The French prison physician Dr. Salan said: "In December 1944, conditions became intolerable. . . . At that time there were 18 three-tiered bunks in the infirmary, in other words, 54 beds. Since some bunks were occupied by two patients, the infirmary held 60 bedridden patients with diarrhea and other diseases."<sup>9</sup>

The death rate in the subcamp was extraordinarily high. By the end of 1944, around 300 prisoners had died of hunger, illness, and maltreatment. Their corpses were transported by train to the Watenstedt subcamp. After a large number of incapacitated prisoners were sent to the infirmary at the Watenstedt subcamp in early 1945, the death rate actually declined. Nevertheless, the funeral parlor Pietät had transferred 80 more corpses from the subcamp to the Braunschweig city crematorium by March 20, 1945.<sup>10</sup>

The SS evacuated the subcamp at the end of March 1945 in the face of the steadily approaching front line. The prisoners were first taken to the subcamp at Watenstedt, and on April 7, together with the prisoners of this subcamp, they

were transported for many days by rail to the Ravensbrück concentration camp. They arrived on April 14. When Ravensbrück was evacuated at the end of April, the men were driven forth on foot. With further transportation, a large group made it to the receiving camp at Wöbbelin, where they were liberated by American troops on May 2.<sup>11</sup>

Even though Great Britain and the Federal Republic of Germany initiated preliminary proceedings against the people in charge at Büssing NAG and the Braunschweig camp, in neither case were the proceedings seen through.<sup>12</sup>

**SOURCES** The two most important studies about the subcamp include Karl Liedke and Elke Zacharias, *Das KZ-Aussenlager Schillstrasse: Der Arbeitseinsatz von KZ-Häftlingen bei der Firma Büssing*, 2nd ed. (Braunschweig: Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge, 1996); Karl Liedke, "Destruction through Work: Łódź Jews in the Büssing Truck Factory in Braunschweig 1944–1945," *YVS* 30 (2002): 153–179. Both studies are mainly based upon accounts by former prisoners and German witnesses.

The records of a German state attorney's office, which are now located in the NStA-Wf, served as additional sources. Further records of preliminary proceedings are located at the PRO and the ZdL-L. They contain, however, little information beyond the files at the NStA-Wf.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Karl Liedke and Elke Zacharias, *Das KZ-Aussenlager Schillstrasse: Der Arbeitseinsatz von KZ-Häftlingen bei der Firma Büssing*, 2nd ed. (Braunschweig: Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge, 1996); Karl Liedke, "Destruction Through Work: Łódź Jews in the Büssing Truck Factory in Braunschweig 1944–1945," *YVS* 30 (2002): 153–179; Gerd Wysocki, *Gedenken für die Verfolgten von Terror und Zwangsarbeit der nationalsozialistischen Herrschaft im Land Braunschweig; Part I: Forschungsstand und zum Umgang mit der Vergangenheit* (Braunschweig, 1995).

2. Liedke, "Destruction," p. 157.

3. Ibid., p. 162.

4. Liedke and Zacharias, *Das KZ-Aussenlager*, p. 15.

5. Ibid., p. 165.

6. Jerzy Herszberg, "A Survival Story of 1939–45 War," *AG-NG*, Ng. 2.8/393, p. 19.

7. Ibid., p. 18.

8. As cited by Liedke, "Destruction," p. 171.

9. Georges Salan, *Prisons de France et bagnes allemandes* (Nîmes, 1946), p. 160.

10. Liedke, "Destruction," p. 174.

11. Ibid.; and Katja Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung; Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945; Katalog zur Wanderausstellung* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2000), 2:15.

12. PRO, WO 309/1241; NStA-Wf, 62 Nds Fb 2, no. 445; and ZSL-L, IV 404 AR 111/67.



## BRAUNSCHWEIG (SS-REITSCHULE)

The city of Braunschweig instigated the installation of the SS-Riding School (SS-Reitschule) camp. The city's objective was to receive concentration camp inmates who could remove the debris caused by Allied air raids. According to concurrent reports of survivors, the female prisoners arrived in Braunschweig shortly before Christmas 1944, probably on December 20. Former prisoners still vividly recall the city's festive Christmas decorations.<sup>1</sup>

The inmates consisted of some 800 Jewish women, the majority of them Hungarians and a smaller number of Czechs.<sup>2</sup> The women had been transported from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen in late November or early December 1944. Shortly before Christmas, the SS transferred them from the women's camp in Bergen-Belsen to Braunschweig.

The inmates were accommodated in the SS-Reitschule. This complex of buildings had the shape of a horseshoe, stretching from Schefflerstrasse to Hans-Porner-Strasse. It had been constructed during the war.<sup>3</sup> The women were housed in a large stable that was absolutely unsuitable for the winter months. The roof leaked, and rain and snow constantly fell into the stable. Emmy Massmann recalled the accommodation as follows: "It was not really a camp. It was a large stable where we had to live with 800 people. There were only two water faucets above the horses' manger. The sick urinated into it, people washed themselves in it, and they also rinsed their food bowls. This had nothing to do with hygiene. We did not have towels and soap at all."<sup>4</sup> Since there were no stoves, the stable was extremely cold. In addition, the women had to sleep on the floor, which was covered only with straw. The straw was full of lice, so that the women were soon covered with bites.

The inmates were deployed cleaning up debris within the Braunschweig city limits. They were taken to different parts of the city in columns of about 100. From dawn to dusk, they had to clear away destroyed buildings and sort out the still-usable stones. Judith Petrover, a Hungarian survivor, remembers above all the cold during the labor deployment: "It was terribly cold. Sometimes the SS allowed two girls to make a small fire. There was also a lot of snow. It was so cold that we cried. The whole commando cried. We could not stand it. We had only a thin dress and a thin, unlined coat. And nothing else."<sup>5</sup>

Due to the hard labor, extreme cold, and inadequate accommodation, the SS-Reitschule subcamp, in spite of its short period of existence, had the highest death rate of all Neuengamme women's subcamps. During the two months of the camp's existence, 16 women died.<sup>6</sup> In mid- or late February 1945, the SS evacuated the camp. About 150 to 200 sick or weak prisoners were transferred to Watenstedt, where several women died. A larger group of about 600 women capable of working was transported to the subcamp at Beendorf.<sup>7</sup>

**SOURCES** Mainly reports and interviews with survivors as well as several extant prisoner cards from the SS-WVHA

serve as sources for this description of the SS-Reitschule subcamp. A booklet written by Bernhild Vögel provides only a brief summary of the SS-Reitschule subcamp: Bernhild Vögel, . . . *und in Braunschweig?: Materialien und Tips zur Stadterkundung 1930–1945* (Braunschweig: JURB, 1994). Hans Ellger's not-yet-published dissertation is more informative: "Weibliche Häftlinge in Neuengamme: Die Geschichte der Frauenaussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der jüdischen Häftlingsgruppe" (Ph.D. diss., University of Hamburg, 2004). Sections dealing with the SS-Reitschule can be found throughout the book.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Report by Piroška Braun, July 11, 1945, YVA, O-15/2791; report by Roszi Markovics, July 8, 1945, YVA, O-15/1763; interview with Eva Timar, April 17, 1997, AG-Dr.

2. Hans Ellger, "Weibliche Häftlinge in Neuengamme: Die Geschichte der Frauenaussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der jüdischen Häftlingsgruppe" (Ph.D. diss., University of Hamburg, 2004), p. 94.

3. Bernhild Vögel, . . . *und in Braunschweig?: Materialien und Tips zur Stadterkundung 1930–1945* (Braunschweig: JURB, 1994), p. 37.

4. Emmy Massmann, "Eckernförde—Auschwitz—Schweden: Ein Dokument aus dem Jahre 1945," in *Jüdische Vergangenheit—Jüdische Zukunft*, ed. Ole Harck (Kiel: Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung Schleswig-Holstein, 1998), p. 70.

5. Interview by Hans Ellger with Judith Petrover, February 28, 2002, as cited in Ellger, "Weibliche Häftlinge", p. 199.

6. See prisoner data bank at AG-NG.

7. Ellger, "Weibliche Häftlinge", p. 99.

## BRAUNSCHWEIG

### (TRUPPENWIRTSCHAFTSLAGER)

In addition to other subcamps attached to Neuengamme that were created in Braunschweig, for example, at Büssing NAG and the SS-Reitschule, a Truppenwirtschaftslager (Army Supply Depot) subcamp was established in Braunschweig on March 25, 1944. Inmates deported to the Neuengamme subcamp system were used as laborers in construction, repairs, and various other economic and rearmaments efforts. The creation of satellite camps at work sites diminished transportation time for inmates between the main camp and the outlying sites. Between 8 and 10 male inmates were transferred to Truppenwirtschaftslager, presumably from the main Neuengamme camp, to construct an office barracks for the SS.<sup>1</sup> They were employed by the SS-Central Recruiting Office (Ergänzungsstelle Mitte) in Braunschweig. The satellite operated briefly until June 5, 1944, when it was evacuated to another satellite work site in Warberg.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Truppenwirtschaftslager in Braunschweig. Brief informa-



tion on the existence of the camp in secondary literature is found in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a reproduction of the quarterly report filed by SS garrison doctor (Standortarzt) Trzebinski. This information is duplicated (except for the opening date of the camp) in the Braunschweig entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979). For similar brief information (opening and closing dates, type of work, and so on), see Ulrich Bauche, *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986).

Primary documentation that provides data on the Braunschweig camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information. The original quarterly report filed by SS garrison doctor Trzebinski, which lists “Truppenwirtschaft” (Braunschweig) and which is published in various secondary sources, can be found at the FGNS-H.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

#### NOTE

1. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FGNS-H, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). The archives of the USHMM (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also contain a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (British Army of the Rhine, BAOR, trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126.

### BREMEN (BORGWARD-WERKE)

A satellite camp attached to Neuengamme was created in Bremen for the automobile manufacturer Borgward-Werke on August 25, 1944. Some 1,000 male inmates, possibly transferred from Auschwitz to Neuengamme, and then eventually to Bremen, were brought to a camp on the grounds of the factory, located on Niedersachsendamm, Schützenweg, and Föhrenstrasse in Bremen.

As in other subcamps attached to Neuengamme, the inmates were brought to the satellite camp at the Bremen Borgward-Werke to be used as laborers in the factory. There is no specific information as to the kind of work the prisoners were forced to perform; however, they were most likely employed in the production of heavy-duty vehicles.

The camp at Borgward-Werke was in operation only until October 12, 1944, when the plant was bombed and destroyed during an Allied aerial attack. The inmates were transferred back to Neuengamme, where they arrived on October 14.

Some prisoners may have also been transferred to Porta Westfalica, to the Aussenlager Lerbeck.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the satellite camp in Bremen at Borgward-Werke. Brief information on the existence of the camp in secondary literature is found in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps. This information (opening and evacuation dates, number of prisoners, and so on) is duplicated in Ulrich Bauche, *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986); and Werner Johe, *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg* (Hamburg: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1982). For specific information on the location of the camp, see Ursula Krause-Schmitt and Gottfried Schmidt, eds., *Heimatgeschichtlicher Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstandes und der Verfolgung, 1933–1945*, vol. 6, Susanne Engelbertz, *Bremen: Stadt Bremen, Bremen-Nord, Bremerhaven* (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag für Akademische Schriften, 1992). For the history of the Borgward-Werke company, see Klaus Brandhuber, *Die Insolvenz eines Familienkonzernes: Der wirtschaftliche Niedergang der Borgward-Gruppe* (Cologne: Müller Botermann, 1988).

Primary documentation that sheds light on the Borgward-Werke camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

### BREMEN (HINDENBURGKASERNE)

On two occasions during World War II, concentration camp prisoners were incarcerated in the horse stables of the Hindenburg Military Barracks (Hindenburgkaserne) in Bremen. Male prisoners of Neuengamme’s 2nd SS-Construction Brigade (SS-BB II) were interned in the stables probably from September 1943 to April 1944. Later on, the stables accommodated Ukrainian forced laborers for several weeks. In August 1944, two transports of female prisoners from Auschwitz arrived in Bremen. They were also quartered in the stables. The Hindenburgkaserne was located on Bossdorfstrasse in Huckelriede, a subdivision of a newly constructed area of Bremen.

A lease details which parts of the Hindenburgkaserne were used to incarcerate prisoners. The lease states the following:

Between Reich exchequer Hoer, represented by defense district administration X in Hamburg (Wehrkreisverwaltung X), further represented by the army station administration Bremen (Heeresstandortverwaltung Bremen), under the agency of senior staff paymaster Schulz, as landlord, and the Reich Ministry of the Interior, represented by the Hanseatic city of Bremen, furthermore represented by the senator for construction, acting as director of emergency measures, as tenant, the following lease agreement has been concluded:

## §1

The landlord rents the following to the tenant for the establishment of a work camp in the rear of the Hindenburgkaserne:

- (a) the stable, including the riding arena and riding square
- (b) the veterinary and quarantine stables
- (c) the terrain west of the veterinary stables, including the tennis court
- (d) the square south of the officers' quarters (Doppel-Offizierheim) for the construction of a barrack.

## §2

The monthly rent is 1,018 RM [Reichsmark], calculated on the basis of an annual rent of 4.50 RM per square meter floor space. The floor space applies to:

- (a) the stable, including the riding hall
  - the northern stable—731.61 sqm [875 square yards]
  - riding hall—922.73 sqm [1,104 square yards]
  - southern stable—683.82 sqm [818 square yards]
- (b) the veterinary and quarantine stables—375.56 sqm [449 square yards] totaling 2,713.72 sqm [3,246 square yards].<sup>1</sup>

In addition, correspondence between the city of Bremen and the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) in Oranienburg near Berlin of August 1944 shows exactly when the female prisoners arrived in the Bremen subcamp. A letter to Oberregierungsrat Köster states: "500 female concentration camp inmates have been sent to Bremen to construct emergency housing. They arrived at the Hindenburgkaserne subcamp on August 2, 1944. It is expected that 300 additional female concentration camp inmates will be sent there shortly."<sup>2</sup>

According to the recollections of several survivors, the Jewish women reached Bremen during the night of August 1 or 2, 1944. Most likely, this transport to Bremen was composed exclusively of Hungarian women, who had been expelled from their homes in the spring of 1944, incarcerated in various ghettos in the country, and from there deported to Auschwitz. In Auschwitz II-Birkenau, many of them were held in Camp C, the so-called transit camp (*Durchgangslager*), where they were selected for work in Bremen.

The "300 additional female concentration camp inmates" mentioned by Köster were all Jewish women from Poland. Some of them had been held in the Łódź ghetto since early 1940 and worked as forced laborers until the ghetto's liquidation in the summer of 1944. From Łódź, these women were deported to Auschwitz and, after a selection, then transported to Bremen. The letter to Oberregierungsrat Köster of August 16, 1944, makes no mention of an expected arrival

date, apart from "shortly." Some Polish survivors stated that they arrived about three weeks after the Hungarian women in Bremen.

Although the city of Bremen had requisitioned the Jewish women from the WVHA for the construction of emergency accommodations, most of them were deployed to remove debris in Bremen. The women worked for a number of demolition and construction firms: Abbruch- und Verschrottungsunternehmen Karl Gesselmann (Karl Gesselmann Demolition and Scrap), Baugeschäft und Abbruchunternehmen Hermann Bödecker (Hermann Bödecker Construction and Demolition), Abbruchunternehmen Heinrich Ebeling (Heinrich Ebeling Demolition), Abbruchunternehmen Kirbitz & Breiter (Kirbitz & Breiter Demolition), Strassenbau- und Tiefbaugeschäft Stehmeyer & Bischoff (Stehmeyer & Bischoff Road Construction and Civil Engineering), Baugeschäft Joh. Heitmann (Joh. Heitmann Construction), Bauunternehmen Friedrich Rodieck (Friedrich Rodieck Construction), Bauunternehmen Dietrich Rohlf's (Dietrich Rohlf's Construction), Unternehmen Siemer & Müller (Siemer & Müller Enterprise), and Betonsteinwerk Lünig & Sohn (Lünig & Sohn Concrete). All these private building and demolition companies leased women as laborers from the city of Bremen, which in turn requisitioned them from the WVHA. The companies had to recompense the Bremen senator for construction for the prisoners' working hours.

Those prisoners deployed to construct emergency accommodations mainly had to level the ground on the different building sites, transport the building materials on lorries to the building sites, pour the foundations, or assist in the construction of buildings. Other women worked for Lünig & Sohn manufacturing precast concrete parts. Those prisoners deployed for the removal of debris from daily air raids removed countless bricks, heavy beams, and broken windows from the city.

The Bremen Hindenburgkaserne had two commandants. Unterscharführer Peter Pittmann assumed command on August 2, 1944. Pittmann was said to be about 34 years old at the time. Johann Hille replaced him after only about four weeks. Hille was born on December 8, 1890, in Tellingstedt. After completing elementary school, he worked as a laborer. He had joined the Nazi Party (NSDAP) on June 2, 1929, but left the party again on February 1, 1930, rejoining two years later on March 1, 1932. Following the Nazi seizure of power, he joined the General-SS (Allgemeine-SS). As a guard at Neuengamme, he was promoted to Oberscharführer on September 1, 1941, and Hauptscharführer on November 1, 1943. In September 1944, he left his position at the Neuengamme main camp and assumed command of the Bremen-Obernheide women's camp.

In addition to the two camp commandants, an unknown number of former Luftwaffe soldiers handled external security, and probably about 20 female guards were responsible for security inside the subcamp.

The subcamp on the grounds of the Hindenburgkaserne was completely destroyed during an air raid on Bremen on September 26, 1944. As a result, the female prisoners had to be transferred on that very day to a camp at Bremen-Obernheide.

On October 11, 1944, Oberregierungsrat Köster reported the following to Max Pauly, commandant of Neuengamme: "The subcamp for female concentration camp prisoners at Hindenburgkaserne, Huckelriede, which accommodated 800 female concentration camp inmates whom you allocated to me, was completely destroyed during an air raid on Bremen on September 26, 1944. As Obersturmführer Benedikt probably already has reported to you, we could transfer the inmates to another good camp on the same day."<sup>3</sup>

**SOURCES** This article is based on Harmut Müller, *Die Frauen von Oberneide: Jüdische Zwangsarbeiterinnen in Bremen 1944/45* (Bremen: Donat, 1988).

The AG-NG holds transcripts of interviews with female survivors who report on the history of the camp. The author conducted several interviews with former inmates. Lilly Kertesz published her recollections: Lilly Kertesz, *Von den Flammen verzehrt: Erinnerungen einer ungarischen Jüdin* (Bremen: Donat, 1999).

Further records are located at YV and AG-BB. All written documents, including the lease and reports about the prisoner transfer, are archived at the StA-Br. These files also contain information about the two camp commandants. A source providing information on the exact arrival date of the second Jewish group from Auschwitz is not available.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Mietvertrag (ohne Datum) Aussenlager Bremen-Hindenburgkaserne, StA-Br, Holding 9, 9-17, Binder No. 66.
2. Schreiben vom SS-Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt in Oranienburg bei Berlin an den Oberregierungsrat Köster der Stadt Bremen vom 16.08.1944, in *ibid*.
3. Schreiben des Oberregierungsrates Köster beim Senator für das Bauwesen an den Herrn Kommandeur des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme, SS-Sturmbannführer Pauly vom 11.10.1944, StA-Br, Holding 9, 9-17, Binder No. 66.

## BREMEN-BLUMENTHAL [AKA BREMEN-DESCHIMAG, BAHRSPATE]

The Bremen-Blumenthal subcamp existed from August–September 1944 to April 9, 1945. The camp was located on the Bahrsplate, a large vacant area of land in Blumenthal, on the Weser River. Immediately to the rear of the vacant land were residential buildings. The camp must have been clearly visible from the village. During the Third Reich, the site was owned by the Krupp Company, Deschimag AG, a Bremen shipyard. Deschimag had its chief site toward the town of Bremen-Gröpelingen. Since the beginning of the 1940s, the shipyard had operated a forced labor camp. Most of the forced laborers were from the "East." In 1943 the shipyard leased parts of the camp to the Bauamt Bremen-Nord, which in turn used it to hold French prisoners of war (POWs). In October 1943, the camp administration of the De-

schimag AG camp requested the Bauamt Bremen-Nord to vacate part of the barracks so that they could be put at the disposal of Oberbaurat Meiners.<sup>1</sup> Oberbaurat Meiners was head of the Marineoberbauamt Bremen and responsible for the construction of the U-boat bunkers "Valentin" (Bremen-Farge) and "Hornisse" (Bremen-Neuenland and Bremen-Osterort). It remains unclear whether the evacuation of the barracks was a portent of the subcamp or whether Meiners wanted Blumenthal as a temporary measure to accommodate civilian forced laborers who were used on the construction of the bunker "Valentin" in Farge. According to the available documents and witness statements, there is no indication that concentration camp prisoners arrived in Blumenthal prior to August 1944.

The subcamp was located next to the Ostarbeiterlager (Eastern Workers' Camp) on the Bahrsplate, separated only by barbed wire and four barracks, which accommodated the naval infantry, who guarded the prisoners. There are two conflicting statements about the size of the camp: according to a Belgian prisoner, the camp consisted of eight barracks and five other buildings that served as a dispensary, washroom, kitchen, administration, and storeroom. On the other hand, a German prisoner has stated that there were only four prisoner barracks and three other buildings.<sup>2</sup>

There were probably around 800 prisoners in the camp in August–September. The largest national groupings were Belgians, Poles, Soviets, and Ukrainians. The most important positions in the prisoner hierarchy, however, were filled by 8 German prisoners. The camp elder was known by the nickname "Langer Karl." His real name is thought to have been Karl Lange. "He is thought to have suffered from TB and was regarded inside the camp as 'a pig.' He repeatedly beat prisoners."<sup>3</sup> Germans were appointed as the camp scribe and in several Kapo positions. The majority were probably classified as criminals. According to a German prisoner, the German prisoners got on very well with the SS and naval infantry. Together they went looking for food and schnapps in the local area and "lads were permitted (under SS guard) to go to the brothel in Bremen."<sup>4</sup> However, there were Polish and Soviet Kapos and block elders. There were also 2 Russian block elders, with the nicknames Ivan the Terrible (Iwan der Schreckliche) and Red Terror (Rote Schrecken), who stood out because of their extreme brutality. Both are thought to have been killed by Polish prisoners during Christmas 1944.<sup>5</sup>

The commandant of the camp was Oberfeldwebel Richard-Johann vom Endt, who was born on January 3, 1904, close to Düsseldorf, and who, according to the Federal German State Prosecutor, died on April 8, 1962. On taking command, he was appointed SS-Oberscharführer. It is believed that proceedings were commenced against him after the war before a military court in Brussels, but the German prosecutors were not aware of the outcome.<sup>6</sup> The prisoners' reports do not reveal much about vom Endt. There is only a mention that he participated in the hanging of two Polish prisoners. The prisoners were guarded essentially by elder soldiers from the Naval Reserve Corps (Marineersatzkorps) Number Sixteen from Zeven.<sup>7</sup> There were also six SS men in the camp or with the guards.<sup>8</sup>

The prisoners were deployed at various work sites. A detachment worked in Gröpelingen at the Deschimag AG shipyard. Here the prisoners had to get up at 4:30 A.M. At 5:15 A.M. they embarked on a small barge that took them on a 1.5-hour trip on the Weser to the shipyard. The prisoners worked from 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., with a half-hour meal break. After they finished their work, they were returned to the camp by boat. There were 190 Jewish prisoners in the detachment, the first of whom arrived in Blumenthal in November 1944. Due to the long way to work, the prisoners in the detachments were transferred at Christmas 1944 to the newly established camp Bremen-Schützenhof, in the vicinity of the shipyard.<sup>9</sup>

The camp's second large work detachment also worked for the Deschimag AG. These prisoners only had to march about 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) to their work site, however. Having leased part of the nearby Bremen Wollkämmerei factory, Deschimag put the prisoners to work constructing turbines for submarines. The sources do not confirm that there was a third detachment that worked on the construction of the U-boat bunker "Valentin."<sup>10</sup>

The withdrawal of some of the prisoners to the Schützenhof subcamp in Blumenthal was compensated by the arrival of new prisoner transports. Shortly before the evacuation of the camp, there were 929 prisoners in the Blumenthal camp.<sup>11</sup> When the camp was evacuated, the Jewish prisoners from Blumenthal as well as the Jewish prisoners transported to the Schützenhof subcamp were separated from the other prisoners. They were crammed into two railway grain wagons and traveled around for several days without food before they finally reached Bergen-Belsen, where some of them were liberated.<sup>12</sup> The remaining prisoners were taken between April 7 and April 9, 1945, to the Bremen-Farge subcamp. They were then sent on a death march from Farge to Neuengamme.

It should be noted that the Blumenthal subcamp had a relatively high death rate for a camp whose prisoners were used mostly for manufacture, which can largely be accounted for by the brutality of the guards and prisoner-functionaries. Two examples of the extreme brutality in the camp are as follows: "If in winter you failed to work three times you were punished for your so-called laziness in the following manner: the guards filled a large vat with water. The prisoner's hands were bound and he was put into the vat so that only his head was above the water. With the very cold wind and the frost the water froze, freezing the prisoner at the same time."<sup>13</sup> The second example: "A favorite punishment in addition to the Bath in the Vat (Bad in der Tonne) was to throw the prisoners into the air. Four Kapos held the prisoners by the hands and legs and counted 'One, two, three!' and hurled as high as possible into the air. The prisoner then fell to the ground. This was repeated until the prisoner was half dead. Finally the camp elder danced on his chest until the ribs broke and the prisoner's heart and intestines were damaged."<sup>14</sup>

There is a record of another, more gruesome incident: two Polish prisoners were hanged on the roll-call square, as they were caught stealing a driving belt. According to witnesses,

this was a spectacle in which Neuengamme camp commandant Max Pauly as well as a large number of Blumenthalers participated as witnesses.

After the establishment of the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg, the Bremen State Prosecutor began proceedings in the 1970s. However, it questioned only German prisoners, and as they could not remember any particularly gruesome incidents in the camp, the proceedings ceased in 1976.<sup>15</sup>

**SOURCES** On forced labor on the construction of submarines in Bremen, see Barbara Johr and Hartmut Roder, *Der Bunker: Ein Beispiel nationalsozialistischen Wahns, Bremen-Farge 1943–45* (Bremen, 1989).

Almost all the primary information on this subcamp comes from former prisoners' statements. The majority of the texts are held in AG-NG. The names of 123 deceased prisoners have been identified in AG-NG's database. The investigations by the Bremen Sta. were helpful in identifying the SS guards, the names of whom can be seen in the StA-Br and the ZdL (now BA-L). StA-N holds 2169-PS, the Neuengamme Standortarzt report submitted to the IMT. A published memoir about Bremen-Blumenthal is Heinz Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens: . . . und ich blieb übrig, dass ich Dir's ansage*, trans. Hannah Vogt (Göttingen, 1992).

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trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Letter of Lagerverwaltung der Deschimag AG to Bauamt Bremen-Nord, October 13, 1943, StA-Br 4, 29/1-1422 (np).

2. See both drawings in AG-NG 6.4.13 AL Blumenthal. To what extent the differences can be explained by the extension of the camp is not known. Allied aerial photographs assisted in analyzing the question.

3. According to the Bremen Sta., see BA-L ZdL 404 AR-Z 129/74.

4. Report in AG-NG 6.4.13. The report reflects the cooperation between the German prisoners and the camp administration and the reporter admits to boxing other prisoners around the ears.

5. Heinz Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens: . . . und ich blieb übrig, dass ich Dir's ansage*, trans. Hannah Vogt (Göttingen, 1992), p. 136.

6. BA-L, ZdL IV 404 AR 611/67.

7. ZdL, 404 AR-Z 129/74.

8. Report in AG-NG, 6.4.13.

9. Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens*, p. 137.

10. Without references but mentioned in Barbara Johr and Hartmut Roder, *Der Bunker: Ein Beispiel nationalsozialistischen Wahns, Bremen-Farge 1943–45* (Bremen, 1989), p. 44.

11. Report of SS-Standortarztes, KZ Neuengamme, March 29, 1945, StA-N, KV-Anklage, 2169-PS.

12. Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens*, p. 140.

13. Ibid., p. 132.

14. Ibid., p. 133.

15. BA-L, ZdL 404 AR-Z 129/74.



## BREMEN-FARGE

In the autumn of 1943, the fourth Neuengamme subcamp was established in Bremen-Farge. According to the register of inmates, from the time it was established, Farge was the second-largest Neuengamme subcamp. (The only official number is from March 25, 1945. At that point, there were 2,092 prisoners in the Bremen-Farge subcamp.)<sup>1</sup> The majority of prisoners were used to construct an underground U-boat shipyard with the code name “Valentin.” It was one of the most important of the new construction projects for the German Navy. The bunker was situated in the north of Bremen on the Weser River. Once it was complete, prefabricated U-boat sections were to be welded together on a production line and then equipped.<sup>2</sup> Marineoberbaaurat Edo Meiners from the Marineoberbauamt Bremen was in charge of the site. On July 20, 1944, the Amt Bau Organisation Todt (OT) took over the whole naval construction program. Meiners remained responsible for the construction in Farge, but he was now in command of the OT-Oberbauleitung Unterweser. He worked closely with the two large Bremen shipyards, which were some of the largest manufacturers of U-boats in Germany. The Deschimag AG, part of the Krupp Group, was in charge of a smaller U-boat bunker in the center of Bremen (located at Bremen-Neuenland and Bremen-Osterort). The Bremen Vulkan-Shipyard, part of the Thyssen Group, took control of the Project Valentin. When constructed, the gigantic bunker was to be 426 meters long and 97 meters wide, with a height of up to 33 meters (466 yards by 106 yards by 36 yards). In order to complete the project, around 10,000 workers, the majority of whom were forced laborers, had to work daily on the construction site. Prisoners of war (POWs), civilian forced laborers, and concentration camp prisoners were employed.

The first transport of concentration camp prisoners to arrive in Farge was a small detachment required for the construction of the camp. This detachment consisted of a few German *befristeten Vorbeugungsbüfilingen* (BV, or Greens)—police “preventive custody” prisoners—as well as Polish and Soviet prisoners. The camp elder was Erich Meissner, a German political prisoner. A prisoner described him as an alcoholic and brutal madman. (After the war, Meissner became the Leipzig mayor.)<sup>3</sup> The higher prisoner-functionary positions were allocated to the German “greens.” The lower prisoner-functionary positions, especially the Kapos, were mostly Polish prisoners. Work on the foundations for the U-boat bunker began in the spring of 1944. At that time, one or two transports arrived daily in Farge, so that the number of prisoners increased to between 800 and 1,000. The heavy work must have caused a high death rate in the camp, as by the summer the number of prisoners had already dropped back to around 500.<sup>4</sup>

On August 1, 1944, a transport of 2,000 prisoners reached Farge. The majority of these prisoners were French. Other large national groups in the transport were Poles, Soviets, and Greeks. The majority of the existing reports and inter-

views from survivors originate from prisoners of this transport. Little is known about the period during the camp’s construction, but there are more details for the period from the summer of 1944.

The concentration camp prisoners worked in Farge in two shifts, each of 12 hours. The prisoners in the day shift were awakened around 4:00 A.M. and had to set forth to the bunker around 6:00 A.M. They worked from 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M., with only a break for a noon meal. The prisoners rarely got to go to bed before 10:00 P.M., as they had to march back to the camp, attend roll call, and eat their dinner.<sup>5</sup> At most, they had 6 hours’ sleep a day. The concentration camp prisoners were used on the heaviest and most unpleasant work that there was on the construction site. This was, above all, the cement detachments, where the prisoners had to shift heavy bags of cement or fill the cement mixers. The dust from the cement was a torture for the prisoners: “During the night the cement, which had settled on the nasal hairs, formed a crust which made breathing difficult. You had to use your fingers to get the concrete out—as well as the hairs as they were part of the concrete. . . . It sometimes happened that when I was coughing that I spat out a white ball, which just about ripped apart my chest.”<sup>6</sup>

The worst work was on the so-called iron detachments (Eisenkommandos), where iron and steel girders had to be transported. French survivor Raymond Portefaix has stated that one’s life expectancy fell dramatically on being allocated to such a detachment. He described such iron detachments as suicide squads (Himmelfahrtskommandos).<sup>7</sup>

The camp was about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) from the construction site in the Rekum Feldmarsch. Initially, the prisoners went to work by foot directly through the local community. Later they were taken in little railway wagons. The SS and Kriegsmarine took few steps to hide the subcamp and the prisoners from the local population. A local photographer was even able to enter the subcamp and take a number of photographs. The prisoners were accommodated in an underground navy fuel tank. The circumference of the tank was 50 meters (55 yards), and inside it had a height of 6.8 meters (7.4 yards). The cover was made of cement and camouflaged with sand. Inside the fuel tank there were separate quarters for the Kapos, a couple of showers, a toilet block, and a long row of tables for washing. The remainder of the tank consisted of bunk beds separated into five prisoner blocks. On the surface of the camp there were initially three barracks that functioned as the kitchen, sick bay, and office. The result was that all the prisoners, with the exception of the sick and a few prisoner-functionaries, were held in the underground fuel tank. Following the arrival of the transport of August 1, 1944, another two surface barracks were constructed, which at times were used to accommodate the prisoners. As in most subcamps, the food was scarcely sufficient to ensure the prisoners’ survival.

At first the prisoners were guarded by the SS, but as the subcamp system expanded, there were insufficient SS personnel for this task. In Farge, it was mostly naval infantry who took over the SS role. From the summer of 1944, a

Marine Reserve Detachment of around 250 men took over guarding the prisoners. At this time an injured Army Hauptmann, Ulrich Wahl, was appointed commander of the Farge subcamp. The SS was represented only by a handful of men who held the few positions within the subcamp. On the construction site, the prisoners were supervised by German foremen. They were driven to work by the Kapos. It was left to the prisoner-functionaries to maintain order within the camp. This situation gave privileged prisoners advantages. It changed little in the daily destruction of life. The camp personnel and the guards seldom interfered in the camp. Portefaix wrote the following: "What is typical in Bremen-Farge is the almost complete dependence of the prisoners on the lower ranks. The SS relied for discipline and work on them on the basis of the privileges they would get. . . . When the Kapos were preoccupied with their own affairs we could stretch out on the plank beds. . . . On the other hand—the brutality they showed when an SS man appeared in order to justify their privileges!"<sup>8</sup>

Due to the heavy nature of the work, Farge was one of the Neuengamme subcamps with a relatively high number of victims. The exact numbers are difficult to ascertain due to the lack of sources. Heiko Kania identified 553 named victims, but the real number is likely to be higher. The majority of the victims who have been identified were French prisoners. Their identification is based on postwar lists prepared by surviving French prisoners. As it is only the French prisoners who were able to compile lists, it can be assumed that more prisoners of other nationalities died than are officially recorded. Despite the high number of victims in the subcamp, postwar investigations in Farge concentrated on the nearby Arbeitserziehungslager (Labor Education Camp, AEL). The reason for this was that the British investigators determined that British soldiers had been imprisoned in the AEL.<sup>9</sup> The Bremen State Prosecutor's Office, which later conducted investigations, appeared to have little interest in pursuing criminal acts. It concentrated on questioning a former head of the AEL, and as a result, so far as known, there were no convictions of any of the perpetrators in Farge, including the subcamp.<sup>10</sup>

The evacuation of the Farge subcamp began on April 10, 1945. In the days before, the evacuated prisoners from other Bremen subcamps had been sent to Farge. The majority of the prisoners were forced to march to Neuengamme, where they arrived on April 15. An unknown number of prisoners marched straight to the Sandbostel POW camp, where they were liberated by the British Army. A transport of sick prisoners wandered for a week between Bremen and Hamburg before it, too, ended up in Sandbostel.

**SOURCES** For a discussion on the relationship between the subcamp and the village, see Marc Buggeln, "Das Aussenlagersystem des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme," in *Abgeschlossene Kapitel? Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager und der NS-Prozesse*, eds. Sabine Moller, Miriam Rürup, and Christel Trouvé (Tübingen, 2002), pp. 15–27. On the history of camp labor deployment in the Bremen U-boat bunkers, see Barbara

Johr and Hartmut Roder, *Der Bunker: Ein Beispiel nationalsozialistischen Wahns, Bremen-Farge 1943–45* (Bremen, 1989); and Rainer Christochowitz, *Die U-Boot-Bunkerwerft "Valentin": Der U-Boot-Sektionsbau, die Betonbautechnik und der menschenunwürdige Einsatz von 1943 bis 1945* (Bremen, 2000). On the identification of Farge prisoners, see Heiko Kania, "Neue Erkenntnisse zu Opferzahl und Lager im Zusammenhang mit dem Bau des U-Boot-Werftbunker Valentin in Bremen-Farge" (unpub. MSS). Having the MSS available, proved invaluable. Information about the evacuation of Farge prisoners to Sandbostel may be found in Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung; Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen, 2000), 2:19.

Most knowledge about conditions in the Bremen-Farge subcamp originates from survivors' statements. Most of the material is to be found in AG-NG. There are a few files in the BA-MA, Navy collection, as well as in the collection RMfRK (R 3) in BA-BL, that provide details on the history of the "Valentin" U-boat bunker. Of particular importance are the photographs in the Photographic Archive in BA-K as well as a film made in 1944 by a Marinebaurat showing the construction of the bunker, which is now in BFA. StA-N holds 2169-PS, the Neuengamme Standortarzt report submitted to the IMT. For the history of the construction of the bunker and its military significance, see USSBS, *Submarine Plant Report No. 7: Submarine Assembly Shelter at Farge* (New York, 1947). Raymond Portefaix's testimony of 1947, originally published in French, is reproduced in "Vernichtung durch Arbeit: Das Aussenkommando Bremen-Farge," in *Hortensien in Farge. Überleben im Bunker "Valentin,"* by Raymond Portefaix, André Migdal, and Klaas Touber, (Bremen, 1995), pp. 19–114.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Quarterly Report, Standortarztes, KZ Neuengamme, March 25, 1945, in StA-N, KV-Anklage, 2169-PS.
2. See USSBS, *Submarine Plant Report No. 7: Submarine Assembly Shelter at Farge* (New York, 1947).
3. Raymond Portefaix, "Vernichtung durch Arbeit: Das Aussenkommando Bremen-Farge," in *Hortensien in Farge. Überleben im Bunker "Valentin,"* by Raymond Portefaix, André Migdal, and Klaas Touber (Bremen, 1995).
4. Ibid., p. 24.
5. Sunday talk with Lucien Hirth on November 24, 1996, AG-NG, N.g.2.8/1243; interview with Josef Smejkal, May 1, 1997, ibid., N.g.2.8/303.
6. Portefaix, "Vernichtung durch Arbeit," p. 57.
7. Ibid., p. 64.
8. Ibid., p. 29.
9. Proceedings of JAG, Nr. 295. A copy of the proceedings and the judgment, which resulted in seven of the accused being sentenced to prison, is held in BA-K, Alliierte Neuengamme Prozesse 8, FC 2877 FXb. The original investigation files are held by PRO.
10. Copies of the Bremen Sta. investigation files are in BA-L, ZdL Ludwigsburg, IV 404 AR 608/67.

## BREMEN-NEUENLAND

### [AKA BREMEN-KRIEGSMARINE]

The Bremen-Neuenland subcamp, situated close to the Bremen airport, most likely existed from the middle of August to the end of November 1944. The prisoners, who were used to construct the U-boat bunker “Hornisse,” named the detachment Bremen-Kriegsmarine, after the organization that used their labor. The first detachment consisted of 1,000 men, who were gathered together on August 15, 1944, in Block 9 of the Neuengamme concentration camp. On August 16 the detachment was transported to Bremen.

The Neuenland camp had existed for some period of time, being used for prisoners of war (POWs). However, when the concentration camp prisoners arrived, the camp was empty. The day after their arrival the prisoners were set to work. The route to work that the prisoners had to cover was about 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) long and led through several Bremen suburbs. Usually they were taken by truck. So far as is known, just about all of the prisoners were used to construct the U-boat bunker Hornisse. The construction of the bunker was undertaken at the request of the navy but occurred in close cooperation with the Bremen shipyard Deschimag AG, part of the Krupp Group. However, it was the construction firms that were responsible for the work and distribution of the prisoners. There are two documents that have survived concerning the prisoners’ labor. These, together with survivors’ reports,<sup>1</sup> are the main sources that are used to establish a rudimentary history of the Neuenland camp. One is a list of work accidents at Hornisse between September 15, 1944, and March 22, 1945. The other is a list of work done at Hornisse from September 8, 1944, to April 4, 1945.<sup>2</sup> The lists show that the majority of prisoners in the first transport were French and Soviet prisoners, who had Neuengamme prisoner numbers between 36000 and 42000. The French were those who were sent by the transports on July 15 and July 28, 1944, from Compiègne to Neuengamme. According to a French prisoner, the Soviet prisoners in the majority had been seized by the Germans for labor and taken to work in the northern French coal region. Here they were arrested by the Gestapo for sabotage and taken to Neuengamme. There were also a few Belgian, Spanish, and Italian prisoners in Neuenland.

The camp commandant was SS-Obersturmführer Hugo Benedict, who was also the Stützpunktleiter (base commander) of all Neuengamme Bremen subcamps. According to one prisoner report, he was not noted for his brutality toward prisoners and at times even stopped the violent acts committed by the camp elder and the Kapos. The Rapportführer was an Oberfeldwebel der Marine, who is also said to have treated the prisoners properly. The guards were infantry soldiers and naval reservists. The highest positions in the prisoner hierarchy were German prisoners with *befristete Vorbeugungshäftlinge* (BV, or Green, the color of their identifying triangle). The camp elder was Hans Rohl, who is said to have been predis-

posed to violence. At the end of the war, he is thought to have been condemned to death by a French court in Rastatt. The closest confidants of the camp elder were other German BVs with relatively low prisoner numbers. As Kapos they were in charge of the largest work detachments and included Lubitz (prisoner number 3273), Kraus (13519), Werner (13955), and Kiebach (26284). There were also Polish Kapos who appear to have been chosen for the role because they hated the two largest national groupings, the French and Soviets. On the other hand, the two camp doctors, a Pole and a Soviet, are seen in a very positive light.

Those in charge of the use of the prisoner labor in constructing the U-boat bunker separated the prisoners at the site into small groups every day. The Kapos in charge recorded the prisoner numbers and handed the detachment over to a foreman. The majority of foremen are thought to have been foreign polishers, the majority of whom were Dutch. Both prisoner reports and the work lists suggest that the composition and strength of each detachment changed daily. It is therefore probable that the concentration camp prisoners were primarily used for the heavy manual labor where there was little need for direction. That labor was mostly carrying building material. Civilian laborers and POWs also worked on the construction site. The concentration camp prisoners were well guarded so that it was rarely possible for them to make contact with the other workers. This was only possible during the air-raid alarms.

Compared to other construction subcamps, the death rate appears to have been relatively low. There are 90 known deaths for the Neuenland subcamp and the Osterort subcamp, where the prisoners were transferred in November 1944. The majority of deaths occurred in the Osterort subcamp.<sup>3</sup> A detailed French prisoner’s report states that there were only 2 deaths among the French prisoners during the period of the Neuenland camp. The French comprised approximately half of the detachment. On the other hand, there were frequent work accidents where the prisoners were often severely injured. On average, there was an accident every three days. In the majority of cases, the injuries were bruises and contusions that in some instances were so severe that the prisoners had to be taken to the hospital. The following case will serve as an example: “At 2:00 p.m. Prisoner F39367 slipped while carrying an iron beam and suffered a contusion to the back of his head.”<sup>4</sup>

The majority of accident reports, as with this example, were not dramatic. However, it needs to be recalled that accidents such as these would not have occurred as frequently to well-nourished and -rested workers. Injuries such as these could have serious consequences, including loss of food rations that would exacerbate the malnourishment. There is no recorded case of this in Neuenland. However, there were accidents, which appear to have been much more serious in the reports: “At 9:30 a.m. Prisoner R41732 received an open head wound from a drilling machine.” The climax in the series of accidents occurred on September 25, 1944, when the side of a



railway wagon, overloaded with prisoners, broke open, and the prisoners fell out of the moving train; 62 prisoners were injured in this accident. In October, a Naval Oberstabsarzt inspected the camp following a report by a prisoner about the high number of cases of blood poisoning and contusions in the sick bay. In the following days, there appears to have been an improvement in the distribution of medicines.

One question remains difficult to answer: there were around 1,000 prisoners in the camp. However, the work lists refer to between 380 and 500 prisoners working on the construction of the U-boat bunker Hornisse. Where were the other prisoners who were not in the camp or the sick bay? One possibility, referred to in prisoner accounts, is that they were used in Bremen to remove the rubble caused by the frequent bombing raids. This is possible, as in June 1944, the SS-Baubrigade II, previously used for this task, was pulled out of Bremen. Other possibilities include working at the aircraft factory Weserflug or the shipyard Deschimag AG.<sup>5</sup>

At the end of October, around a thousand prisoners from the Bremen Borgward-Werke subcamp, whose barracks had burned down, were transferred to Neuengamme. These prisoners, mostly Polish political prisoners, stayed here for two days before they were transported to the Neuengamme main camp. During the short period they were there, the Polish Borgward prisoners told the French prisoners about Auschwitz. This was the first time the French prisoners had heard about Auschwitz. At the beginning of November, five French priests from the detachment were transferred to the Dachau concentration camp. The Neuengamme camp was evacuated on November 28, and the whole detachment was transferred to the new Bremen-Osterort camp.

**SOURCES** Just about all of the primary information comes from former prisoners' statements, especially the reports by French survivors listed as AG-NG, ANg 2.8/154 and 2.8/1257. The majority of this essay is based on an evaluation of both reports. Other information regarding the work lists as well as the sick reports of prisoners who worked on the construction of the U-boat bunker "Hornisse" is held in AG-NG. Another source is the record of an interview of the operational director of the Norddeutsche Hütte held in the StA-N.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-NG, ANg, 2.8/154 and 2.8/1257.
2. Both files are held in AG-NG, Best. 6.4.15 (Hornisse/Riespott).
3. AG-NG, Databank.
4. AG-NG, ANg, 6.4.15.
5. The use of concentration camp prisoners at Weser-flug and Deschimag is mentioned in the examination by the Allies of the operational director of the Norddeutsche Hütte, Otto Hofmann; see StA-N, KV-Anklage, NIK-9207.

## BREMEN-OBERNHEIDE

Bremen-Obernheide operated as a subcamp of the Neuengamme concentration camp from late September 1944 until early April 1945. During this period of time, it held only female prisoners. The camp was located on the edge of Bremen, directly on Obernheider Strasse in the Obernheide district of the Lower Saxon community of Stuhr.

Shortly before the outbreak of the war, the Organisation Todt (OT) had constructed the barracks camp in the meadows of Hans Katerkamp, an Obernheide farmer. At first, the camp accommodated only German workers who assisted in the construction of the Autobahn. After the outbreak of war, the Luftwaffe took over the camp and in turn, at the end of 1940, put it at the disposal of the city of Bremen to quarter German and foreign construction workers. They were deployed in the Bremen city area to construct bunkers and shelters for the civilian population. In 1941, the German Labor Front (DAF) assumed control of the camp. In January 1942, it was temporarily closed, until French prisoners of war (POWs) arrived in Obernheide at the end of the year. They were deployed clearing debris from air raids in Bremen and remained in Obernheide until late April 1944. Other than for occasional use, the camp then remained empty until female prisoners arrived from Neuengamme around the end of September 1944.

The camp consisted of three accommodation barracks, a guard barracks, a latrine, and an infirmary. In addition, accommodation and administration barracks for the SS camp personnel were located outside the camp fence.

The female prisoners arrived from Bremen (Hindenburgkaserne), another women's subcamp of Neuengamme, at the Bremen-Obernheide camp on the evening of September 26, 1944. The female prisoners had to be transferred to the empty barracks at Obernheide since the Hindenburgkaserne camp had been completely destroyed during an Allied air raid on the same day. On October 11, 1944, Oberregierungsrat Köster reported the event in a letter to Max Pauly, commander of Neuengamme: "The subcamp for female concentration camp prisoners at Hindenburgkaserne, Huckelriede, which accommodated 800 female concentration camp inmates whom you allocated to me, was completely destroyed during an air raid on Bremen on September 26, 1944. As Obersturmführer Benedikt has probably already reported to you, we could transfer the inmates to another good camp on the same day."<sup>1</sup>

The 800 female prisoners in Obernheide consisted of 500 Hungarian and 300 Polish Jewish women. Prior to their internment at Hindenburgkaserne, the Hungarian women had been expelled from their homes in the spring of 1944, held in various ghettos in Hungary, and then deported from there to Auschwitz. In Auschwitz II-Birkenau, many of these Jewish women were held in Camp C, the so-called transit camp, where they were selected for work in Bremen. The Jewish women from Poland, then again, probably arrived in Bremen in late August 1944. Since the beginning of 1940, some of them had been in the Łódź ghetto, where they worked as forced laborers until the ghetto's liquidation in the summer of



1944. From Łódź, the women were deported to Auschwitz and, after a selection, then transported to Bremen.

Although the city of Bremen had requisitioned the Jewish women from the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) for the construction of emergency accommodations, most of them were deployed to remove debris in Bremen. Former inmate Lily Kertesz recalls:

The city was bombed almost daily. An ever increasing part of the city was turned into an uninhabitable desert of rubble. . . . Large placards warned: "Entering the ruins is perilous and prohibited!" These warnings and prohibitions, however, did not apply to us. We were ordered to search out and remove bricks from the ruins. It was very dangerous. A wall collapsed here, a wall collapsed there. The rain softened the mortar, and in a strong wind, the walls collapsed as if nothing had ever held them together. An especially violent storm raged one day. The guards and foremen had taken off, while we had to continue working. Suddenly a wall collapsed. With a deafening sound the walls smashed everything that stood in their way. Dust whirled upward. We could no longer see anything. Our eyes, mouths and noses were full of dust; we coughed and sneezed. Screams and cries for help came from all sides. Some of us were injured; one was dead.<sup>2</sup>

The women worked for a number of demolition and construction firms: Abbruch- und Verschrottungsunternehmen Karl Gesselmann (Karl Gesselmann Demolition and Scrap), Baugeschäft und Abbruchunternehmen Hermann Bödecker (Hermann Bödecker Construction and Demolition), Abbruchunternehmen Heinrich Ebeling (Heinrich Ebeling Demolition), Abbruchunternehmen Kirbitz & Breiter (Kirbitz & Breiter Demolition), Strassenbau- und Tiefbaugeschäft Stehmeyer & Bischoff (Stehmeyer & Bischoff Road Construction and Civil Engineering), Baugeschäft Joh. Heitmann (Joh. Heitmann Construction), Bauunternehmen Friedrich Rodieck (Friedrich Rodieck Construction), Bauunternehmen Dietrich Rohlfs (Dietrich Rohlfs Construction), Unternehmen Siemer & Müller (Siemer & Müller Enterprise), and Betonsteinwerk Lüning & Sohn (Lüning & Sohn Concrete). All these private building and demolition companies leased women as laborers from the city of Bremen, which in turn requisitioned them from the WVHA. The companies had to recompense the Bremen senator for construction for the prisoners' working hours.

Those prisoners deployed to construct emergency accommodations mainly had to level the ground on the different building sites, transport the building materials on lorries to the building sites, pour the foundations, or assist in the construction of buildings. Other women worked for Lüning & Sohn, manufacturing precast concrete parts. Those prisoners deployed for the removal of debris from daily air raids removed countless bricks, heavy beams, and broken windows from the city.

The only camp leader (Lagerleiter) of the female subcamp in Obernheide was Johann Hille, who was born in Tellingstedt on December 8, 1890. After elementary schooling, he worked as a laborer. He had joined the Nazi party (NSDAP) as early as June 2, 1929, but left the party again on February 1, 1930, rejoining it two years later on March 1, 1932. Following the Nazi seizure of power, he joined the General-SS (Allgemeine-SS). As a guard at Neuengamme, he was promoted to Oberscharführer on September 1, 1941, and Hauptscharführer on November 1, 1943. In September 1944 he ended his guard duties at the Neuengamme main camp and took command of the Obernheide women's camp.

In addition to the camp leader, an unknown number of former Luftwaffe soldiers were responsible for guard duty outside the camp, alongside some 20 female guards who did internal guard duty. One of these guards was Gertrud Heise, who was born in Berlin on July 23, 1921. From October 1942 onward, she was in the service of the SS. Deployed at the Ravensbrück concentration camp until March 1943, she was then transferred to Lublin-Majdanek, where she managed the prisoners' and SS kitchens, remaining there until April 1944. From Majdanek she was transferred in April 1944 to Krakau-Plaszow, where she worked until September 1944, followed by a one-month assignment in Auschwitz. Thereupon, Heise was transferred to the Obernheide women's subcamp in October 1944, where she was a so-called commando leader (Kommandoführerin), in charge of cleanliness, order, and maintaining discipline in the camp. Following the dissolution of the Bremen camp at the beginning of April 1945, Heise was transferred to the Hamburg-Eidelstedt camp, where she remained until her discharge. She was arrested by British military police on June 11, 1945, and sentenced to 15 years, imprisonment at the end of May 1946 for maltreating concentration camp prisoners. The sentence was reduced to 7 years in August 1946.

The Bremen-Obernheide camp was probably evacuated on April 4, 1945. The women were transferred on foot, by truck, and by train to Bergen-Belsen, where they most likely arrived on April 8 or 9, 1945. Those who managed to survive the conditions in the "receiving camp" were liberated by English troops on April 15, 1945.

**SOURCES** This article is based on Harmut Müller, *Die Frauen von Obernheide: Jüdische Zwangsarbeiterinnen in Bremen 1944/1945* (Bremen: Donat, 1988). Today, a memorial and various commemorative plaques at Obernheider Strasse, Obernheide (community of Stuhr), commemorate this women's subcamp of Neuengamme.

The AG-NG holds transcripts of some interviews with female survivors who report on the history of the camp. Hans Ellger conducted several interviews with former inmates. Lilly Kertesz published her recollections: Lilly Kertesz, *Von den Flammen verzehrt: Erinnerungen einer ungarischen Jüdin* (Bremen: Donat, 1999). Further records are located at YV and AG-BB. Documents relating, among others, to the use of the camp barracks before the arrival of the Jewish women and the transfer of the prisoners are located at the StA-Br. These rec-

ords also contain information about the camp leader Johann Hille. Documents relating to Getrud Heise are located in British trial records in the BA-K.

Hans Elger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Schreiben des Oberregierungsrates Köster beim Senator für das Bauwesen an den Herrn Kommandeur des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme, SS-Sturmbannführer Pauly vom 11.10.1944, StA-Br, Holding 9, 9–17, Binder No. 66.

2. Lilly Kertesz, *Von den Flammen verzehrt: Erinnerungen einer ungarischen Jüdin* (Bremen: Donat, 1999), p. 114.

## BREMEN-OSTERORT [AKA BREMEN-RIESPOTT, BREMEN-KRIEGSMARINE]

The Bremen-Osterort camp became a Neuengamme subcamp on November 28, 1944. On that day all the prisoners at the Bremen-Neuenland subcamp—probably fewer than 1,000—were transferred to Osterort. The conditions in the Osterort camp in many respects resembled those in the previous camp: the commandant, camp elder, and Kapos were largely the same, and the majority of the prisoners continued to work at the U-boat bunker Hornisse, while others worked in removing rubble or possibly at the Weserflug or Deutsche Schiff- und Maschinenbau AG (Deschimag).

There were several reasons for the transfer from Neuenland to Osterort, the most important being that the distance the prisoners traveled to work decreased, and the route no longer passed through a densely populated part of the city. Some prisoners were now working at the Norddeutsche Hütte, which owned the campsite. The existing barracks had been previously used as a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp.<sup>1</sup> The Norddeutsche Hütte was part of the Krupp conglomerate and operated several high-temperature ovens, a vanadium operation, and a cement factory. The company director from 1935 to 1945 was Otto Hofmann, who had been a member of the Nazi Party since 1931 and later a Nazi Ortsgruppenleiter.<sup>2</sup>

With the transfer of the camp, a work detachment was established of around 50 concentration camp prisoners who worked in the tailings operation of the conglomerate. The company transferred operational control to engineer Strieder's department.<sup>3</sup> A French prisoner had the following to say about the detachment: "The men did not report to a 'Hütte' foreman but a Kapo, who was usually a political prisoner. His sadism was given a free reign. Just as the midday soup was the most nourishing received by the prisoners, the work site was the most feared."<sup>4</sup> A French Kapo named Muller is remembered by survivors of the tailings detachment for his violence. It is believed that he was sentenced to death after the war by a French court but that he was later pardoned.

In general, it would seem that conditions for the prisoners deteriorated with the transfer to Osterort. In the evenings,

the exhausted prisoners were tortured with sport exercises. Roll calls were longer, and during air raids, the guards drove the prisoners during the night into a bunker in which there were 30 centimeters (almost a foot) of water. The prisoners had built their own radio, and the news broadcast by the BBC in December 1944 on the German counteroffensive at the Ardennes had a shattering effect on the prisoners.

As the situation worsened, so did the death rate in the Osterort camp. Hardly any prisoners had died in the Neuenland camp. In Osterort, prisoners were dying each day. "The corpses were carried by the prisoners' comrades into a small building, next to the washroom, which served as a mortuary. Now and then, in the early morning a driver would appear with a four-wheeled cart, something similar to a manure cart, and took the corpses away. One day he took away seventeen at one go."<sup>5</sup> As a result of the prisoners' increasing weakness, the first and only transport of such prisoners took place on January 11, 1945. Around 100 so-called Muslims (Muselmänner—men too weak to work) were taken back to the Neuengamme main camp by train. Of the approximately 50 French prisoners on the train, only 3 survived the end of the war.

These prisoners were replaced at the end of January by a transport of 100 prisoners from the Farge subcamp. "The group was under the control of Kapos whose extreme brutality surprised us. One of them, called 'Typhus,' was particularly sadistic. Life in Bremen-Osterort became even harder than ever."<sup>6</sup> In February, a convalescence block (*Schonungsblock*) was set up, but this did little to stop the death rate. The end of the subcamp began with the Allied air raid on Bremen on March 30, 1945. During the bombardment, the Norddeutsche Hütte was heavily attacked. Two bombs fell close to the Osterort camp, killing one of the guards. The U-boat bunker Hornisse was heavily damaged and was made practically useless. Nevertheless, the prisoners continued to work at the bunker until April 4.<sup>7</sup> The majority of the prisoners in the last days worked on repairing the Adolf Hitler Bridge as well as the railway bridge across the Weser River.

The evacuation of the Bremen-Osterort camp began on April 6, 1945. A report of the Neuengamme SS-Standortarzt on March 25, 1945, refers to 869 prisoners in the camp.<sup>8</sup> The detachment was divided into two groups on April 6: Muselmänner and prisoners who were seen as capable of working. The Muselmänner were transported on April 6 to the Bremen-Farge subcamp, where they were crammed into a train with Muselmänner from other detachments. The train traveled back and forth for a week between Bremen, Hamburg, and Hannover, finally coming to a halt on April 13 at the Bremervörde station. From here the prisoners were taken to the Sandbostel camp. Those in the group of workers left Osterort by foot for Farge on April 9. They marched with the majority of other prisoners who had been sent to Farge, in the direction of Neuengamme. It seems that in Bremervörde the march was divided: prisoners weakened by the march were taken to the Sandbostel camp, while the large majority was transported to Neuengamme.<sup>9</sup>

If one attempts to estimate the mortality in the camp, one must consider that the detachment consisted of 1,000 prisoners when it arrived in Bremen-Neuenland, of whom around 10 prisoners died before the transfer to Osterort. That means that of the approximately 990 prisoners who arrived at Osterort on November 28, 1944, 120 died in the camp up to March 25, 1945.<sup>10</sup> A further 100 other prisoners, who are not included in that group because they were replaced by other prisoners, were taken in January to Neuengamme as Muselmänner. If one accepts figures provided for the French group, then at least 90 percent of them were dead by the end of the war. It would seem that in the six months of the camp's existence until its evacuation, every fifth prisoner in Osterort died. These numbers do not include those who died on the evacuation marches or on the ships in the Neustädter Bucht.

**SOURCES** On the evacuation of this and other Neuengamme subcamps, see Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung; Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen, 2000), 2:21.

Just about all the information represented here is based on statements of former prisoners. The majority of the texts are held in AG-NG. There are further sources including the work details lists and prisoner sick reports for those who were working at the U-boat bunker Hornisse. They are likewise held in AG-NG. Another source is the interrogation of the operations director at the Norddeutsche Hütte, which is held in the StA-N. Published reports about this camp may be found in Kollegengruppe der Klöckner-Hütte Bremen, ed., *Riespott: KZ an der Norddeutschen Hütte; Berichte, Dokumente und Erinnerungen über Zwangsarbeit 1935-45* (Bremen, 1984).

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Hans Schröder report in Kollegengruppe der Klöckner-Hütte Bremen, ed., *Riespott: KZ an der Norddeutschen Hütte; Berichte, Dokumente und Erinnerungen über Zwangsarbeit 1935-45* (Bremen, 1984), p. 54.

2. Hofmann was interned by the Allies at the end of war and questioned as part of the pretrial proceedings against the Krupp Conglomerate about the use of concentration camp prisoners; see StA-N, KV-Anklage, NIK-9207 und KV-Anklage, Interrogations, H 172.

3. Hofmann interview.

4. Statement by P.B., AG-NG, 2.8/154. The extensive report is a central source for the history of the Neuenland camp as well as the Osterort camp. As the majority of this essay is based on this report, it will not be referred to hereafter.

5. P.B. report.

6. Ibid.

7. Arbeitseinsatzlisten "Hornisse" vom 8. September 1944 bis 4. April 1945, AG-NG, Bestand 6.4.15.

8. Vierteljährige Bericht vom 29. März 1945, StA-N, KV-Anklage, 2169-PS.

9. P.B. report.

10. To date, the names of 99 prisoners who died in Osterort or Neuenland have been identified; see AG-NG, Datenbank.

## BREMEN-SCHÜTZENHOF [AKA BREMEN-DESCHIMAG]

The Schützenhof camp was one of the last Neuengamme subcamps to be established. The first transport of concentration camp prisoners arrived at Bremen-Schützenhof late in December 1944. All the prisoners were sent from the Bremen-Blumenthal camp. There they had worked for the Deutsche Schiff- und Maschinenbau AG (Deschimag) shipyards, which was part of the Krupp company. To reach the shipyards, the prisoners had to travel for two and a half hours by boat along the Weser from Blumenthal. As the journey was becoming ever more difficult and dangerous due to the increasing bombing raids, it was decided to relocate the prisoners closer to the shipyard.

The camp was located in the barracks of a shooting club in the Bremen suburb of Gröpelingen, which was where the shipyard was located. There were four barracks that were used to accommodate the prisoners. There was, in addition, a kitchen barracks, an infirmary, and barracks where the prisoners could wash themselves. When the prisoners arrived, the barracks were in good condition, and the beds were described as being comparatively comfortable. On the other hand, it seems that the lack of food in the camp and the cold meant that the prisoners began to deteriorate rapidly, which in turn meant that within a very short period of time sanitary conditions in the camp became catastrophic. From the beginning there was no flowing water in the camp and no heating. In addition, the windows were nailed shut.

The advantage of the camp was that the prisoners had to rise each day at 6:00 A.M. instead of 4:30 A.M., as the camp was close to where they worked. Miroslav Tamchyna worked in the grenade turning mill. Heinz Rosenberg wrote the following: "Kurt and I worked in a department on ventilators."<sup>1</sup> The statements suggest that the concentration camp prisoners worked in particular departments of the shipyard.<sup>2</sup> One of the remaining pages of the camp's asset register lists the prisoners as mechanics. Other trades listed include welders, carpenters, and electricians.<sup>3</sup> The prisoners had direct contact with German shipyard workers when they were at work. The German workers reacted in a number of different ways. Rosenberg writes the following: "Many of the German foremen were very nice. Some of them gave us every now and then a piece of beet. Others wrote down the numbers and the punishments in the . . . Schützenhof were . . . very bad."<sup>4</sup> Czech prisoner Tamchyna stated that at his workstation he would roll cigarettes and in exchange would receive half a loaf of bread from the German workers.<sup>5</sup>

In January 1945, there were repeated air raids on the shipyard. Increasingly, the German foremen failed to appear at

work, and a large part of the facility was damaged. As a result, the prisoners ceased working at the shipyard: "Regular work ceased at the end of January. We were forced to clean up but under strict security. . . . A large yellow cross was painted on our striped prisoner uniforms so that anyone could recognize us."<sup>6</sup> It would seem that it was above all the Jewish prisoners who were used to clean up the bomb rubble. Tamchyna, on the other hand, continued to work in the grenade turning mill at the shipyard until the evacuation.<sup>7</sup> During an air raid in January, defenseless prisoners, who had been locked in their barracks, had to witness the bombs falling on the camp. They were lucky—it was only the SS kitchen barracks that was destroyed.

Hardly anything is known about the guards. Rosenberg mentions only that the camp's security changed little and that the camp commandant was an SS-Oberscharführer from the Blumenthal camp. Whether it was SS-Oberscharführer Richard-Johann vom Endt, the camp commandant from Blumenthal, or whether, after the evacuation of the Schützenhof group, Endt was transferred to Blumenthal is not known. It is thought most likely that a handful of SS men and a few naval infantrymen from the Blumenthal camp accompanied the prisoners to the Schützenhof camp.

The sources suggest that there were four large prisoner groups. There were prisoners from the Soviet Union, Poland, and Belgium, and Jews from a number of different countries. The Jewish prisoners stood at the bottom of the hierarchy and had no chance of being appointed to the higher functionary posts. It would seem that shortly after the camp was opened, there were around 1,000 prisoners in the camp. The large majority were the prisoners from Blumenthal. However, at the end of December, a prisoner transport arrived from the main camp. Rosenberg, writing from the perspective of a Jewish prisoner, wrote mostly about the Russian and Polish Kapos: "The antisemitism or the hatred of the Poles and Russians toward the Jews was terrible."<sup>8</sup>

However, something extraordinary happened on New Year's Day. Rosenberg writes: "We were told on January 1, 1945, to expect an SS-Oberscharführer. He arrived and made the following speech: 'Prisoners—don't imagine the war is over. We will show the world that Hitler will win this war. But if we lose there will be plenty of time to deal with you. Every prisoner is now to receive a cigarette and an extra slice of bread and can send a postcard home.' That was something new. Was the Oberscharführer fearful of the future . . . ? We did not know; but we had to do squats for a quarter of an hour and were then chased around the yard until most of us dropped from exhaustion, unable to go on."<sup>9</sup> Rosenberg used the free afternoon to send a postcard to his Christian half-Jewish relatives. He asked for toothbrushes and toothpaste. "Four weeks later a small packet really did arrive . . . with toothbrushes and toothpaste. And with something else—bread and a cookie. The only thing was that there was no letter, nothing."<sup>10</sup> This would have been one of the few packets that a Jewish prisoner in a concentration camp would have received in 1945.

In April 1945, the camp was evacuated. According to the Neuengamme SS-Standordarzt, there were 582 prisoners in

Bremen-Schützenhof on March 25, 1945. Rosenberg, on the other hand, states that there were only around 300 prisoners alive when the camp was evacuated. The evacuation train, which left the camp at the beginning of April, took the prisoners to their old camp in Bremen-Blumenthal. "After half a day, we, the Jewish prisoners, had to gather together. . . . There were only about one hundred of us left. There were around fifty Jews from other camps. . . . We were taken to two grain wagons, pushed in and the iron doors were closed behind us. . . . This was the worst of all the transports. There was nothing to eat and nothing to drink. It rained and it was cold. Illness and death traveled with us."<sup>11</sup> The transport finally reached its destination, the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Rosenberg was one of the few Jewish prisoners to survive the Bremen subcamp. The remaining prisoners from the Schützenhof camp were transported from Blumenthal to Farge, from where they set out on a large death march. The prisoners either reached Sandbostel or the Neustadt Bucht by boat. Many died during the march.<sup>12</sup>

The death rate in Bremen-Schützenhof appears to have been relatively high. This is particularly so when compared with Bremen-Blumenthal. Here the prisoners speak of extreme brutality. Nevertheless, in the Blumenthal camp there were 123 documented deaths, whereas for the Schützenhof camp, which existed for half the time, there were 268 documented deaths.<sup>13</sup> A possible explanation is the fact that some of the prisoners, in particular the Jewish prisoners, from January on worked in the open air on bomb disposal squads, where they were exposed to the elements. On the other hand, the Blumenthal prisoners worked inside factory buildings.

**SOURCES** On the evacuation of the camp, see Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt. Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung. Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen, 2000), 2:25.

Just about all the primary information is from former prisoners. The majority of the texts are held in AG-NG. The most important are the memoirs of Heinz Rosenberg, which have been published as *Jahre des Schreckens . . . und ich blieb übrig, dass ich Dir's ansage* (Göttingen, 1992)—pp. 137–141, which concern Schützenhof. Another important source is the Register of Deaths at the Bremen Riensberg Cemetery.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Heinz Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens . . . und ich blieb übrig, dass ich Dir's ansage* (Göttingen, 1992), p. 131. In addition there is held in AG-NG an interview with Heinz Rosenberg, AG-NG, OH-Projekt 1586. As all statements on the Schützenhof camp are based on the same two sources, I have refrained from constantly repeating them and only referred to the pages from which quotations are taken. Less reliable is the video interview with Czech prisoner Miroslav Tamchyna, AG-NG, Video 1997/0093 (27 minutes).



2. The local memorial committee suspects that the prisoners were deployed on the construction of the U-boat bunker "Hornisse." The fact that Rosenberg, Tamchyna, and other concentration camp prisoners do not refer to the bunker, but rather to Neuenland, suggests the committee is wrong.

3. AG-NG, 6.4.17 (Aussenlager Deschimag).
4. Heinz Rosenberg interview, p. 40.
5. Video interview with Miroslav Tamchyna.
6. Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens*, p. 139.
7. Video interview with Miroslav Tamchyna.
8. Interview with Heinz Rosenberg, p. 40.
9. Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens*, p. 138.
10. Interview with Heinz Rosenberg, p. 42.
11. Rosenberg, *Jahre des Schreckens*, p. 140.
12. Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt. Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung. Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen, 2000), 2:25. Miroslav Tamchyna survived the sinking of the *Cap Arcona*. He writes that around a quarter of the prisoners died during the evacuation march. See video interview with Miroslav Tamchyna.
13. Datenbank, AG-NG.

## BREMEN-UPHUSEN (BEHELFSWOHNBAU)

The small barrack camp at Bremen-Uphusen existed as a Neuengamme subcamp from February 1945 until early April 1945. It was a camp exclusively for female prisoners. The camp was located on Bruchweg, a small side street off Uphuser Heerstrasse at the edge of Uphusen.

On October 11, 1944, Oberregierungsrat Köster, who worked with the Bremen senator for construction, suggested the establishment of the subcamp in a letter to Max Pauly, commandant of Neuengamme. At the time, Köster wanted to transfer some of the prisoners from the subcamp in Bremen-Obernheide to Uphusen, thereby decreasing the prisoners' commuting distance to their workplace. He wrote:

The subcamp for female concentration camp prisoners at Hindenburgkaserne, Huckelriede, which accommodated 800 female concentration camp inmates whom you allocated to me, was completely destroyed during an air raid on Bremen on September 26, 1944. As Obersturmführer Benedikt probably already has reported to you, we could transfer the inmates to another good camp [this refers to the Bremen-Obernheide camp] on the same day. Unfortunately, this is located far away on the edge of the city. Considering the current shortage of vehicles and fuel, it has become almost impossible to transfer the prisoners to their work sites, apart from the loss of valuable work time regrettably arising from the huge distance the prisoners need to travel. The following female prisoners are engaged in constructing prefabricated parts for emergency housing: 50 at the Lüning company in Hemelingen; 80 at the Rodieck company in

Uphusen. Moreover, as of Monday, October 16, 1944, 100 women will be deployed in Üsen near Achim to level the ground and lay the foundations for 100 emergency homes. The distance from the Obernheide subcamp to Hemelingen is 26 km [16 miles], to Uphusen, 29 km [18 miles], and 33 km [20.5 miles] to Üsen. Because the route is through the entire city, truck commuting time alone takes up to one hour.

I managed to obtain a barrack to accommodate some 200 prisoners near the Rodieck factory grounds. Requirements set forth by the SS for surveillance and security will be fulfilled. I shall arrange that other necessary work will be done. After inspecting the work sites, Obersturmführer Benedikt also examined the prisoners' accommodation and the premises and will be able to offer more details on the practicality of my proposal. I request your consent that a branch camp of the Obernheide subcamp be established here in Uphusen for 200 prisoners. I would be very grateful if you comply with my wishes in view of the serious difficulties that transportation now poses.<sup>1</sup>

On October 18, 1944, Pauly approved the establishment of a subcamp in a letter to Oberregierungsrat Köster, provided that "accommodation and security requirements are met."<sup>2</sup> Construction began on November 15, 1944. The subcamp, a long stone barrack surrounded by a high fence, was completed in early February 1945.

As a note to the file by Köster indicates, 100 female prisoners, all Hungarian and Polish Jewish women, as well as five guards, were transferred from the Obernheide subcamp to Uphusen on February 7, 1945.<sup>3</sup> Before their arrival in Bremen in August 1944, they had been driven from their homes, incarcerated in various ghettos in the country, and deported to Auschwitz. At Auschwitz II-Birkenau, many of them were held in the C Camp, the so-called transit camp, where they were selected for work in Bremen. The Jewish women from Poland, then again, probably arrived in Bremen in late August 1944. Since the beginning of 1940, some of them had been in the Łódź ghetto, where they worked as forced laborers until the ghetto's liquidation in the summer of 1944. From Łódź, the women were deported to Auschwitz and, after a selection, then transported to Bremen.

As Köster mentions in the letter cited above, the Jewish women in Uphusen were deployed solely to erect emergency housing and produce prefabricated building components, hence the name Behelfswohnbau. The construction companies Friedrich Rodieck, Lüning & Sohn, and Diedrich Rohlf's employed the women. Most of the women worked for Rodieck, where they had to pour concrete blocks and make prefabricated building slabs for emergency housing. Similarly, the Jewish prisoners at Lüning & Sohn mainly produced prefabricated concrete components. At the construction sites of the Rohlf's construction company, the women had to level the

building ground, transport the construction material on flat-bed carts to the work sites, pour foundations, or assist in constructing emergency housing.

Even though Uphusen was a branch camp of the Bremen-Obernheide subcamp, it remains uncertain whether Johann Hille, the camp leader (Lagerleiter) at Obernheide, was also in charge of Uphusen.

Just as the identity of the commandant of the Uphusen subcamp is unknown, no information is available on the five guards Köster mentions in his note to the file.

The Uphusen camp was probably evacuated on April 4, 1945. Partly on foot, by truck, and by train, the female prisoners from both Uphusen and Obernheide were transported to Bergen-Belsen, where they arrived on April 8 or 9, 1945. Those who managed to survive the conditions in the “receiving camp” were liberated by British troops on April 15, 1945.

**SOURCES** This description of the Uphusen camp is based on Harmut Müller, *Die Frauen von Obernheide: Jüdische Zwangsarbeiterinnen in Bremen 1944/1945* (Bremen: Donat, 1988).

The AG-NG holds transcripts of some interviews with female survivors who report on the history of the camp. The author conducted several interviews with former inmates. Further records are located at YV and AG-BB. Documents on the construction of the camp barracks as well as reports about the prisoner transfer are held in the StA-Br. These files also contain information on Johann Hille.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Schreiben des Oberregierungsrates Köster beim Senator für das Bauwesen vom 11. Oktober 1944 an den Herrn Kommandeur des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme, SS-Sturmabführer Pauly, Hamburg-Neuengamme, StA-Br, 9, 9–17, Folder no. 66.
2. Schreiben des SS-Sturmabführer und Kommandant Max Pauly vom 18. Oktober 1944 an den Oberregierungsrat Köster beim Senator für das Bauwesen, StA-Br, Holding 9, 9–17, Folder no. 66.
3. Aktenvermerk ohne Datum, StA-Br, Holding 9, 9–17, Folder no. 66.

## BREMEN-VEGESACK

A satellite camp attached to Neuengamme was created in the Vegesack district of Bremen from July 1944 to September 1944. As in other subcamps attached to Neuengamme, the inmates deported to Bremen-Vegesack were used as laborers to clear rubble from bombed-out areas of the city. In Vegesack, the inmates’ demolition of partially destroyed buildings may have cleared space for the construction of temporary housing for displaced residents (*Ersatzwohnungen*).

As many as 500 female inmates were deported to the Bremen-Vegesack satellite camp, although it is unclear where they were originally from. Most female inmates were de-

ported directly to Neuengamme subcamps from other camps, such as Auschwitz II-Birkenau, rather than first to the main camp. These women may have been Polish Jews selected for work in Auschwitz and deported to Bremen in August 1944.<sup>1</sup>

In September 1944, the Vegesack inmates were most likely transferred to another Neuengamme subcamp in Bremen-Obernheide, located on the edge of Bremen on Obernheide Strasse. Various firms employed these women in construction and clearing.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources outlining information about the Neuengamme satellite camp in Bremen-Vegesack. Secondary literature that contains brief information on the existence of the camp includes Werner Johe, *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg* (Hamburg: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1982); and Bogdan Suchowiak, *Die Tragödie der Häftlinge von Neuengamme* (Reinbeck bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1985). This information (opening and closing dates, number of inmates) can also be found in the Bremen-Vegesack entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979).

Primary documentation that offers details on the Bremen-Vegesack camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG, which contains many witness reports from former prisoners, may yield additional information about this camp.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTE

1. See Neuengamme/Bremen-Obernheide.

## DARSS-WIECK

The first subcamp attached to Neuengamme was created on the Darss peninsula near the Baltic Sea. A detachment of 50 male inmates was deported to Darss-Wieck in January 1941. They were forced to cut reeds, which were collected and sent to the SS-Weaving Contingent (Rohrmattenflechtei) in the women’s camp at Ravensbrück. The 50 male inmates were most likely Jehovah’s Witnesses who had been deported to the Neuengamme camp from Gestapo prisons and other concentration camps, such as Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald. They were used in Darss-Wieck for reed cultivation until late February 1941. These inmates were most likely deployed again from Neuengamme to Darss-Zingst later that same year in December 1941.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources outlining information about the Neuengamme satellite camp in Darss-Wieck. Secondary literature, which contains brief information on the existence of the camp, includes Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), which covers a broad analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps. For an analysis of Jehovah’s Witnesses in

the Neuengamme camp system, see Detlef Garbe, *Zwischen Widerstand und Martyrium: Die Zeugen Jehovas im "Dritten Reich"* (Munich, 1999), pp. 473–489.

Primary documentation that provides information on the Darss-Wieck camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## DARSS-ZINGST

A satellite camp attached to Neuengamme was established in Zingst on the Darss peninsula near the Baltic Sea. A detachment of 50 male inmates was deported to Darss-Zingst in December 1941. They were forced to cut reeds, which were collected and sent to the SS-Weaving Contingent (Rohrmattenflechterei) in the women's camp at Ravensbrück. The 50 male inmates were most likely Jehovah's Witnesses who had been deported to the Neuengamme camp from Gestapo prisons and other concentration camps, such as Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald. They were used in Darss-Zingst for reed cultivation until April 1942. These may have been the same inmates who were deployed from Neuengamme to Darss-Wieck in early 1941.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources outlining information about the Neuengamme satellite camp in Darss-Zingst. Secondary literature, which contains brief information on the existence of the camp, includes Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), which covers a broad analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps. For an analysis of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Neuengamme camp system, see Detlef Garbe, *Zwischen Widerstand und Martyrium: Die Zeugen Jehovas im "Dritten Reich"* (Munich, 1999), pp. 473–489.

Primary documentation that provides information on the Darss-Zingst camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## DRÜTTE

Drütte was a key Neuengamme subcamp in the Braunschweig/Salzgitter region, built to provide labor to the armaments manufacturer Reichswerke "Hermann Göring" (RWHG). Planned expansion of the plant in 1942 necessitated more labor, so in a private meeting in September managing director Paul Pleiger obtained Heinrich Himmler's permission to use concentration camp prisoners.<sup>1</sup> On this basis, planning commenced for the first and largest Neuengamme subcamp, which was to house 2,577 prisoners. Monthly transports from November 1942 to May 1943 would ensure that the planned numbers were reached.<sup>2</sup>

The camp was established in the pithead bathing and dressing rooms (*Waschkauen*) on the Hochstrasse, one of the main roads inside the RWHG. It was originally known as Camp 27 and had been built in 1939 to hold around 1,000 Polish civilian laborers.

The first 50 prisoners and 10 guards from the Buchenwald concentration camp arrived at the Drütte subcamp on October 18, 1942. They took over the construction work on the main road. Each month transports arrived from the Neuengamme concentration camp. With the completion of the accommodation blocks in the spring of 1944, the camp population reached the goal of 2,600 prisoners. At the same time the construction of the new assembly factory and the technical building for *Aktion 88* (a program to produce 8.8 cm artillery shells) were completed.

The work was done in different areas: one group worked on the production of 7.5 cm and 10.5 cm shell bodies; another group, the Blockbrecher- und Blockputzzerkommando (block breaking and cleaning detachment), worked at presses to break up the glowing steel blocks; and still others worked on the production line for Aktion 88. The prisoners worked in two 12-hours shifts but occasionally in three 8-hour shifts. From the summer of 1944 on, an average of 2,000 prisoners worked daily in Aktion 88.<sup>3</sup>

It was only in May 1944 that the SS and the Reichswerke "Hermann Göring" concluded a contract regarding Drütte.<sup>4</sup> The RWHG paid the usual 6 Reichsmark (RM) per skilled and 4 RM per unskilled prisoner to the SS. The accommodations for the SS and prisoners were provided free of charge by RWHG, as was water, electricity, heating, and construction and cleaning of the barracks.

Food supplies were very poor in Drütte. The minimum quantities set for prisoners were often not reached. The food supply bore no correlation to the heavy labor. In the summer of 1944 the camp command attempted to increase the prisoners' output by introducing a bonus system.<sup>5</sup> It is not clear who distributed the bonus cards and whether there was in fact additional food in the canteen. According to former prisoners, it was possible, now and then, to exchange the bonus cards for a type of beet salad.<sup>6</sup>

In September 1944, the Reichsführer-SS allowed the camp strength to be increased to 3,150 prisoners. This was done on the basis of the official line that there were sufficient accommodation and beds. However, even before this permission was granted, Drütte was short of at least 600 beds.<sup>7</sup>

As the prisoner numbers increased, the standards of the living conditions declined. Between 600 and 800 men lived in each accommodation block on the Hochstrasse, sleeping in three-tiered bunk beds. There was a constant coming and going caused by the different shifts, which meant a great deal of noise. In addition, there were the factory sounds and the noise of cars and trucks on the Hochstrasse.

The average age of the 3,000 prisoners was around 20 years old. Most of them were Europeans and were classified as "political prisoners." In spite of their youth, they could only bear the heavy physical labor and poor nutrition for a short time. Many fell sick or were injured while carrying out their work, to which they were not accustomed.

Initially there were only 60 beds in the infirmary. When the camp was expanded, the infirmary was shifted and enlarged to around 150 to 180 beds. It became more difficult to

obtain access to the infirmary, as it was separated from the rest of the camp by a fence. The Neuengamme camp doctor was responsible for medical care. This responsibility was taken over in 1942 by Reichswerke medical doctor Dr. Edmund Schauf. Paul Michael, a tailor, was the SS medical orderly in the sick bay between May 1943 and April 1945. Treatment of the prisoners was undertaken by prisoner doctors.<sup>8</sup> The infirmary was inadequately equipped for the high number of sick prisoners. Often 2 prisoners shared a bed; there was no isolation bay and scarcely any medicines and bandages.<sup>9</sup> Officially, 682 prisoners died in Drütte through illnesses, accidents, and executions.<sup>10</sup>

During construction the camp commandants were SS-Hauptsturmführer Hermann Florstedt and SS-Obersturmführer Anton Thumann; from the end of 1942 to the middle of 1943, SS-Hauptsturmführer Georg-Heinrich Forster; from then until the spring of 1944, SS-Hauptsturmführer Herbert Rautenberg; from then until March 1945, SS-Obersturmführer Arnold Strippel; and from then to the evacuation of the camp, SS-Obersturmführer Karl Wiedemann.<sup>11</sup>

The Drütte subcamp was evacuated three days before American troops reached the Salzgitter area. On April 7, 1945, all the prisoners were confined to barracks. It was only in the evening that they were loaded onto goods and cattle cars. The train was standing on a railway line behind the camp fence. The transport was to take all the concentration camp prisoners to Bergen-Belsen. At midday on April 8, 1945, the train halted at the Celle goods railway yard. Around 6:00 P.M. the air-raid sirens were heard, and several squadrons of the U.S. 9th Air Force bombed the railway goods yards. To the extent that they were able to, prisoners tried to escape, fleeing to a nearby forest, hiding in house entrances and in cellars. After the air raid the SS, Wehrmacht, Celle citizens, and Hitler Youth hunted down the prisoners. More than half of the 4,000 prisoners on the transport did not survive the bombing and the hunt that followed. Those who could march were driven by foot to Bergen-Belsen. The injured and weak were left behind in the former stables of the Heide barracks.

Those responsible for the Drütte concentration camp were tried between March 18 and April 2, 1947, in the Hamburg Curio-Haus by a British military court. Only seven men were tried for the mistreatment and killing of Allied citizens in the Drütte labor camp at the RWHG, even though many SS and factory employees had been investigated in the years preceding the trial. Only three of the accused were convicted.

Karl Hecht, who from December 1942 to May 1943 was Rapportführer in Drütte, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. Karl Sokola, an SS guard, received six months, and Walter Mehnert, an engineer at the factory, was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. The other accused were acquitted due to a lack of evidence.<sup>12</sup>

**SOURCES** Information on the Drütte subcamp is to be found in a number of publications, often in chapters focus-

ing on a particular theme. To date, there is no comprehensive study on the camp. Gudrun Pischke has described the camp and its development in her book *“Europa arbeitet bei den Reichswerken . . .” Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem in Salzgitter* (Salzgitter, 1995). Gerd Wysocki in his book *“Arbeit für den Krieg”—Herrschaftsmechanismen in der Rüstungsindustrie des Dritten Reiches* (Braunschweig, 1992) deals with the use of concentration camp prisoners in the armaments industry. The essay by Elke Zacharias deals with the evacuation of the camp: “Die Räumung der KZ Aussenlager in der Region Salzgitter/Braunschweig,” which is included in a book published by the Neuengamme Concentration Camp Memorial: *“Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung”: Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945* (Hamburg, 2005). The author's book *Ein Ort mit Geschichte: Der “Ausländerfriedhof” Jammertal in Salzgitter-Lebenstedt* (Salzgitter, 2006) includes for the first time the names of all known Drütte concentration camp prisoners who died there. On the Celle air raid and the massacre of camp prisoners, see Mijndert Bertram, *April 1945: Der Luftangriff auf Celle und das Schicksal der KZ-Häftlinge aus Drütte* (Celle, 1989); and the author's “Wir dachten, die Befreiung sei ganz nah . . .,” in *Hasenjagd in Celle: Das Massaker am 8. April 1945* (Celle RWLE Möller Stiftung, 2005).

There are collections in various archives. The archives of the RWHG did not survive intact: there was a targeted destruction of files before the end of the war; in addition, those files that did survive were broken up when the company was privatized in the 1980s. In the BA-K, there are parts of the files from the Peine-Salzgitter AG, which also include files on Drütte. Of particular importance are the investigation and trial files on the third Drütte Trial, which are held in the PRO. Other files on the Drütte subcamp are scattered. There are some in NARA, and these were used in preparing the Nuremberg Trials. A comprehensive collection of interviews and memoirs is held in the archives of the AG-Dr and the AG-NG.

Elke Zacharias  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-K, SAG 12/312/10, Schreiben vom 2.10.1942.
2. BA-K, SAG 12/312/10, Schreiben vom 29.9.1942.
3. BA-K, SAG 12/312/10, Forderungsnachweis.
4. BA-K, SAG 12/312/10, Vertrag vom 22.5.1944.
5. BA-K, SAG 12/312/10, Vorgaben für Prämienscheine.
6. AG-Dr, Interview Modrzejewski 1991.
7. BA-K, SAG 12/312/10, Schreiben vom 29.9.1944.
8. PRO, WO 309/411.
9. Ibid.
10. StA Salzgitter, Friedhofskartei, AG-NG, Die Toten, CD 2005.
11. Gudrun Pischke, *“Europa arbeitet bei den Reichswerken . . .” Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem in Salzgitter* (Salzgitter, 1995), p. 276.
12. PRO, WO 309/411.



## DÜSSIN

A satellite camp attached to Neuengamme was created in Düssel (Mecklenberg province) on September 15, 1944. Inmates deported to the Neuengamme subcamp system were used as laborers in construction, repairs, and various other economic and rearmaments efforts. The creation of satellite camps at work sites diminished transportation time for inmates between the main camp and the outlying sites. At least 80 male inmates were transferred to the Düssel camp, presumably from the main Neuengamme camp, to be used as laborers. They performed various duties, including loading potatoes onto freight trains.

The Düssel camp existed until March 1, 1945, when the inmates were transferred to another Neuengamme subcamp located at Hamburg Hammerbrook (Spaldingstrasse). There they were employed in clearing rubble from bombed-out areas of Hamburg, reconstructing buildings, and burying corpses. The fate of the Düssel prisoners in particular is unknown; however, the camp at Spaldingstrasse was evacuated after an Allied air raid destroyed the camp on April 14, 1945. The inmates were transferred to the Sandbostel camp, where they were liberated by British and Canadian troops on April 19, 1945.<sup>1</sup>

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources outlining information about the Neuengamme satellite camp in Düssel. Secondary literature, which contains brief information on the existence of the camp, includes Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), which covers a broad analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps; and Ulrich Bauch, *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945* (Hamburg, 1986). This information (opening and closing dates, number of inmates) can also be found in the Düssel entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen, 1979). Finally, for the dates and path of the evacuation of the camp, see the second volume of the two-volume work *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung; Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, ed. Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, Freundeskreis KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme e.V., with contributions by Detlef Garber and Nina Holsten (Bremen, 2000).

Primary documentation that provides information on the Düssel camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTE

1. See Neuengamme/Hamburg-Hammerbrook (Spaldingstrasse).

## ENGERHAFE [AKA AURICH-ENGERHAFE]

The Neuengamme subcamp in Engerhufe was established in October 1944 and was located in the vicinity of the town of Aurich. The original Engerhufe barracks had been constructed

in 1941 and had capacity for about 500 prisoners. In 1942, Organisation Todt (OT) employed foreign workers confined in the camp for the construction of air-raid bunkers in the nearby town of Emden. From early 1944 until October 1944, the camp remained empty. After the camp was incorporated into the Neuengamme camp system, a commando of about 400 to 500 inmates was transferred from Neuengamme to Engerhufe on October 21, 1944. The commando reconstructed and expanded the camp to prepare for the arrival of additional prisoners. The Engerhufe subcamp prisoners were to be used in the construction of the so-called Friesenwall, a set of fortifications ordered by Hitler in August 1944 and planned for the western border regions and the coast of the North Sea.

The original Engerhufe camp, which consisted of three barracks including a kitchen and wash area, was expanded in October 1944 with the arrival of the first prisoners from Neuengamme. The commando built four new watchtowers at the perimeter of the camp, constructed two additional large barracks, and surrounded the camp with barbed wire. One of the barracks was partitioned to form space for a prisoner infirmary. The barracks were overcrowded and unheated, and inmates sometimes had to sleep two to each bunk level. The sanitary conditions in Engerhufe were primitive. There were no toilets, only pits with benches built around them; these quickly overflowed. The prisoners had no change of clothing, and their thin garments and wooden shoes offered little protection against the weather or harsh working conditions.

During its two-month existence, some 2,000 inmates were incarcerated in the Engerhufe subcamp. In addition to the first transport of about 500 inmates, other transports from Neuengamme followed after the camp was expanded. Many of the prisoners had been incarcerated in other camps prior to Neuengamme, including Sachsenhausen and its subcamps, such as Berlin-Lichterfelde. The prisoners in Engerhufe were all men and were predominantly Polish. The second largest national group included about 200 Dutch inmates; on November 9 and 10, 1944, an unknown number of Dutch men were deported from the town of Putten to Neuengamme. There were also many French, Latvian, and Russian prisoners, as well as some Belgian, Danish, Lithuanian, Estonian, Spanish, Czech, and Italian prisoners. Jewish prisoners were also imprisoned in the camp, many deported from Lithuania; at least 15 Jews were reported to have died in the Engerhufe camp. (There is no specific breakdown of numbers of prisoner groups in the camp, including the exact number of Jews imprisoned in the camp.)<sup>1</sup> On December 15, 1944, about 500 to 600 inmates, who were too exhausted or ill to work, were transported back to the Neuengamme main camp. By the time of the dissolution of the Engerhufe camp in December 1944, about 1,200 inmates remained.

The commandant of the Engerhufe subcamp was SS-Oberscharführer Erwin Seifert. Seifert entered the SS-Death's Head Units (Totenkopfverbände) in 1938 and was assigned to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1939. He became the Lagerführer of Berlin-Lichterfelde, a sub-

camp of Sachsenhausen, from September 1943 to March 1944. After the evacuation of Berlin-Lichterfelde, Seifert was transferred to Neuengamme, and shortly after, he was appointed Lagerführer in Engerhabe. According to postwar trial documentation, Seifert asserted that, other than himself, there were few other SS guards in Engerhabe. Most of the guards in Engerhabe were naval soldiers (Marinesoldaten) and were answerable to Seifert.

In addition to Oberscharführer Seifert, his assisting SS officers, and the naval soldiers, some inmates were given positions of authority over their fellow inmates. Kapos oversaw the inmates at work sites and terrorized the prisoners within the camp. Former Engerhabe inmate Christian Georges characterized a Kapo as “a man who beat other men for one more piece of bread, for soup, for good clothing, good shoes . . . for his survival, he would have beaten his own mother.”<sup>2</sup> The camp elder (Lagerältester) and block elder (Blockältester) were responsible for discipline and order within the camp. Prisoner positions within the camp gained some privileges, including extra food and less stringent physical work. With few exceptions, the Kapos and other special assignment prisoners (*Funktionshäftlinge*), generally German and Dutch criminals, were brutal toward the other inmates.

Daily activity in the Engerhabe camp was dominated by work on the Friesenwall, an operation led in part by the Marine-Oberkommando Nordsee (Wilhelmshaven) and the Generalkommando X in Hamburg. The Engerhabe prisoners were sent daily on a two-hour march to Aurich, where they were forced to dig antitank trenches for the “Rundumverteidigung Aurich.” The work was grueling and performed manually, often knee-deep in mud. With only shovels and spades, the inmates dug trenches 4 to 5 meters (13.1 to 16.4 feet) wide and 2 to 3 meters (6.6 to 9.8 feet) deep. The Kapos and guards drove the prisoners to exhaustion and beat them with rubber truncheons while they worked. The Engerhabe inmates worked uninterrupted for 12 hours each day, until they were marched back to the camp for roll call and a sparse evening meal. A Polish former political prisoner in Engerhabe, Jozef Ścisło, recalled that the inmates nicknamed the camp “Hitler’s morgue.”<sup>3</sup>

Due to the terrible living and work conditions in the Engerhabe subcamp, many inmates died from exhaustion, malnutrition, and lack of proper medical care. They succumbed to diseases such as dysentery, typhus, and pneumonia, and the death rate was considerably high. A special prisoner commando, called the Corpse Unit (Leichenkommando), carried corpses in wagons to the nearby Engerhabe cemetery, where they buried the bodies in mass graves. Over a two-month period, 188 inmates died in Engerhabe (excluding the prisoners transferred to Neuengamme in mid-December). Prisoner deaths and burials were recorded in the “Friedhof-Lagerbuch der Kirchengemeinde Engerhabe” as well as in the Neuengamme death book (*Totenbuch*). The Service Technique de la Délégation Générale pour l’Allemagne et l’Autriche du Ministère des Anciens Combattants et Victimes de Guerre confirmed this number after exhuming and identifying the bodies buried in mass graves in Engerhabe in 1952. The death

rate was at its highest between November 21 and December 15, 1944, when 143 inmates died.

The maximum exploitation of the Engerhabe inmates in the construction of the Friesenwall and the poor conditions within the camp thwarted organized resistance or escape attempts. Most prisoners were consumed by overwhelming hunger and tried to avoid beatings meted out by the Kapos and guards. According to testimony from former inmates, solidarity formed within the various national groups, which were grouped together in blocks. Some individual attempts to assist fellow inmates were made; for example, the Czech prisoner who worked in the kitchen sometimes hid extra food and distributed it to other inmates. A Dutch camp elder assigned ill or weakened inmates to lighter workloads.

As the Allies closed in and the front neared, the Engerhabe subcamp was dissolved. The inmates were evacuated either on foot or by train to Neuengamme on December 22, 1944. Because they had little food and water for the often weeklong march, additional inmates died during the evacuation or were shot by the SS. According to witness testimony, at the time of the evacuation, a large number of Polish inmates were transferred to Mauthausen, and many Dutch and Belgian prisoners were transferred to Hamburg or Bergen-Belsen and ultimately to the prisoner-of-war (POW) camp Sandbostel.

The Landgericht (Regional Court) Aurich brought criminal charges against former Oberscharführer Seifert in 1965.<sup>4</sup> He was accused of murdering at least 20 inmates throughout his career in the camps; however, Seifert was never sentenced. No further information about Seifert’s trial or other members of the Engerhabe camp is available.

**SOURCES** This entry builds upon the seminal study on the Engerhabe camp by Elke Suhr, *Das Konzentrationslager im Pfarrgarten: Ein Panzergraben-Kommando für den Friesenwall-Aurich/Engerhabe 1944* (Oldenburg, 1984), which examines nearly all aspects of the camp and includes excerpts of witness testimony. See also Eva Requardt-Schohaus, “Der verdrängte Herbst von Engerhabe,” *Ostf-M* (November 1994), for an updated overview of the status of research on the camp and the memorial in Engerhabe. For a broad overview of the Neuengamme subcamp system, see Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997); and Werner Johe, *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg* (Hamburg, 1982). For further information on the Armed Forces High Command (OKW) defense strategy in Ostfriesland and Emsland and the role of the Marine-Oberkommando Nordsee, see *Kriegstagebuch des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht (Wehrmachtsführungsstab) 1940–1945*, ed. Percy Schramm, with Hans-Adolf Jacobsen (Augsburg, 2002); and Herbert Schwarzwälder, *Bremen und Nordwestdeutschland am Kriegsende 1945* (Bremen, 1972).

Primary documentation on the Engerhabe subcamp, used extensively by Suhr in *Konzentrationslager im Pfarrgarten*, is located at the FZH (formerly the FGNS-H), especially the Hans Schwarz archive that includes the Neuengamme “Totenbücher.” Files containing detailed information on prisoner deaths derived from an investigation of mass graves in Aurich-Engerhabe and conducted by the grave commission of the Ser-

vice Technique de la Délégation Générale pour l'Allemagne et l'Autriche du Ministère des Anciens Combattants et Victimes de Guerre are stored at the NStA-Os, and grave lists from the delegation are stored at the AGe-Sü. Documentation from the 1965 trial against Erwin Seifert by the Landgericht Aurich is located in the AStALG-Au (2 Js 820/65). For other administrative records attached to the camp, such as a list of French inmates in the camp (NE 24) and postwar testimony from a former inmate (NE 24), see the archives of the USHMM, Acc. 1998.A.0045, which constitutes a collection copied from the AN-MACVG and originating from the ITS.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Numbers of prisoners who died in Engerhufe can be found in the Totenbücher of Neuengamme and its subcamps, stored at the FZH.

2. Testimony of Christian Georges, as quoted in Elke Suhr, *Das Konzentrationslager im Pfarrgarten: Ein Panzergraben-Kommando für den Friesenwall-Aurich/Engerbake 1944* (Oldenburg, 1984), p. 94.

3. Report of Jozef Ścisło to French consulate, Kraków, May 2, 1966 (NE 24), AN, Secretariat d'Etat aux Anciens Combattants as reproduced in the archives of the USHMM, Acc. 1998 A.0045, Reel 40.

4. Documentation from the trial is stored at the AStALG-Au (2 Js 820/65).

## FALLERSLEBEN (VOLKSWAGENWERKE)

The Fallersleben (Volkswagenwerke) concentration camp was a subcamp of the Neuengamme main camp under the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). It operated from early June 1944 to April 7, 1945, first as a men's camp and, from August 1944, then as a women's camp. It was located on the second floor of the Volkswagen (VW) company's main factory in Wolfsburg. (Wolfsburg was called "Stadt-des-Kraft-durch-Freude-Wagens bei Fallersleben," that is, city of the Strength-through-Joy-motorcar near Fallersleben, since the VW motorcar was named after the Nazi Party's Strength-through-Joy organization.)

The Fallersleben (VW) camp was established on the initiative of leading Volkswagen chief Ferdinand Porsche after a meeting he and his son, Ferry Porsche, had with Heinrich Himmler on March 4, 1944. VW had a long history of cooperation with the SS. As early as 1941, the SS had agreed to provide the company with forced laborers from concentration camps. It started to do so in 1942 when the "Arbeitsdorf" main camp started operating on the factory premises. Chief executive officer (CEO) and developer of the "people's car" Ferdinand Porsche, an Oberführer of the General-SS (Allgemeine-SS), belonged to Hitler's inner circle. He staged cooperation projects with Himmler and the SS on several occasions. Ferdinand Porsche constantly attempted to increase the number of laborers in order to expand the company. Even though the German Labor Front (DAF) owned

the company, he treated it as if it were his private property. Since VW had a key role in the Fieseler (Fi) 103 (V-1) program, Porsche could expand production, employment, and the exploitation of forced and slave labor.

The Fallersleben (VW) concentration camp provided slave laborers for V-1 and small arms production in the VW factory. Its history falls into two distinct periods. Until July 5, 1944, the camp held 300 male Hungarian Jewish prisoners. They had been recruited by a VW engineer and SS-Hauptscharführer in Auschwitz as metalworkers, technicians, and civil engineers for the manufacturing of cruise missiles in a top-secret area of the factory just above the prisoners' quarters. After Allied air raids had partly destroyed the factory, V-1 production was moved to underground facilities in Schönebeck an der Elbe near Magdeburg and Tiercelet in occupied Lorraine. The 300 "V-1 specialists" were taken by train to Thil, a Natzweiler subcamp, where they arrived on July 6, and were put to work for the VW subsidiary company Minette in nearby Tiercelet.

During the second period, from August 1944 to April 7, 1945, a larger number of female prisoners, the majority of them Hungarian Jews who had been selected for slave labor in Auschwitz, manufactured land mines and bazookas at assembly lines located next to the concentration camp area.

The Fallersleben (VW) camp consisted of two large, sealed-off former workers' changing rooms on the factory ground floor. The rooms were barren but clean, with bunk beds, wooden tables, and benches. Hot showers remained and could be used by the prisoners. Daylight could only come through one window opening to a closed yard. Air-raid shelters were part of the camp area, and prisoners frequently had to spend their short off-duty hours there.

The guards' accommodations were located in separate quarters next to the prisoners' rooms and in a nearby Waffen-SS barrack. Another Neuengamme subcamp, Fallersleben-Laagberg, was in charge of camp administration. Its commandant, until February 1, 1945, Hauptscharführer Johannes Pump, then Army Hauptmann Karl Werringloer, commanded the guards of both camps. During the first period, SS, Luftwaffe, and elderly Wehrmacht personnel mainly composed the guard units. During the second period, female SS guards were also deployed, some having been recruited among VW employees and rushed through a short, brutalizing training program at the Ravensbrück women's camp. Since the prisoners' accommodations were inside the factory building, there were no special security measures. The prisoners' work areas, however, were sealed off from the rest by wire fences and walls. Prisoners were not allowed to communicate with the German foremen and foreign laborers who did transport and repair jobs. Nevertheless, the different groups of workers talked to each other.

The first transport of 300 male Jewish prisoners remained intact until its transfer to Thil. The arrival of the second transport of 500 Jewish women from Auschwitz in August transformed the Fallersleben VW camp into a women's camp. Additional transports arrived on November 18 from Bergen-



Belsen, numbering 50 Jewish women, and on January 14, 1945, from Dachau through Bergen-Belsen, carrying 100 mostly non-Jewish women who had been arrested as participants or supporters of partisan activities in Yugoslavia and Hungary. A large evacuation transport of Jewish and non-Jewish women from the Porta Westfalica camp almost doubled the total number of inmates on April 2, 1945. By then, at least 4 prisoners had died because of infectious diseases. Two babies were born in the camp in December 1944. According to eyewitness accounts, one was killed at once, while the other died after two weeks despite joint efforts by prisoners to hide and provide for it.

As there were no German prisoners, the camp elder, Gyula Gross (later Brana Heller) and other prisoner-functionaries were Hungarian Jews. Although survivor accounts differ about their behavior, they generally seem to have administered SS orders with moderation.

Slave labor was the purpose of the Fallersleben (VW) camp. The prisoners performed specialized metal processing operations for which they received brief training during the first days of their stay at the factory by German workers and Luftwaffe personnel. Work frequently was delayed due to a lack of materials. On various occasions, prisoners had to "volunteer" to remove debris after air raids, load and unload railway cars, or work in vegetable fields that surrounded the factory. According to survivor testimonies, one prisoner was shot at point-blank range by a female guard for attacking her verbally. Occasionally, guards distributed blows and whiplashes, but most former inmates report the level of violence as low. There were no ritualized punishment procedures as in other concentration camps. Verbal abuse was, however, common, and male guards took pleasure in sexually harassing the female prisoners in the showers.

Hygiene in the Fallersleben (VW) camp was good, but food was clearly insufficient. Eventually, rations were reduced. By the time of liberation, most prisoners suffered from dire emaciation. A sick bay managed by a prisoner (a dental aide) and supervised by a VW factory physician only had five or six beds, so on company orders only prisoners with more than 39 degrees Celsius (102.2 degrees Fahrenheit) of fever were exempt from work. A few seriously ill prisoners were treated in the nearby company-owned hospital, where they were kept in isolation during their stay. That the prisoners were protected from the weather and excessive violence mainly accounts for the low mortality rate in spite of the deplorable food situation.

Male prisoners successfully sabotaged the V-1 devices, and female prisoners managed to engage in acts of symbolic resistance. Headed by intellectuals, they organized a "camp university" with lectures, recitals of poetry, plays, and Italian operas. A small group of orthodox Jewish women was protected by other inmates when performing religious rituals. Attempts to escape did not occur, as the prisoners were constantly kept behind locked doors in the factory building.

The first commandant, Pump, was excessive in his sexual abuse of female inmates. While committing various acts of violence in the Laagberg camp, which he also commanded, he generally left day-to-day business in the women's camp to the female guards. They, however, took more interest in partying

with soldiers from the nearby Waffen-SS barracks and only made sporadic appearances inside the camp area.

On April 7, 1945, some 1,600 remaining female inmates of the Fallersleben (VW) camp were evacuated by train to Salzwedel, another Neuengamme subcamp. They were liberated by U.S. Army troops a week later.

**SOURCES** The description of the Fallersleben (VW) camp is based on Therkel Straede's research. Most useful sources included: Hans Mommsen and Manfred Grieger, *Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf: ECON, 1996), pp.864, 896; Therkel Straede's articles in *Proceedings of the Xth International Oral History Conference* (Rio de Janeiro, 1998), p.1748, and *Lessons & Legacies 1998* (Chicago, 2002). Further secondary sources include Klaus-Jörg Siegfried, *Das Leben der Zwangsarbeiter im Volkswagenwerk 1939–1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1988); Siegfried, *Rüstungsproduktion und Zwangsarbeit im Volkswagenwerk 1939–1945: Eine Dokumentation* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1987); and incomplete data in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990). A chapter on the camp is included in the author's forthcoming book *The Volkswagen Jews*. Some survivors have published accounts on the camp. See, for example, the gravely erroneous account by Kitty Hart-Moxon, *Return to Auschwitz: The Remarkable Story of a Girl Who Survived the Holocaust* (New York: Atheneum, 1983); Atie Siegenbeek van Heukelom in *'t venster* 6/1946 (Amsterdam); and Julia Kertesz, "Von Auschwitz ins Volkswagenwerk: Erinnerungen an KZ-Haft und Zwangsarbeit," *DaHe* 8 (1992): 69–87.

Sources on the Fallersleben (VW) camp are scattered. The VW archive and the ASt-WOB hold company and municipal documents as well as second provenance collections of documents from the AG-NG, YV, the NIOD, the NHStA-H, the BA-B, and the ZdL-L. These collections include several accounts and testimonies by survivors and eyewitnesses, as do the VHF and the USHMM.

Therkel Straede

## FALLERSLEBEN-LAAGBERG

The Fallersleben-Laaagberg concentration camp was a subcamp of the Neuengamme main camp under the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). It operated from May 31, 1944, until April 7, 1945. The camp was located 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) from the Volkswagen (VW) company's main factory in Wolfsburg. (Wolfsburg was called "Stadt-des-Kraft-durch-Freude-Wagens bei Fallersleben," that is, city of the Strength-through-Joy-motorcar near Fallersleben, since the VW motorcar was named after the Nazi party's Strength-through-Joy organization.)

The Laagberg camp was established on the initiative of VW management after negotiations with the Army Armaments Inspectorate (Rüstungsinspektion) and the SS. At that time, VW already had a long history of cooperation with the



SS. As early as 1941, the SS had agreed to provide the company with slave laborers from concentration camps. It started to do so in 1942, when the “Arbeitsdorf” main camp started operating on the factory premises. Chief executive officer (CEO) and developer of the “people’s car” Ferdinand Porsche, an Oberführer of the General-SS (Allgemeine-SS), belonged to Hitler’s inner circle. He staged cooperation projects with Himmler and the SS on several occasions. Porsche constantly attempted to increase the number of laborers in order to expand the company. Even though the German Labor Front (DAF) owned the company, Porsche treated it as if it were his private property.

Laagberg provided manpower for the construction of a brick barracks settlement intended to accommodate German workers employed in the Fieseler (Fi) 103 (V-1) cruise missile program. VW coordinated V-1 production until October 1944 and hoped to expand the company, as this weapon system ripened to serial production. It used the V-1 program as a pretext to accumulate capacities, including workers’ housing, in order to prepare for postwar civilian production. Thus, both wartime and peacetime economic considerations motivated VW to employ concentration camp slave laborers.

The Laagberg concentration camp was surrounded by a high-voltage barbed-wire fence and four wooden watchtowers equipped with searchlights and machine guns. Four unfinished one-story brick barracks with a capacity of 768 inmates were located inside the camp. For several weeks, there was neither running water nor washing facilities and only primitive outdoor latrines. Thirst drove prisoners to drink surface water from muddy holes. Eventually, the prisoners installed a sewage water system and erected toilets and lavatories. In the winter of 1944–1945, two additional watchtowers and another barrack, serving as a morgue, were built. With the arrival of new transports in April 1945, however, it also accommodated prisoners. The roll-call area (*Appellplatz*) and the gallows were located in the center of the prisoners’ compound. Brick barracks outside the fenced-in area accommodated the guards as well as the SS camp administration, offices of the company building site administration, and from November on, also a camp kitchen. During working hours, the entire 450×600-meter (492×656-yard) building site was encircled by a chain of guardposts (*Postenkette*).

Initially, SS-Death’s Head Units, partly of Eastern European origin, served as guards. In August 1944, army personnel and elderly territorial guardsmen (*Landeschützen*) replaced some SS men.

On May 31, 1944, some 800 prisoners from Neuengamme arrived. Indications that some prisoners were transferred to Neuengamme in order to receive punishment or because they were too weak to work have not been confirmed. The incomplete Neuengamme death register contains a list of 35 Laagberg casualties. The total estimated loss of lives due to undernourishment and the extremely violent abuse is substantially higher. By March 25, the camp held 656 prisoners. Additional prisoners arrived with evacuation transports from subcamps in the Kassel area on April 1, 1945 (460 prisoners) and from Porta Westfalica on April 2.

Half of the prisoners were French resistance fighters and hostages; others were largely of Dutch, Spanish, Soviet, and Polish origin. The Kapos and foremen came from different countries and generally administered SS orders with great cruelty. According to survivors’ testimonies, the camp elder (*Lagerältester*), Waclaw Dyba, a Polish political prisoner, however, treated his fellow prisoners decently. Except for a few of the late arrivals, there were no Jews in the camp.

Laagberg was basically a forced labor camp. The prisoners performed construction labor. They had to work outdoors under harsh weather conditions with temperatures as low as -16° Celsius (4° Fahrenheit). They lacked proper clothing and were severely punished for making protective vests from paper sacks. When the primitive wooden boots broke, no replacement was handed out, so a growing number of prisoners had to work barefoot. Work assignments included the laying of concrete floors, masonry, carpentry, and plumbing. A large work detail moved heavy materials along a pushcart rail 3 to 4 kilometers (1.9 to 2.5 miles) uphill from the train station to the building site and was subject to extremely violent treatment by Kapos and guards. Work was conducted under the surveillance of the SS, VW chief architect Ernst Döring, representatives of the DAF-owned construction company Deutsche Bau AG (German Construction Corporation), and private German subcontractors. Civilian foremen and technicians commanded work details, but their number was small.

Some prisoners were commanded to remove debris after air raids and to make building repairs; others to do maintenance work at a nearby Waffen-SS barracks. On Sundays, many were forced to “volunteer” to unload railway cars and riverboats on the factory premises. Some performed heavy tasks in the factory blacksmith’s shop or in a nearby quarry that was being turned into an underground skip (*Metallpresse*) facility. Kapos and SS constantly strove to speed up the pace by punishing the “idle” and resorted to random violence. Toward the end of the Third Reich, work frequently was delayed due to lack of materials.

Provisions were clearly insufficient. Initially, the factory kitchens delivered the meals. When the camp kitchen started operation in November, rations and quality were reduced substantially. By Christmas 1944, more than 100 prisoners had reached the *Muselman* stage of total emaciation. In spite of heroic efforts by French prisoner physicians, the 50-bed sick bay was insufficient to cope with the high morbidity in the camp. Even so, seriously ill prisoners were denied transfer to the nearby VW-owned hospital.

Despite the desolate conditions in the camp, acts of symbolic resistance occurred. French prisoners celebrated the July 14 Bastille Day by wearing tricolor flowers and the November 11 World War I Armistice Day by a minute’s silence. At Easter, a Catholic priest read a Mass. News was received on an illegal radio and circulated in the camp, and messages about the death of prisoners were smuggled out through forced laborers who were eventually accommodated in the finished barracks next to the camp compound. They also

smuggled food and medicine into the camp. A number of escape attempts occurred; few were successful.

The first commandant of the Laagberg camp was SS-Hauptscharführer Johannes Pump, who also commanded the nearby VW Fallersleben camp. Pump committed numerous acts of brutality and inspired his staff to follow his example. Eventually, he left day-to-day business to his deputy, SS-Scharführer Anton Peter Callesen, while he himself spent time in heavy drinking and sexual abuse of female prisoners from the VW Fallersleben camp. Callesen treated the prisoners with more cruelty than Pump and killed several. Around February 1, 1945, Pump was replaced because of black marketeering by Army Hauptmann Karl Werringloer. He tried to improve conditions, establishing a “reposing block” (*Schonungsblock*) for prisoners who were too weak to work and issuing a soon-disregarded ban on the guards’ carrying sticks and beating prisoners. As provisions and hygiene did not improve, the number of Muselmen and deaths continued to rise. The camp was evacuated on April 7, 1945. The approximately 1,600 prisoners ended up in the Wöbelin camp.

**SOURCES** The description of the Fallersleben-Laagberg camp is based on Therkel Straede’s research. Most useful sources included: Hans Mommsen and Manfred Grieger, *Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf: ECON, 1996), pp.766–799; Christian Jansen, “Zwangsarbeit für das Volkswagenwerk: Häftlingsalltag auf dem Laagberg bei Wolfsburg,” in *Ausbeutung, Vernichtung, Öffentlichkeit: Neue Studien zur nationalsozialistischen Lagerpolitik*, ed. Norbert Frei, Sybille Steinbacher, and Bernd C. Wagner (Munich: KG Saur, 2000), pp.75–107; Klaus-Jörg Siegfried, *Das Leben der Zwangsarbeiter im Volkswagenwerk 1939–1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1988); *ibid.*, *Rüstungsproduktion und Zwangsarbeit im Volkswagenwerk 1939–1945: Eine Dokumentation* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1987); and incomplete data in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990). A chapter on the camp is included in the author’s forthcoming book *The Volkswagen Jews*. A witness account is included in Henk’t Hoen, *Twee jaar Volkswagenwerk* (Amsterdam, 2002).

The most important sources on the Fallersleben-Laagberg camp are the records of the Danish war crimes trial against Anton Peter Callesen in the DAA/DK. The VW archive and the ASt-WOB hold documents and second provenance collections from the AG-NG, YV, the NHStA-H, the BA-B, and the ZdL-L; these sources include numerous survivor and eyewitness records.

Therkel Straede

## GOSLAR

A subcamp attached to Neuengamme was created in Goslar (Hannover province) on October 20, 1944. Inmates deported to the Neuengamme subcamp system were used as

laborers in construction, repairs, and various other economic and rearmaments efforts. The creation of satellite camps at work sites diminished transportation time for inmates between the main camp and the outlying sites. Some 15 inmates were transferred to the Goslar camp, presumably from the main Neuengamme camp, to work for the Goslar construction administration of the SS-Construction Management unit (Bauleitung Goslar).<sup>1</sup> There is no information about the exact work the Goslar inmates performed.

Little other specific information about this small satellite commando can be found. According to an attachment to a translated copy of the report filed by SS garrison doctor (Standortarzt) Trzebinski, which lists the SS doctors in charge of overseeing medical care within the Neuengamme camps, Dr. Hintzelmann and his assistant SS-Rottenführer Joers supervised the health of the Goslar inmates.<sup>2</sup>

The camp in Goslar existed until March 23 or 25, 1945, when, according to historian Werner Johe, the commando was most likely liberated by Allied troops. A slate panel was erected in Goslar to commemorate the death of Henry Jens Sørensen, one of the inmates who died in the Goslar camp.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the subcamp in Goslar. Brief information on the existence of the camp in secondary literature is found in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a reproduction of the quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski. The brief details on the Goslar camp are duplicated in Werner Johe, *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg* (Hamburg, 1982). Information on the memorial stone in Goslar, which commemorates the death of a prisoner in the Goslar camp as well as in a subcamp of Buchenwald, is found in Hans-Joachim Höhler, *Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager* (Hamburg, 2000).

Primary documentation that provides information on the Goslar camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information. The original quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski, which lists the subcamp of the SS-Bauleitung Goslar, published in various secondary sources, can be found at the FZH.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FGNS-H, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). The archives of USHMM, RG-59.016 M, Reel 5, also contain a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), pp. 123–126.

2. *Ibid.*

## HAMBURG (BOMBENSUCHKOMMANDO NO. 2)

After extensive destruction from air raids of large areas of Hamburg from July 24 to August 2, 1943, inmates from the Neuengamme concentration camp were deployed throughout the city to clear rubble, reconstruct buildings, detonate unexploded bombs, and bury corpses. To lessen the inmates' transportation time between the camp and work sites, various subcamps affiliated with the main Neuengamme camp were established throughout Hamburg and its environs.

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS) camp index, a subcamp was created in a Hamburg prison, although its exact location is not known. A work commando, presumably quartered at the prison, was deployed to clear rubble from bombed-out areas for one month.

**SOURCES** There are few sources on the Hamburg Bombensuchkommando attached to Neuengamme. The main secondary source of information is the entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979). Although not always consistent with other sources, this publication provides information about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, and so on. Another important secondary source of information on the Hamburg subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps. See also Werner Johe, *Neuengamme. Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg* (Hamburg: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1982).

Although limited, primary documentation on the Hamburg Bombensuchkommando is most likely stored at the AG-NG in Hamburg.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## HAMBURG (HOWALDTWERKE)

In October 1944, a subcamp of Neuengamme was established at the Howaldtwerke firm in Hamburg at Ferdinandstrasse 58. The Howaldtwerke subcamp was 1 of more than 15 Neuengamme subcamps in Hamburg and its surroundings, and it was one among several subcamps attached to the Hamburg shipyards. In the aftermath of the destruction of large areas of Hamburg in late July and August 1943 through Allied air raids, commandos of inmates from Neuengamme were deployed throughout the city to clear rubble, reconstruct buildings, and bury corpses. To lessen the inmates' transportation time between the camp and work sites, satellite camps were created throughout Hamburg and its surrounding districts. In addition to clearing rubble from the streets, many of the subcamps also provided labor to private firms, including shipbuilding companies such as Blohm & Voss, Stülcken-Werft [Stülckenwerft], Deutsche Werft, and Howaldtwerke.

Nazi Party Provincial Chief (Gauleiter) Karl Kaufmann and head of the Armaments Commission (Rüstungskommission, RüKo) Otto Wolff arranged for the introduction of concentration camp inmates as laborers in the Hamburg shipyards in late summer 1944. According to a report issued from a meeting of RüKo in July 1944, private firms in Hamburg would be assigned between 4,000 and 5,000 inmates from Neuengamme. Companies agreed to pay 6 Reichsmark (RM) for each worker per day, and the SS would supply meals for the prisoners, as well as guard personnel for inmates. Due to a marked increase in U-boat production in the latter half of 1944, coupled with a severe shortage of skilled workers, at least 2,000 inmates were allotted to the shipbuilding industry in Hamburg in August 1944. An agreement between the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) and Dr. May, the labor allocation group leader (Arbeitseinsatzgruppenleiter) for the Hamburg shipyards authorized the use of concentration camp inmates as workers in the shipbuilding industry.

The camp at Howaldtwerke was in operation from October 1944 until April 1945, when the subcamps in Hamburg were dissolved due to the closing in of the front. All of the inmates at Howaldtwerke were male, although there is no further information as to how many inmates were deported to this camp. (Unlike other subcamps in the Hamburg shipbuilding industry, Howaldtwerke did not appear on the quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski.)<sup>1</sup> As they were most likely transported from the main Neuengamme camp, the inmates represented various nationalities and prisoner groups.

There is no information about the guards in the Howaldtwerke camp nor about the commandant of the camp. Like all other Neuengamme subcamps in Hamburg, the guards answered to and were administered by the Support Center (Stützpunkt) Hamburg, which was located at the Spaldingstrasse subcamp—see Neuengamme/Hamburg-Hammerbrook (Spaldingstrasse)—and they fell under the leadership of SS-Obersturmbannführer Karl Wiedemann.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources specifically on the Howaldtwerke subcamp of Neuengamme. For contextual information on the use of concentration camp inmates in the Hamburg shipbuilding industry, see Ludwig Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," 1999 2 (April 1995): 57–73, and by the same author, "Das KZ-Aussenlager Blohm & Voss im Hamburger Hafen," in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg, (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1996)—although these essays focus mainly on the subcamp at Blohm & Voss. Another important secondary source of information on the Hamburg subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps. For a broad history of the Howaldtwerke company, see Bruno Bock, *Gebaut bei HDW: Howaldtwerke-Deutsche Werft AG: 150 Jahre* (Herford: Koehler, 1988), although this text includes no information about the subcamp.

Primary sources on the Howaldtwerke camp are scarce. In his essay, Ludwig Eiber has noted the usefulness and location

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of scant materials related to the Hamburg shipyard subcamps. The StA-HH has some files that pertain to the creation and dissolution of subcamps in Hamburg, but they contain little to no information about conditions within the camps. Finally, the HJMA contain thousands of reports from surviving Hungarian Jewish deportees taken in 1945 and 1946 by the DE-GOB. Several protocols briefly describe conditions in specific camps, but none mention Howaldtwerke by name. Others refer to Hamburg shipyards in general but give little specific information as to location or name of the employing firm (see especially protocols 2990, 875, and 1492).

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTE

1. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). The archives of USHMM (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also contain a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp.123–126.

## HAMBURG-EIDELSTEDT

The Eidelstedt subcamp existed from September 1944 to early May 1945. It was a camp exclusively for female prisoners and was located at Friedrichshulder Weg (in what later became Lurup, a Hamburg suburb). During the war, the barracks camp was part of Hamburg-Eidelstedt. It was based on the edge of the Eidelstedter Heide in a sparsely populated area with few houses. The railway line from Hamburg to the north ran right along the campsite. The Eidelstedt railway station, one of the largest marshaling yards of its time, was very close to the subcamp. Not far from the subcamp were the railroaders' houses where German Reich Railway Deutsche Reichsbahn, (DR) employees lived. Following the large air raids on Hamburg in the summer of 1943, more and more people fled to Eidelstedt or were relocated there as refugees from their bombed-out homes. To accommodate them in Eidelstedt, emergency housing from prefabricated slabs were being built since 1943. Those were built at least in part by female inmates from the Neuengamme concentration camp.

It is difficult to say when exactly the former barracks camp, which became a Neuengamme subcamp in 1944, was constructed. The Nazis destroyed all relevant files at the end of the war. According to the recollections of local residents, Italian prisoners of war (POWs) had been interned in the wooden barracks since 1943 until they were replaced by the Jewish prisoners. The POWs had also constructed prefabricated slab houses. A contract dated September 23, 1942, shows that the city of Hamburg purchased the site of the later barracks camp from the Hamburg Vereinsbank on behalf of the DR. This at

least proves that the camp could not have been built before the end of 1942.

The barracks camp consisted of two large sleeping barracks, each with several sleeping rooms, and another large barracks housing the washroom, the toilets, and a storage room. In addition, there was a sick bay and a clothing store as well as a canteen for the prisoners in the camp. Outside the camp, an air-raid bunker was built for the guards at the main entrance; directly next to it were the premises for the guards, including sleeping quarters for the camp command.

Most likely on September 27, 1944, 500 Czech and Hungarian Jews were interned at the Eidelstedt women's subcamp. This was on Yom Kippur, the most solemn of Jewish festivals. Survivor of the camp Paula Hermann wrote the following: "And it was on Yom Kippur that we were told that we were to be transferred to a new camp. After our poor belongings had been thoroughly searched, we ended up on the floor of some open trucks. Scarcely had our journey began when it began to rain and hail. We were completely wet and the hail beat on to our heads. We were gripped by hunger, cold, and despair. 'Why are we being punished on this holiest of days?' we all cried. The new camp was in Eidelstedt, where no joy awaited us."<sup>1</sup>

Other survivors also reported about being transferred to the subcamp at Hamburg-Eidelstedt in the evening hours of Yom Kippur. The women have clear memories of the transfer because they, despite the heavy burdens of their work, remained true to Jewish traditions and fasted. On the evening of Yom Kippur, the women returned starving and completely exhausted back to their camp in the expectation that they would soon receive their evening soup. They were to be disappointed by the SS, however, as even before the soup allocation, all the women were transferred to another camp. This transfer remains in their memories because of the enormous physical strain it caused.

The Jewish prisoners arrived at Eidelstedt from the women's camp in Wedel, also a Neuengamme subcamp, where they had been interned in mid-September 1944. Earlier, they had been incarcerated in Auschwitz and in another women's Neuengamme subcamp named Hamburg-Geilenberg (Desauer Ufer).

Walter Kümmel was camp leader (Lagerleiter) at Eidelstedt. He had been in command of the approximately 500 Jewish women in the Wedel subcamp. In late 1933, Kümmel, as a 28-year-old, applied for admission to the General-SS (Allgemeine-SS). He was admitted in early 1934. In 1937 he joined the Nazi Party (NSDAP). He volunteered in April 1941 and received basic military training with the Waffen-SS. Due to health problems, Kümmel was at first deployed to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp guard battalion and, after a few months, then transferred as a telephone operator to the battalion's orderly room at Neuengamme. During his time at Neuengamme, Kümmel took part in two noncommissioned officer courses, receiving intensive military training.

His promotion to Unterscharführer on December 1, 1943, marked the end of his military training. He became



block leader at the “protective custody” camp at the Neuengamme main camp. After being promoted to the main camp’s 2nd roll-call leader, he was put in command of a bomb disposal squad consisting of prisoners from Neuengamme in February 1944. This squad was dispatched to Kiel. Following the dissolution of the squad in Kiel, Kümmel received orders to take command of the 500 female prisoners. The Jewish prisoners were under his command at both camps, Wedel and Eidelstedt. Following Germany’s defeat, the British arrested Kümmel. Together with 13 other former members of the Neuengamme staff, he was tried by the Superior British Military Court in Hamburg for manslaughter and mistreatment of Allied citizens and sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment. The court convicted Kümmel for his role as 2nd roll-call leader at Neuengamme, not for his role as leader of the Eidelstedt camp. Kümmel was released early from prison in 1952.

Only in 1970, the Hamburg State Attorney’s Office began to investigate Kümmel on suspicion of murder of two newly born children in the Eidelstedt subcamp. The testimony of former prisoners heavily incriminated Kümmel in the murder of the two children. The court, however, could not determine whether Kümmel personally killed the children or allowed them to be killed. Accordingly, the Hamburg regional court found him guilty as an accessory to murder on August 30, 1982. However, as the statute of limitations for accessory to murder for Nazi crimes applied, Kümmel was acquitted.

Female SS wardens guarded the female prisoners inside the camp. Retired customs officers provided security outside the camp. There are no files documenting the number and identities of the female SS guards at the camp. Survivors unanimously state, however, that the guards were particularly brutal. Personnel files indicate that about 20 customs officers watched over the camp in rotating shifts. They guarded the female prisoners both in Eidelstedt and in Wedel.

As already stated, the Jewish women were mostly employed to construct emergency housing for bombed-out railroad employee families. Supervised by skilled German tradesmen, the women had to build the houses from the foundations to the roof. In addition, they had to carry various building materials, such as cement, sand, small bricks, and stone beams, from the delivery point at the Eidelstedt railway station to the various building sites by small railway carts.

Toward the end of the war, several women from the Eidelstedt camp were deployed to remove debris after air raids in Hamburg and also to remove snow, particularly at the larger Hamburg railway stations. The women were taken to work in the inner city by means of a special tram.

Eidelstedt was probably evacuated on April 4, 1945. The women reached the “receiving camp” at Bergen-Belsen after a three-day odyssey. Those who managed to survive the stresses and strains were liberated by the British on April 15, 1945. As part of the evacuation of numerous camps in Germany during the last days of the war and after the evacuation of Eidelstedt’s Jewish prisoners, the camp was used again to intern female prisoners from camps at Beendorf, Hamburg-Wandsbek, and

Hamburg-Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll), all of which were women’s subcamps of Neuengamme.

**SOURCES** The following essays are the basis for this description of the Eidelstedt subcamp: Hans Ellger, “Die Häftlingsgruppe der Jüdinnen am Beispiel des Frauenaussenlagers Hamburg-Eidelstedt,” in *Häftlinge im KZ Neuengamme: Verfolgungserfahrungen, Häftlingssolidarität und nationale Bindung*, ed. KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme (Hamburg: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme, 1999), pp.144–157; and Ellger, “Ein Barackenlager am Friedrichshulder Weg: Ein Frauenaussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme,” in *Fischkistendorf Lurup: Siedlungsprojekte, Schrebergärten, Bauwagen und Lager von 1920 bis 1950*, ed. Anke Schulz (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag 2002), pp. 104–115. There are not any original sources verifying Eidelstedt’s exact dates of operation. Today, a memorial stone and a commemorative plaque at Randowstrasse in Hamburg-Lurup are a reminder of the camp’s existence.

The AG-NG holds transcripts of some interviews with female survivors who report on the history of the camp. Hans Ellger also conducted several interviews with former inmates of the Eidelstedt camp. Hedi Fried’s memoirs have been published: Hedi Fried, *Nachschlag für eine Gestorbene: Ein Leben bis Auschwitz und ein Leben danach* (Hamburg: Krämer, 1992). Further records are located at YV and AG-BB. The trial records of Walter Kümmel are held in the archives of the Hamburg Regional Court. They provide information about his career and the male customs officers at the Eidelstedt subcamp.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. Paula Hermann, “Unvergessliche Tage in Hamburg: Report form 1990,” AG-NG.

## HAMBURG-FINKENWERDER

In October 1944, a subcamp of Neuengamme was established in the Finkenwerder district of Hamburg. The Finkenwerder subcamp was 1 of over 15 Neuengamme subcamps in Hamburg and its surroundings and one of several subcamps attached to the Hamburg shipyards. In the aftermath of the destruction of large areas of Hamburg in late July 1943 through Allied air raids, commandos of inmates from Neuengamme were deployed throughout the city to clear rubble, to reconstruct buildings, and to search for and bury corpses. To lessen the inmates’ transportation time between the camp and work sites, satellite camps were created throughout Hamburg and its environs. In addition to clearing rubble from the streets, many of the subcamps also provided labor to private firms, including shipbuilding companies such as Blohm & Voss, Stülcken-Werft, and Deutsche Werft.

Nazi Party Provincial Chief (Gauleiter) Karl Kaufmann and head of the Armaments Commission (Rüstungskommission) Otto Wolff arranged for the introduction of concentration camp inmates as laborers in the Hamburg shipyards in

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late summer 1944. According to a report issued from a meeting of the Rüstungskommando in July 1944, private firms in Hamburg would be assigned 4,000 to 5,000 inmates from Neuengamme. Companies were to pay 6 Reichsmark (RM) for each worker per day, and the SS would supply meals for the prisoners, as well as guard personnel for inmates. Due to a marked increase in U-boat production in the latter half of 1944, coupled with a severe shortage of skilled workers, at least 2,000 inmates were allotted to the shipbuilding industry in Hamburg in August 1944.

In September 1944, Kaufmann recommended that around 1,000 inmates from Neuengamme be transported to Finkenwerder. Estimates of the number of inmates actually incarcerated in the Finkenwerder subcamp vary. Between 308 to 600 inmates were deported to Finkenwerder over its five- to six-month period of operation.<sup>1</sup> They were housed in barracks on the grounds of the shipyard. According to former inmates in the Finkenwerder camp, living conditions were terrible and overcrowded. The prisoners suffered constant beatings from the Kapos and SS guards.<sup>2</sup> Further research at the KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme, especially an examination of former prisoner reports, may yield additional details about living conditions within the camp.

The inmates were deported to Finkenwerder from the Neuengamme main camp and other subcamps, where they were imprisoned for various reasons including resistance activity, political affiliation, sexual orientation, religion, and other so-called crimes. They were all male. Most of the prisoners in the Finkenwerder subcamp were originally from the Soviet Union, Poland, and France. At least one transport of inmates arrived in Finkenwerder in late March 1945 from the Steinwerder subcamp in Hamburg; this transport included an unknown number of Hungarian Jews.<sup>3</sup>

The inmates in the Finkenwerder camp were used as laborers at the Deutsche Werft company, as well as at the nearby Reiherstieg shipyard. Inmates performed shipbuilding work and were employed as welders, metalworkers, and electricians. They also had to repair railway lines and clear rubble from the shipyards, as they were frequent targets of Allied bombing. During the air raids, some inmates were permitted to take shelter in a dry submarine dock, where they were beaten by the SS and often cut off from food and water for several days.<sup>4</sup> One attack at the end of December 1944 killed at least 91 inmates, and over 100 were wounded; 24 prisoners were reported missing. In late March 1945, another air raid resulted in the death of 180 inmates.

There is no specific information on the names or ranks of the guards in the Finkenwerder camp, and the name and rank of the commandant are unknown. However, a quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski on March 29, 1945, which details medical conditions in many of the Neuengamme subcamps, includes a list of SS-assigned doctors for each subcamp, as well as the number of prisoner doctors and number of SS guards in each camp. Dr. Hintzelmann oversaw medical treatment in Finkenwerder, and one prisoner doctor worked in the Finkenwerder infirmary. The report also listed that there were

45 SS guards in the camp during the period summarized in the report (December 26, 1944, to March 25, 1945).<sup>5</sup>

At the end of March or early April 1945, the Finkenwerder camp was evacuated to the subcamp Hamburg-Geilenberg (Dessauer Ufer), where the surviving inmates were briefly kept in overcrowded conditions.<sup>6</sup> From Dessauer Ufer, some of the inmates were evacuated to an overflow camp (*Auffanglager*) at the Sandbostel prisoner-of-war (POW) camp, and another group was deported to a ship in the Lübeck bay.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Finkenwerder subcamp. This entry builds predominantly upon the research of Max Andree, who compiled a series of essays for the Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte, titled *Konzentrationslager in Hamburg: Ansichten 1990* (Hamburg, 1990). This publication also includes a photograph (in 1990) of the former camp land. For further contextual information on the use of concentration camp inmates in the Hamburg shipbuilding industry, see also Ludwig Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," 1999, 2 (April 1995): 57–73, although this essay focuses mainly on the subcamp at Blohm & Voss. Another important secondary source of information on the Hamburg subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a reproduction of a quarterly report on numbers of inmates in the Finkenwerder camp (among others) by Trzebinski (March 29, 1945).

Primary sources on the Finkenwerder camp are equally scarce; in his essay, Ludwig Eiber has noted the usefulness and location of scant materials related to the Hamburg shipyard camps. The AG-NG contain reports from former inmates of the Finkenwerder camp. The StA-HH contains some files that pertain to the creation and dissolution of the subcamp (Aussenlager) system in Hamburg but contain little to no information about conditions within the camps.

The IGA/ZPA-B contains a small file on the Finkenwerder camp collected by the "Komitee ehemaliger politischer Gefangener." Finally, the HJMA contains thousands of reports from surviving Hungarian Jewish deportees that were recorded in 1945 and 1946 by the DEGOB. Several protocols describe conditions in the Deutsche Werft subcamp; see especially protocols 3484, 2990, 250, and 1950.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Max Andree, for MHG, has estimated between 308 to 600; while a quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski for the period between December 26, 1944, and March 25, 1945, lists 308 prisoners in the Finkenwerder camp (March 29, 1945). Original report, FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), pp. 123–126. The archives of the USHMM, RG-59.016M, Reel 5, also have a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167, with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos.

2. Protocol 3484 (G.W.), protocol 2990 (A.S.), protocol 250 (A.W.), and protocol 1950 (I.B. and K.B.), HJMA, DEGOB Protocols. All DEGOB protocols translated from Hungarian to English by historian Gábor Kádár.

3. Protocol 3484 (G.W.), protocol 2990 (A.S.), protocol 250 (A.W.), and protocol 1950 (I.B. and K.B.), HJMA, DEGOB Protocols.

4. Protocol 3484 (G.W.), protocol 250 (A.W.), and protocol 1950 (I.B. and K.B.), HJMA, DEGOB Protocols.

5. See translated version of quarterly report by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski, PRO, WO 235/167, reproduced in USHMM (RG-59.016M, Reel 5).

6. Protocol 1950 (I.B. and K.B.), HJMA, DEGOB Protocols.

## HAMBURG-FUHLSBÜTTEL

The Neuengamme Fuhlsbüttel subcamp existed from October 26, 1944, to February 14, 1945. The SS established the camp at the end of October 1944 in part of the Fuhlsbüttel concentration camp to temporarily hold male prisoners from the Hamburg-Geilenberg (Dessau Ufer) subcamp. The Dessau Ufer subcamp, which from the middle of September held around 2,000 men from the Soviet Union, Poland, France, the Netherlands, and Germany, had been largely destroyed during a bombing raid on the Hamburg port at the end of October 1944.<sup>1</sup> According to former prisoner Miron Dawidowitsch Tschernoglasow, “just about all those in the sick bay” at Dessau Ufer died during the bombing raid. The prisoners, who during the attack were working as part of a labor detachment, had to assemble that evening and were transported to Fuhlsbüttel, where they were accommodated in a building of the Fuhlsbüttel concentration camp.<sup>2</sup> According to Hermann Kaienburg and Ludwig Eiber, around 1,300 men were held in the Fuhlsbüttel subcamp.

The prisoners had to do a variety of work for the Geilenberg staff, including cleaning up at refineries and other fuel-producing installations. This crisis agency, which also decided on the allocation of concentration camp prisoners for work details, had been formed at the beginning of June 1944 under the command of Edmund Geilenberg, head of the Main Committee—Munitions in the Armaments Ministry. Its task was to keep fuel production going in the face of the air raids on the fuel industry. According to Kaienburg, the prisoners worked for companies such as Rhenania (Shell), Schindler, and Jung-Ölwerke, as well as the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways). The cleanup detachments were put under the control of Hamburg Generalbevollmächtigten für die Baubewirtschaftung (Hamburg Plenipotentiary for Construction) Wilhelm Tegeler. On February 15, 1945, the SS transferred the prisoners from the Fuhlsbüttel subcamp back to Dessau Ufer. They were then evacuated to Sandbostel at the beginning of April 1945.

**SOURCES** This essay is based mainly on research done by Hermann Kaienburg and Ludwig Eiber: Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn:

J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1997); Kaienburg, “*Vernichtung durch Arbeit*”: *Der Fall Neuengamme*, 2nd ed. (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1991); Ludwig Eiber, “Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften,” 1999 2 (1995): 57–73; Herbert Diercks, *Gedenkbuch “Kola-Fu”: Für die Opfer aus dem Konzentrationslager, Gestapogefängnis und KZ-Aussenlager Fuhlsbüttel* (Hamburg: KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme, 1987); as well as a report by survivor Miron Dawidowitsch Tschernoglasow (Odessa, 1984, trans. Horst Koop), which is held in the AG-NG.

Katharina Hering  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Miron Dawidowitsch Tschernoglasow, Odessa, 1984, AG-NG.

2. Ibid.

## HAMBURG-GEILENBERG (DESSAUER UFER) (MEN)

In the aftermath of the bombing destruction of large areas of Hamburg in late July 1943, inmates from the main Neuengamme concentration camp were deployed throughout the city to clear rubble, reconstruct bombed-out buildings, and bury corpses. To lessen the inmates’ transportation time between the camp and various work sites, several Neuengamme subcamps were established throughout Hamburg and its surrounding areas. On September 19, 1944, a subcamp for male inmates was created at a recently evacuated grain warehouse on Dessauer Ufer in the port of Hamburg. Prior to the arrival of the inmates, the warehouse had been used as a camp for over 1,000 Czech and Hungarian Jewish women who had been deported to Hamburg from Auschwitz II-Birkenau in July 1944 for forced labor. The Dessauer Ufer camp served as a central distribution camp for laborers to various work sites in Hamburg, and the women were evacuated in mid-September to camps at Hamburg-Sasel-Poppenbüttel, Wadel, and Hamburg-Neugraben.

Like the female inmates, the male prisoners in the Dessauer Ufer camp were used for forced labor under the Geilenberg Program, a plan initiated by the Reich Housing Commissar (Reichswohnungskommissar) to rebuild and clear rubble from Hamburg’s industrial areas after the destruction in the city caused by Allied air raids. The legal adviser to General Plenipotentiary for Building Management (Generalbevollmächtigter für die Baubewirtschaftung Senatssyndikus) Wilhelm Tegeler, Nazi Party Provincial Chief (Gauleiter) Karl Kaufmann, and head of the Armaments Commission (Rüstungskommission) Otto Wolff arranged for the introduction of concentration camp inmates to Hamburg industries, including the shipyards. The inmates worked for various firms, including Rhenania Ossag (Shell), Schindler, Jung-Ölwerke, and the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways).



They performed various kinds of work, such as clearing rubble, reconstructing bombed-out areas, and digging antitank trenches in Hittfeld.

According to several secondary sources, between 1,500 and 2,000 male inmates of various nationalities were deported from Neuengamme to Hamburg-Geilenberg in September 1944. In late October 1944, during an Allied air raid that destroyed parts of the camp, at least 150 prisoners were killed. Many inmates were evacuated to subcamps at the Fühlsbüttel prison and Spaldingstrasse in Hamburg following this air raid.<sup>1</sup> After the camp was repaired, inmates from Fühlsbüttel were brought back to the Dessauer Ufer camp on February 15, 1945. According to a quarterly report submitted by SS garrison doctor Standortarzt Trzebinski, 3,464 inmates were incarcerated in Hamburg-Geilenberg between December 26, 1944, and March 25, 1945.<sup>2</sup> However, this figure far exceeds any other source on the Dessauer Ufer camp. As the report covers the period during which the Dessauer Ufer camp was at least partially evacuated due to the October air raid, it is possible that the number refers to all commandos in the Geilenberg Program and thus may include numbers of inmates in both the women's and men's camp at Dessauer Ufer.

The inmates were imprisoned in Lagerhaus G, which was situated on the edge of a canal. There is no further information as to how this three-story warehouse was divided and used as a camp. According to Hedi Fried, who had been deported from Sighet to Auschwitz II-Birkenau and then "selected" for work and deported to Hamburg, the women arrived at the warehouse "and entered a big hall with gigantic windows overlooking the River Elbe. Beds were laid out in two tiers."<sup>3</sup> They endured roll calls each morning before being sent to work and were generally fed at the work sites on brief breaks from their long shifts. According to Fried, some of the work sites provided better meals than others (for example, the Schindler Wharf), and the labor, which included clearing rubble and digging trenches, was less strenuous at certain firms. According to historian Ludwig Eiber, the Hittfeld commando where inmates dug antitank trenches was particularly harsh, and the work and treatment from the guards resulted in many deaths and illnesses.

Detailed information about the commandant or guard staff of the Hamburg-Geilenberg men's camp is also lacking. According to a study conducted by Max Andree for the Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte (MHG), SS-Hauptscharführer Friedrich Wilhelm Kliem worked in the clerical office of the Dessauer Ufer subcamp and later became the commandant of Hamburg-Neugraben and Diago-Tiefstack subcamps, beginning in mid-October 1944. Therefore, his service in the men's camp at Geilenberg lasted for only one month before he was transferred. In addition to members of the SS, the camp was most likely guarded by customs officers (Zollbeamter) recruited specifically to oversee operations within the camps.

As the Western Front closed in, the Hamburg-Geilenberg men's camp was dissolved in April 1945. On April 14, the inmates were evacuated by train to either Bremervörder or Brillit, and then on foot to the receiving camp at Sandbostel. The evacuation

transport most likely lasted two days. There is little information about postwar trials in relation to the Hamburg-Geilenberg camp. Friedrich Wilhelm Kliem was tried by a British military tribunal in 1946 for crimes committed in Neugraben. He was sentenced to a 15-year prison term but was released in 1955.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources specifically on the Hamburg-Geilenberg men's satellite camp. This entry builds predominantly upon the research of Max Andree, who compiled a series of essays for the MHG, titled *Konzentrationslager in Hamburg: Ansichten 1990* (Hamburg: MHG Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur, 1990). This publication also includes a photograph (in 1990) of the land of the former camp. For further contextual information on the use of concentration camp inmates in Hamburg for the Geilenberg Program, see also Ludwig Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," 1999, 2 (April 1995) pp. 57–73; and Ludwig Eiber, "Das KZ-Aussenlager Blohm & Voss im Hamburger Hafen," in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1996). Another important secondary source of information on the Hamburg subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a reproduction of a quarterly report on numbers of inmates in the "Geilenberg Hamburg" camp (among others) by garrison doctor Trzebinski (March 29, 1945).

Primary source material on the Geilenberg men's camp at Dessauer Ufer is most likely stored at the AG-NG in Hamburg, which contains witness reports from the women's camp at the same location and which may provide insight into conditions within the camp in general. Likewise, see former Dessauer Ufer inmate Hedi Fried's memoir *The Road to Auschwitz: Fragments of a Life* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), which provides a description of life in the women's camp and at some of the work commandos. The Dessauer Ufer camp is briefly mentioned in the questioning of Hamburg base camp commander (Stützpunktleiter) Karl Wiedemann during his 1946 trial; see documentation of the Curiohaus-Prozess, PRO (London), WO 235/162–169, as reproduced in the archives of the USHMM, RG-59.016M, JAG, War Crimes Case Files. The original files at the PRO in London most likely hold documentation related to the trial of Friedrich Wilhelm Kliem. Information about Wilhelm Tegeler, the plenipotentiary of the construction program, is located in the ZdL-L, IV 404 AR.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Curiohaus-Prozess, PRO (London), WO 235/162–169, Examination of Karl Wiedemann by Dr. Lappenberg (WO 235/165), as reproduced in the archives of the USHMM, JAG's Office: War Crimes Case Files, Second World War, RG-59.016M (Reel 5).

2. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original



report). The archives of the USHMM (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also contain a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126.

3. Hedi Fried, *The Road to Auschwitz: Fragments of a Life* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), p. 114.

## HAMBURG-GEILENBERG (DESSAUER UFER) (WOMEN)

The Neuengamme subcamp for women Dessauer Ufer, Hamburg-Geilenberg, was located at the Hamburg city free port, on the southern bank of the North Elbe (an area later known as Saalenhafen). Jewish women were held prisoner in this camp from July until September 1944. They had been transported as forced laborers from Auschwitz to Hamburg in the course of the Geilenberg Program.

The disused granary G at Dessauer Ufer was made ready for the accommodation of the Jewish women probably in June 1944. Wilhelm Tegeler, syndic of the Hamburg city senate, was in charge of the prisoners' accommodation and their deployment as forced laborers. The roughly 1,500 women traveling from Auschwitz to Neuengamme arrived in northern Germany in two transports. According to Danuta Czech, the first group of around 1,000 Hungarian and Czech Jewish women left Auschwitz on July 14, 1944. The survivors recall that the journey lasted about two or three days. Thus, the women probably arrived at the Dessauer Ufer subcamp at the Hamburg harbor on July 16 or 17, 1944. Another group of around 500 Polish Jewish women followed, which probably arrived at the Dessauer Ufer subcamp in mid-August 1944.<sup>1</sup> The Polish inmates had been transported from the Łódź ghetto to Auschwitz and had there been selected for forced labor in the Third Reich. The Czech inmates had been incarcerated in the Theresienstadt ghetto for several years before they were transported to Auschwitz. The Hungarian women, then again, had been interned in various Hungarian ghettos since late March or early April 1944 before they arrived in Auschwitz in several transports.

In the framework of the Geilenberg Program, the female prisoners had to clean up the Hamburg harbor and restore the destroyed production facilities of the fuel industry. They were mostly deployed at oil refineries and storage depots heavily damaged during air raids in June 1944. Companies using the female forced laborers included the Rhenania Ossag (Shell), Ebano-Oehler, Schindler, and other companies at the Hamburg harbor. A survivor, Ruth Bondy, recalled the following: "Two days after we had arrived in Hamburg from Auschwitz in July 1944 . . . we—a work detachment of Jewish prisoner women in grey overalls made of jute—were taken by boat from the former tobacco storage depots at Dessauer Ufer, where we were accommodated, to clean up the Rhenania

refinery, which had been heavily damaged by Allied air raids."<sup>2</sup> According to Hedi Fried's memoirs:

Hamburg. Our train went via the railway station to the harbor where it stopped in front of gigantic warehouses. So this was our final destination. This was where our new life would begin, far away from the chimney's shadows. The sun was shining, the river glistening, when we were commanded to leave the train and get into the warehouse, which was to become our new home. We entered a large hall with gigantic windows, from where one could see the Elbe. There were bunk beds. . . . The bright hall was in stark contrast to our gloomy barracks in Auschwitz. We had left hell and arrived in heaven. We were given bread and coffee; coffee that actually tasted like coffee. Then I fell asleep. . . . I was awakened by a whistle and the roll call. Our first morning in our new prison gave us hope, even though the new routine was not that much different from the old one. . . . During the roll call we were separated into smaller groups. The rows of five became groups of 30 and were taken to the harbor. We got on boats, which tooted, released their lines and set on up the Elbe. If it had not been for the ruins on the banks, we could have believed that we were on summer holidays. None of us had ever been in a boat before. The water splashed on to our clothes, the wind brushed our cheeks as we stood holding hands at the railings. We reached our goal, Schindler's wharf, in about 30 minutes. . . . We had to remove bomb debris, dig dykes, carry cement sacks and form a long chain to pass bricks: entire bricks on one heap, broken bricks on another.<sup>3</sup>

The female prisoners probably remained at Dessauer Ufer until about mid-September 1944. Most likely, the 1,500 women were divided into three groups of about 500 each on September 13, 1944,<sup>4</sup> and taken to three other Neuengamme female subcamps—Wedel, Hamburg-Neugraben, and Hamburg-Sasel-Poppenbüttel. In mid-September 1944, male prisoners were interned in the Dessauer Ufer subcamp.

It is not known who was in command of the female subcamp at Dessauer Ufer. It is also unclear who was in charge of guarding the prisoners. According to survivors, discharged Wehrmacht soldiers and retired customs officers guarded the women. Information on whether there were also female SS guards in the camp is unavailable. In addition, sources are lacking that document the exact period of internment of the two female groups in the camp at the Hamburg free port.

**SOURCES** The following articles constitute the basis for this essay on the Dessauer Ufer women's subcamp: Rita Bake, Jutta Dalladas-Djemai, and Birgit Kiupel, *Frauen im Hamburger Hafen* (Hamburg: Christians, 1989), pp. 90–94; Ludwig Eiber, *KZ-System und Zwangsarbeit: Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme im Hamburger Hafen 1944/45* (Hamburg, 1988), especially pp.

45–47; Eiber, “Das KZ-Aussenlager Blohm & Voss im Hamburger Hafen,” in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen: Leske und Budrich, 1996), pp. 227–238; Kaienburg, *Das Konzentration Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Dietz, 1997); Ulrich Bauche, ed., *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945; Katalog zur ständigen Ausstellung im Dokumentenhaus der KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme; Aussenstelle des Museums für Hamburgische Geschichte*, 2nd ed. (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1991); and Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz–Birkenau 1939–1945* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1989), especially pp. 811, 817, 822.

The AG-NG holds interviews with and memoirs of survivors. These are the main source of information about the camp. Further information about the living and working conditions at the Dessauer Ufer subcamp can also be obtained at the AG-NG. In addition to accounts by Ruth Bondy and Hedi Fried, the memoirs of Lucille Eichengreen and Ruth Elias are available: Ruth Bondy, *Mehr Glück als Verstand: Eine Autobiographie* (Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1999); Hedi Fried, *Nachschlag für eine Gestorbene: Ein Leben bis Auschwitz und ein Leben danach* (Hamburg: Krämer, 1992); Lucille Eichengreen, *Von Asche zum Leben: Lebenserinnerungen* (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz, 1992); Ruth Elias, *Die Hoffnung erhielt mich am Leben: Mein Weg von Theresienstadt und Auschwitz nach Israel*, 7th ed. (Munich: Piper, 2000).

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. There are no documents on this transport. The Polish Jewish women inmates recall that they were still in Łódź in early August 1944. Thus, they could not have arrived in Hamburg before mid-August 1944.

2. Ruth Bondy, *Mehr Glück als Verstand: Eine Autobiographie* (Gerlingen: Bleicher, 1999), p. 135.

3. Hedi Fried, *Nachschlag für eine Gestorbene: Ein Leben bis Auschwitz und ein Leben danach* (Hamburg: Krämer, 1992), p. 118.

4. There are no longer any details on the transfers. According to personnel files of former customs officers and auxiliary customs officers, they commenced guarding female prisoners at the women's subcamps Hamburg-Neugraben, Hamburg-Sasel-Poppenbüttel, and Wedel on September 13, 1944. Thus, this date is considered the date the women were transferred. Copies of the files are located in the records of the preliminary proceedings of the State Attorney's Office at the Hamburg Regional Court against Walter Kümmel (2000 Js 19/77, vol. 4, p. 422.; vol. 10, p. 1569). This suspected transfer date is confirmed by the fact that male prisoners were interned in the Dessauer Ufer subcamp, probably on September 15, 1944.

## HAMBURG-HAMMERBROOK (BOMBENSUCHKOMMANDO)

After extensive destruction from air raids of large areas of Hamburg from July 24 to August 2, 1943, inmates from the Neuengamme concentration camp were deployed throughout

the city to clear rubble, reconstruct buildings, detonate unexploded bombs, and bury corpses. To lessen the inmates' transportation time between the camp and work sites, various subcamps affiliated with the main Neuengamme camp were established throughout Hamburg and its environs.

In mid-1944, 35 men were deployed to the Hammerbrook district of Hamburg to detonate unexploded bombs.<sup>1</sup> The inmates may have been housed in the former Brackdamm School, and the work commando existed here until at least March 25, 1945.

**SOURCES** The main secondary source of information is the Hammerbrook entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979). Although not always consistent with other sources, the ITS catalog provides information about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, and so on. There are few sources on the Hammerbrook Bombensuchkommando attached to Neuengamme. An important secondary source of information on the Hamburg subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a published reproduction of the quarterly report filed by the garrison doctor Trzebinski, as well as a listing of Neuengamme subcamps. See also Werner Johe, *Neuengamme. Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg* (Hamburg: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1982).

Although limited, primary documentation on the Hamburg-Hammerbrook Bombensuchkommando is most likely stored at the AG-NG in Hamburg.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTE

1. See entry for “Bombens Hamburg” in the quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). The archives of the USHMM, RG-59.016M, Reel 5, also contains a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126.

## HAMBURG-HAMMERBROOK (SPALDINGSTRASSE)

After extensive destruction from air raids of large areas of Hamburg from July 24 to August 2, 1943, inmates from the Neuengamme concentration camp were deployed throughout the city to clear rubble, reconstruct buildings, detonate unexploded bombs, and bury corpses. To lessen the inmates'

transportation time between the camp and work sites, various subcamps affiliated with the main Neuengamme camp were established throughout Hamburg and its environs. In October or November 1944, the SS established a subcamp in the St. Georgsburg apartment building at Spaldingstrasse 156/158 in the Hammerbrook section of Hamburg. Located less than 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) from the main train station, the Spaldingstrasse subcamp became the base from which all Hamburg subcamps were administered under the central leadership of SS-Obersturmbannführer Karl Wiedemann (September 1944–February 1945), followed by his successor SS-Obersturmbannführer Arnold Strippel.<sup>1</sup>

The Spaldingstrasse subcamp was the largest Hamburg subcamp of Neuengamme, with over 2,000 prisoners from October 1944 to April 1945. (According to a quarterly report filed by SS garrison doctor Trzebinski on March 29, 1945, there were 3,464 inmates in the camp from December 26, 1944, to March 25, 1945.)<sup>2</sup> The St. Georgsburg structure was only partially destroyed during the raids on Hamburg, and the eight-story building situated behind the courtyard was refurbished as a camp. The ground floor was reserved for the SS and commandant's quarters, and the second through sixth floors served as the inmates' living areas. The top floor was transformed into a makeshift infirmary. Roll calls were carried out in the courtyard between the two buildings of the St. Georgsburg.

Inmates imprisoned in the Spaldingstrasse subcamp represented many nationalities and had been incarcerated in Neuengamme for various reasons.<sup>3</sup> The Spaldingstrasse inmates included Soviet and Latvian prisoners of war (POWs) and members of the resistance from Poland, Belgium, France, and Denmark. Men rounded up during a counterresistance operation in the Dutch village of Putten were also incarcerated at Spaldingstrasse. According to former infirmary doctor Paul Lohéac, there were also Hungarian Jews in the camp, as well as Serbian and Czech prisoners. The exact dates of incoming transports to the camp are unknown. Lohéac has noted that a group of prisoners from the Dessauer Ufer commando arrived at Spaldingstrasse on April 15, 1945, shortly before the camp was evacuated. There were few German prisoners in the camp, and the SS appointed most of them as supervisors (Kapos) over the work and other daily activities of their fellow inmates.

The Spaldingstrasse inmates woke each day at four o'clock in the morning, ate a small breakfast with ersatz coffee, and gathered for roll call that often lasted for hours. The prisoners were then deployed, either on foot, by streetcar, or by train, to various work commandos in 12-hour shifts throughout Hamburg.<sup>4</sup> For example, inmates repaired railroad lines and telephone cables for the railroad and the postal service. One of their most dangerous work assignments was the detonation of unexploded bombs.<sup>5</sup> Other inmates were sent to clear rubble and bury corpses from the bombed-out Hamburg streets. Many prisoners sought to be selected for the "botanical garden commando," for which prisoners performed light gardening work and received a warm meal.

The commandant of the Spaldingstrasse camp was SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Weber. According to postwar

court testimonies of Wiedemann and a former guard in the camp, Bruno Hahn, the guard contingent consisted of naval and army officers as well as customs officials (Zollbeamter) specifically recruited to perform sentry duties within the camp. Hahn himself was a customs official and guard in the Spaldingstrasse camp.<sup>6</sup> Hahn also testified that under Wiedemann's supervision, the roll-call leader (Rapportführer) in the camp was SS officer Fegus. SS-Scharführer Kurt Otto Kemmerich was in charge of the Spaldingstrasse infirmary. Kemmerich had some medical training and supervised the infirmaries of all Neuengamme subcamps in Hamburg that fell under the jurisdiction of the base.<sup>7</sup> According to Paul Lohéac, the Kapo in charge of the infirmary was André Van Steenberghen, a Belgian prisoner.

Piecing together information gathered from the death books (*Sterbebücher*) kept by the civil registry offices in Hamburg, Neuengamme, and Ohlsdorf, as well as from the infirmary books (*Revierbücher*) from the Spaldingstrasse camp, historian Thomas Krause has estimated that at least 800 inmates died in the camp. Historian Ludwig Eiber has estimated that at least 528 deaths were registered in Spaldingstrasse by the end of December 1944, although the exact number of deaths is unknown. The death rate in the camp was high, especially during the winter months. Many inmates died from diseases such as typhus, tuberculosis, and dysentery, which spread easily because of the terrible sanitary conditions in the camp (for instance, the upper floors had no water). Inmates succumbed to exhaustion from harsh working conditions, hunger, and daily abuse meted out by the SS and Kapos on the marches to work sites, during work, and within the camp. The infirmary was constantly overcrowded, and the prisoner doctors had no means to care for exhausted and ill patients. The SS conducted selections periodically in the infirmary and transported inmates who were too weak and ill to work back to the Neuengamme main camp; however, there is no specific information about exactly how many prisoners were sent back. Bodies of prisoners who died during the day in the commandos or in the infirmary were heaped in a pile on the roll-call area and transported daily to Neuengamme and Ohlsdorf for burial or cremation. In some instances, inmates who were still alive were thrown onto the pile and taken for dead.

There is no record of organized resistance or escape attempts in the Spaldingstrasse camp; however, some inmates made efforts to ameliorate the miserable daily conditions. To supplement their meager food rations, inmates attempted to "organize" extra food when possible. Former inmate Stanislaw Sterkowicz reported that on the daily marches to the work sites inmates secretly searched through trash cans to find discarded remains of food when the columns made a brief pause.<sup>8</sup> According to Lohéac, in March 1945, at least one inmate escaped after convincing the guards that he needed to rest in the infirmary. The prisoner doctors were accused of assisting him, investigated by the SS, and received corporal punishment for their alleged collaboration. Lohéac also noted that the infirmary became a kind of "Franco-Belgian enclave," and the doctors attempted to



assist French and Belgian prisoners until the evacuation of the camp.

During an Allied air raid on Hamburg on April 14, 1945, several bombs struck the Spaldingstrasse camp. In the ensuing panic, two camp guards were killed as well as an unknown number of inmates. With the nearing of the front, the SS began to evacuate the subcamps in the Hamburg area. The first transport from the Spaldingstrasse camp left on April 13 or 14 and reached a provisionary satellite camp created near or attached to the Sandbostel POW camp three days later. The Sandbostel camp, including the surviving inmates from Spaldingstrasse, was liberated by British and Canadian troops on April 19, 1945.

There is little information about postwar trials of SS officers who guarded the Spaldingstrasse camp. It is also hard to know whether the commandant SS-Hauptsturmführer Weber was tried. Wiedemann was tried by a British military court in 1946. He was sentenced to a 15-year prison term, released in 1955, and died in 1968. A British military tribunal brought Kemmerich to trial in 1947. He was charged with the murder of a Polish national in the infirmary of the Hamburg-Sasel-Poppenbüttel concentration camp. Kemmerich was found not guilty.<sup>9</sup>

**SOURCES** Most of the information for this entry comes from the extensive analysis of the Spaldingstrasse camp by Thomas Krause, "St. Georgsburg. Das KZ-Spaldingstrasse," in *Kein Ort für anständige Leute: St. Georg, Geschichte und Gegenwart eines liebenswerten Stadtteils*, ed. Michael Joho (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1990). Paul Lohéac, a former prisoner doctor in the infirmary of the Spaldingstrasse camp (among other camps and prisons), published his memoir as *Un médecin français en déportation: Neuengamme et Kommandos* (Paris: Bonne Presse, 1949). Lohéac's memoir contains a detailed chapter on his experiences in the Spaldingstrasse camp. For references as to the number of deaths in the Spaldingstrasse camp, see Ludwig Eiber, "Das KZ-Aussenlager Blohm & Voss im Hamburger Hafen," in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1996). Eiber's essay "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," 1999, 2 (April 1995): 57–73, also describes the transfer of prisoners from Spaldingstrasse to the subcamp at Blohm & Voss (however, no date is given).

There are few primary sources on the Spaldingstrasse subcamp, and most of these are derived from Krause's research and essay noted above. The AG-NG contains infirmary reports and witness reports related to the Spaldingstrasse camp. Some information on the number of deaths in the camp was reconstructed by Krause from the death book kept by the civil registry offices in Hamburg, Neuengamme, and Ohlsdorf and from the Spaldingstrasse camp infirmary reports. A report from former Spaldingstrasse inmate Manfred Zichmann is published in Christoph Ernst and Ulrike Jensen, eds., *Als letztes starb die Hoffnung: Berichte von Überlebenden aus dem KZ Neuengamme* (Hamburg: Rasch und Röhring, 1989). For information related to the trials of Wiedemann and Kemmerich, see the trial documentation of the

Curiohaus-Prozess, PRO (London), WO 235/162–169, as reproduced in the archives of the USHMM, RG-59.016M, JAG, War Crimes Case Files. Finally, photographs of concentration camp prisoners removing corpses and clearing rubble in the Hammerbrook area of Hamburg are stored at the USHMPA, designation 59.935, WS 79113, 79114, 79115, although it is unclear whether these photos depict prisoners specifically from the Spaldingstrasse camp. The photos originate from the StA-HH, which may contain additional documentation on the Spaldingstrasse camp and the exact origin of the photos.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Curiohaus-Prozess, PRO (London), WO 235/162–169, Examination of Karl Wiedemann by Dr. Lappenberg (WO 235/165), as reproduced in the archives of the USHMM, RG-59.016M (Reel 5). (The proceedings do not mention Strippel; this information has been gathered from secondary sources on the camp.)

2. Original quarterly report, FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126. The archives of the USHMM (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also have a translated copy (from which this number is taken) reproduced from the PRO, WO 235/167, with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. [Secondary sources are contradictory and note that the number is closer to 2,000.]

3. Still to be confirmed after more research on the Geilenberg male camp: Although sources differ on the exact opening date of the camp, former commandant of the central administration Karl Wiedemann noted in his trial that the first group of prisoners to Spaldingstrasse were evacuated from Dessauer Ufer (Hamburg-Geilenberg) after it was bombed out in late October 1944 (some were sent to Spaldingstrasse, some to Hamburg-Fuhlsbüttel). The female contingent of prisoners at Dessauer Ufer was evacuated in September 1944 to Wedel, Hamburg-Neugraben, and Hamburg-Sasel-Poppenbüttel and replaced with male inmates—however, ITS dates the evacuation of the male camp to April 1945. It is possible that only some of the inmates from Dessauer Ufer were evacuated to the two camps in October 1944.

4. Manfred Zichmann's witness testimony in Christoph Ernst and Ulrike Jensen, eds., *Als letztes starb die Hoffnung: Berichte von Überlebenden aus dem KZ Neuengamme* (Hamburg: Rasch und Röhring, 1989), p. 91.

5. Ibid., pp. 91–93.

6. Trial proceedings against Karl Wiedemann, USHMM, RG-59.016M (Reel 5), p. 140, and questioning of witness Bruno Hahn by Major Stewart, same file, pp. 149–156.

7. Trial proceedings (Sasel II) against Kurt Otto Kemmerich (1947), JAG's Office: War Crimes Case Files, Second World War, USHMM, RG-59.016M (Reel 8).

8. Stanislaw Sterkowicz witness testimony, as quoted in Thomas Krause, "St. Georgsburg. Das KZ-Spaldingstrasse,"



in *Kein Ort für anständige Leute: St. Georg, Geschichte und Gegenwart eines liebenswerten Stadtteils*, ed. Michael Joho (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1990), pp. 95–96.

9. Trial proceedings (Sasel II) against Kurt Otto Kemmerich (1947), JAG's Office: War Crimes Case Files, Second World War, USHMMA, RG-59.016M (Reel 8).

## HAMBURG-LANGENHORN (HEIDBERG) (SS-KASERNE)

In the aftermath of air raids on Hamburg in late July 1943, inmates from the Neuengamme main camp were deployed throughout the city to clear debris, reconstruct buildings, and bury corpses. To decrease the inmates' transport time between the camp and various work sites, Neuengamme subcamps were established throughout Hamburg and its environs. In an SS barracks (SS-Kaserne) on Tangstedter Landstrasse in the Hamburg-Langenhorn district, the SS created a subcamp of Neuengamme. In addition to the SS-Kaserne subcamp, there was another subcamp in Hamburg-Langenhorn on Essener Strasse. In the latter, at least 500 Jewish women were interned for forced labor from September 1944 onward.

In the summer of 1942, some 60 inmates were transported to the SS barracks on Tangstedter Landstrasse. They came from the Neuengamme main camp and represented various nationalities; age; and prisoner groups, including political prisoners, "asocials," and so-called habitual criminals. The inmates were deployed to clear debris after air raids. In April 1945, 368 inmates evacuated from Neuengamme were temporarily interned in the barracks. The Langenhorn subcamp was evacuated to Schleswig-Holstein (the exact destination is unknown) on May 2, 1945. Some inmates may have been able to escape during evacuation.

Further information on living conditions within the subcamp, the demographics of the prisoners, the commandant or the guards, working conditions, and resistance is not available. In September 1945, the former SS barracks and concentration subcamp were transformed into the Heidberg General Hospital (*Allgemeines Krankenhaus Heidberg*). No information about postwar trials associated with the Langenhorn subcamp is available.

**SOURCES** Few primary or secondary sources on the Langenhorn camp exist. This entry builds predominantly upon the research of Max Andree, who compiled a series of essays for the MHG: Max Andree, *Konzentrationslager in Hamburg: Ansichten 1990; Ausstellung der Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur* (Hamburg: MHG, 1990). Additional information on the subcamps in Langenhorn can be found in Karl-Heinz Zietlow, *Unrecht nicht vergessen: 1933–1945; Zwangsarbeiter und KZ-Häftlinge in Hamburg-Langenhorn* (Hamburg: Selbstverlag, 1995). Another important secondary source of information on the Hamburg subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Dietz, 1997). It offers a broad analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps.

Primary source material on Langenhorn is scarce. Some documentation is most likely located at the AG-NG. This archive contains witness reports and other relevant documents that may provide additional insight into conditions inside the camp as well as on the camp administration.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## HAMBURG-LANGENHORN (OCHSENZOLL)

The Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll) subcamp operated as a subcamp of the Neuengamme concentration camp between September 1944 and the end of April or the beginning of May 1945. It was a camp solely for female prisoners. (The camp grounds were later to be found in Essen Strasse, Langenhorn, a suburb in north Hamburg, on the city's edge.)

As early as August 1942, a building application was lodged at the Hamburg City Planning Office for the construction of a camp consisting of barracks for East European male and female workers, on the grounds of Essen Strasse. The camp was quickly built and expanded in 1943. In the summer of 1944, part of the camp was set aside for the proposed subcamp of the Neuengamme concentration camp. This section of the camp was further expanded by the construction of two additional wooden barracks. The newly constructed camp consisted of two large prisoner barracks, a kitchen barracks together with a small infirmary, and a small storage room. The SS accommodation barracks was probably outside the camp directly next to the camp entrance.

Thanks to the Stutthof concentration camp commandant's Order No. 61, it is known when the female prisoners left the Stutthof concentration camp in the direction of north Germany. That surviving document states as follows:

According to FT [*Funktelegramm*, radio telegram] of the Head of Office Group D of the SS-Business Administration Main Office [WVHA] on 25.08.1944 and on 29.08.1944, 500 female Jewish prisoners are to be transferred from the Stutthof concentration camp to the Neuengamme concentration camp—Hamburg-Ochsenzoll. The names of the transferring prisoners have already been recorded and examined by the camp doctor. The head of administration is to ensure that the prisoners are correctly dressed. The prisoners will leave Stutthof for Tiegenhof at about 3.00 pm on 12.09.1944. The exact time of their departure will soon be ordered. The prisoners will leave Tiegenhof by rail in 7 carriages at 6.35 pm. The transport leader will be SS-Oberscharführer Redder of the 1st Company. He will have as support 9 men from the 1st Company and 6 men from the 2nd company. The head of administration has two days' supplies for both prisoners and guards. SS-Oberscharführer Redder has been ordered to hand the prisoners over at their destination. The hand-over is to be reported to me by telegram. SS-Oberscharführer Redder is to return to

Stutthof with the accompanying guards once he has successfully handed over the prisoners. Traveling papers are to be collected by SS-Oberscharführer Redder at the adjutant's office on 12.09.1944 at 12.00 pm.<sup>1</sup>

According to the survivors' recollections, the trip from Stutthof to Hamburg lasted three to four days. The documents that could exactly identify the arrival date no longer exist.

According to a report of the SS camp doctor, Dr. Alfred Trzebinski, dated March 29, 1945, 740 female prisoners were admitted to the subcamp Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll) on March 25, 1945.<sup>2</sup> It is most probable that in addition to the 500 Jewish women who arrived at the camp Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll) from Stutthof in September 1944, there was a further transport of about 250 women from the female concentration camp Ravensbrück at the beginning of March 1945. These women included so-called female criminal prisoners and Gypsies.

The nationalities of the Jewish inmates are known, thanks to the surviving WVHA prisoners' index cards.<sup>3</sup> According to the cards, the women were predominantly from Lithuania. Some were from Estonia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and also Germany. Prior to their incarceration in Stutthof and Neuengamme, many of them had been held in different ghettos such as Kaunas, Wilno, and Theresienstadt. From these ghettos they were transferred to concentration camps in the east, such as Vaivara or Riga-Kaiserwald, until most of them were deported from those camps during the course of 1944 to the concentration camp Stutthof.

The commandants of the Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll) camp remain unidentified. The survivors recall three camp commandants. According to their reports, there was a change in the camp command shortly before Christmas in 1944 and again in February 1945. In addition to the camp leadership, SS female guards were responsible for security within the camp. Male guards, some of them customs officials, were responsible for security outside the camp. Survivors' reports indicate that there were about 20 female guards and an unknown number of male guards.

The female prisoners of the Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll) camp were put to work in armaments production. They worked predominantly in a two-shift system, each shift of 12 hours for the Hanseatic firms Kettenwerk and Messap. The women had to produce mostly guns and ammunition, for example, flak grenades and bazookas, on metal-processing machines. Both prisoners of war (POWs) and German workers worked for both firms, and the concentration camp guards were careful to ensure that the Jewish prisoners did not make any contact with the other workers.

It is possible that a few of the female prisoners from the Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll) camp were also used for excavation work or gardening in the newly constructed project homes in the direct vicinity of the female subcamp. But firm evidence for this is unavailable.

The Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll) subcamp was probably evacuated on either April 3 or 4, 1945. After a three-day odyssey, the

women reached the "reception camp" Bergen-Belsen, where, if they survived the tribulations in that camp, they were freed by the British on April 15, 1945. Following the evacuation of the female prisoners, the external subcamp Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll), as part of the evacuation of countless camps in Germany in the last days of the war, was filled with female prisoners from Beendorf, also a subcamp of Neuengamme. These women were freed at the beginning of May 1945 by British soldiers.

**SOURCES** This article is based on the book by Karl-Heinz Zietlow, *Unrecht nicht vergessen: 1933–1945; Zwangsarbeiter und KZ-Häftlinge in Hamburg-Langenhorn* (Hamburg, 1995). On the Trzebinski report, see Werner Johe, *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg*, 3rd ed. (Hamburg, 1982).

A few interviews and memoirs from the female survivors about the history of the camp Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll) are to be found in AG-NG. The author interviewed a few survivors of this camp. Other accounts are to be found in YVA and AG-BB. Sima Skurkovitz published her memoirs under the title *Simas Lieder: Hoffnung und Trost in finsterner Nacht* (Jerusalem, 1993). Documents prepared by the architect Konstantin Gutschow, which are found in the StA-HH, provide information about the construction dates of the first barracks in Hamburg-Langenhorn. Copies of the concentration camp Stutthof commandant's order and the WVHA's prisoners' cards are to be found in AG-NG. Documents confirming the arrival date of the women in Hamburg or their departure at the beginning of April 1945 are just as unlikely to be found as documents regarding the female and male guards of the camp at Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll).

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. See Commandant's Order No. 61 of the Commandant of the Concentration Camp Stutthof on September 11, 1944, AG-NG, Best.: Lists and Transports to Neuengamme, NG 3.2.3.10. In addition to this order, there is also a transport list in which 100 Jewish women who were on this transport are mentioned by their names.

2. See the report by SS doctor Dr. Alfred Trzebinski, dated September 29, 1945, cited by Werner Johe in *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg*, 3rd ed. (Hamburg, 1982), p. 76.

3. See the prisoners' cards of the SS-WVHA, AG-NG.

## HAMBURG-NEUGRABEN

The Neuengamme/Hamburg-Neugraben subcamp is said to have existed between September 1944 and February 1945. It was a camp solely for females. It was located along what was later Falkenbergweg in the middle of the Neugraben Heath (Neugrabener Heide) on the southern edge of the city of Hamburg.

On this site just to the south of Falkenberg there had existed, probably since the end of the 1930s, a camp with 30 wooden barracks. At first German construction workers and

later prisoners of war (POWs) and forced laborers were accommodated here. In the summer of 1944, a small part of the camp was separated from the rest of the camp with fence posts and barbed wire. This area was to hold female prisoners from Neuengamme, while the rest of the camp continued to hold forced laborers and POWs.

The subcamp consisted of five barracks, two of which were used to accommodate the prisoners. In another two wooden barracks were located the camp kitchen, the sick bay, the washroom, and the toilets. A fifth, unfinished barracks also belonged to the camp.

It is most probable that the Neugraben women's camp was occupied by about 500 Czech Jews on September 13, 1944, since it was on this day that most customs officers, who were to guard the women, commenced their service at the camp. It is therefore assumed that the camp opened on the same day.

The Jewish women reached Neugraben from the Neuengamme subcamp (Dessauer Ufer), of Hamburg-Geilenberg where they had been brought from Auschwitz in the middle of July 1944. The Czech women were held in the so-called Family Camp in Auschwitz II-Birkenau, where they had been brought in December 1943 and May 1944 from the Theresienstadt ghetto.

The Neugraben camp for women was commanded by Friedrich-Wilhelm Kliem, who was born in 1896 in Paderborn. Kliem was drafted into the Wehrmacht as a noncommissioned officer on August 26, 1939. Because of his age, he was forced to end his service with the frontline troops on the Eastern Front in May 1944. On July 6, 1944, he was transferred to the Allgemeine-SS. While serving in the SS, he reached the rank of Hauptscharführer. At first Kliem worked in the office of the Dessauer Ufer subcamp. However, on October 18, 1944, he became commander of the female camp at Neugraben. Kliem replaced Untersturmführer Otto Schulz, who had been in command of the subcamp for a month since it had been established in September 1944.

Kliem was arrested in November 1945 and sentenced by the British War Crimes Court in Hamburg in November 1945 to 15 years' imprisonment for mistreating prisoners at the Neugraben subcamp. Kliem was released from Werl Prison in 1955 for good behavior.

The female prisoners in Hamburg-Neugraben were supervised inside the camp by female SS wardens and outside the camp by retired customs officers. According to Kliem, five female SS wardens were instructed to supervise the female prisoners inside the camp. One of them was Anneliese Kohlmann, who was born on March 23, 1921, in Hamburg. She joined the Nazi Party on April 1, 1940. On November 4, 1944, she was appointed senior warden in the Neugraben subcamp. In February 1945, she and the prisoners were transferred to the camp at Hamburg-Tiefstack, where she remained as senior warden until April 1945. She was arrested as early as April 17, 1945. On May 16, 1946, she was charged in Hamburg with mistreating prisoners. Kohlmann was found guilty on May 16, 1946, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. She died on September 17, 1977, at the age of 56.

According to the surviving personnel files, the custom officers or customs auxiliary officers, between 20 and 25 in number, were responsible for security outside the camp at Neugraben. They worked in changing shifts.

The survivors unanimously state that the female prisoners in Neugraben were used mostly for construction at the so-called Falkenberg Emergency Housing Estate. Under the leadership of German skilled tradesmen from the construction company Prien, Holst, and Weseloh, the women built a settlement for bombed-out Hamburg families who had been made homeless as a result of the heavy bombing raids on the city commencing in the summer of 1943, on the southern edge of Hamburg. Some of the prisoners dug the ground to lay water pipes or electricity cables. They also had to transport building materials such as cement, sand, and small building stones or steel beams from the delivery point not far from the railway station at Hamburg-Neugraben. This was done with the help of a specially laid mine-car system that had been installed at the construction site. However, in order to get the building materials to the building sites, a group of women first had to construct a few streets in the housing estate because the building lots had not yet been opened up.

Aside from helping to construct the estate, the women were used to manufacture concrete slabs and hollow bricks (Malo-Stein) for the companies Gizzi and Malo. The slabs and bricks were used in constructing the Falkenberg Emergency Housing Estate.

Toward the end of the war, the female prisoners were used to remove rubble from Hamburg, Neugraben, and Buxtehude, excavating tank traps to defend Hamburg, and removing snow in the Hamburg inner city. However, it remains unclear whether this work was done by the women from the subcamp at Neugraben or the camp at Tiefstack.

Most probably the women were transferred on February 18, 1945, from the Neugraben camp to Tiefstack.

**SOURCES** This depiction of the Neugraben subcamp is based on the article by Karl-Heinz Schultz, "Das KZ-Aussenlager Neugraben," in *Harburg: Von der Burg zur Industriestadt; Beiträge zur Geschichte Harburgs 1288–1938*, ed. Jürgen Ellermeyer, Klaus Richter, and Dirk Stegmann (Hamburg, 1988), pp. 493–503.

The AG-NG contains numerous interviews and memoirs of the female survivors. The author has conducted many interviews with the former prisoners. Other reports are to be found in YVA and AG-BB. Ruth Bondy has written about the camp in her book *Mehr Glück als Verstand: Eine Autobiographie* (Gerlingen, 1999); as has Hana Greenfield in *Von Kolin nach Jerusalem: Erinnerungen* (Hamburg, 1999). Some of the trial files relating to Friedrich-Wilhelm Kliem, which provide details about his life, are located in BA-K. The trial files for Anneliese Kohlmann are also located here. Files of the male guards are located in the investigation proceedings against Walter Kümmel (commander of the subcamp at Hamburg-Eidelstedt), which are held by the Hamburg State Court. There are no original sources that, for example, provide de-

tails about the period in which the camp operated or when the wooden barracks were constructed.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## **HAMBURG-ROTHENBURGSORT**

### **[AKA BULLENHUSER DAMM]**

The Neuengamme subcamp in the former high school at Bullenhuser Damm in the Hamburg suburb of Rothenburgsort existed from October 1, 1944, to April 21, 1945. The establishment of the camp was the result of a cooperative effort between the city of Hamburg and the SS enterprise German Earth and Stone Works (DESt). In September 1944, the Hamburg Gauleiter Kaufmann asked the SS to allocate concentration camp prisoners so that construction material could be extracted from rubble. A short time later, on October 12, 1944, the SS and the city of Hamburg agreed that concentration camp prisoners could be used to manufacture concrete blocks from the rubble for DESt.<sup>1</sup> The concentration camp prisoners and the SS guards were to be accommodated in the former high school at 92/94 Bullenhuser Damm in the bombed-out suburb of Rothenburgsort. The city of Hamburg put the school at the disposal of DESt, financed renovations to the building, and secured the area as a concentration camp. The city also undertook to supply the brick rubble and take out the concrete blocks. DESt, in return, was to carry out the production with the concentration camp prisoners. Office Group D of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) guaranteed to DESt the use of 1,000 concentration camp prisoners.

The first male prisoners arrived at Bullenhuser Damm in November or December 1944. They put the school buildings in order, removed rubble from the work grounds, and secured the site with a barbed-wire fence.<sup>2</sup> In January 1945, the city of Hamburg and DESt entered into a contract for the use of concentration camp prisoners at Bullenhuser Damm.<sup>3</sup> Historian Hermann Kaienburg stated that additional male prisoners arrived in the camp at the beginning of February. The prisoners stored the rubble to be used as construction material in a factory hall bordering the school grounds. In addition to the prisoners, there were some Scandinavian prisoners who, as a result of negotiations between Heinrich Himmler and the Swedish Red Cross representative Count Folke Bernadotte, were relocated from throughout Germany in March 1945 to Neuengamme. From there they were taken in April 1945 by the Red Cross in buses to Denmark. The SS established a medical center at Bullenhuser Damm at the beginning of 1945. Numerous disabled prisoners of the Neuengamme concentration camp were relocated to this center.

Details about the number of prisoners in Bullenhuser Damm vary. According to Danish historian Jørgen H. Barfod, there were in all 600 prisoners at Bullenhuser Damm.<sup>4</sup> This

number corresponds to the quarterly report of SS-Standortarzt Alfred Trzebinski made to the WVHA on March 29, 1945, which refers to 592 prisoners. Kaienburg, on the other hand, considers the numbers to be higher, especially when one takes into consideration the prisoners in the medical center and the Scandinavian prisoners. Kaienburg is of the opinion that there were at least 1,000 prisoners at Bullenhuser Damm.

The subcamp was under the command of SS-Unterscharführer Ewald Jauch. The SS evacuated the Bullenhuser Damm subcamp in April 1945.

Following the evacuation of the camp on April 20, 1945, the SS murdered 20 Jewish children and 28 adults in the cellars of the Bullenhuser Damm camp. The children, 10 boys and 10 girls, aged between 5 and 12 years, had been deported from Auschwitz to Neuengamme in November 1944. The SS physician Dr. Kurt Heissmeyer began conducting medical experiments with tuberculosis cells on the children in January 1945. Under strict secrecy, Heissmeyer had begun the experiments in June 1944 on concentration camp prisoners, including many Russian prisoners of war (POWs). Heissmeyer believed that he could develop a vaccine against tuberculosis. He infected the adults and children with tuberculosis cells. He then removed the lymph nodes from the armpits of the seriously ill victims, as he suspected that here he could find the vaccine against the disease. Heissmeyer concluded his medical experiments on the children in March 1945. For his crimes to be hidden, the children together with two Dutch nurses and two French doctors were hanged in the cellars of the evacuated subcamp on April 20, 1945. A few hours after the murder of the children, 24 Soviet POWs from the Spaldingstrasse subcamp were also executed in the former school.

Those responsible for the murders were the base commander (Stützpunktleiter) for all the Hamburg subcamps, Arnold Strippel, and the camp commander at Bullenhuser Damm, Jauch. The SS garrison physician in Neuengamme, Trzebinski, and SS-Unterscharführer Johann Frahm carried out the murders.

The British military court sentenced Trzebinski, Jauch, and Frahm to death in the Curio-Haus Trial from March to May 1946.<sup>5</sup> The former SS doctor Heissmeyer was arrested in December 1964 in Magdeburg in the German Democratic Republic and in June 1966 was sentenced to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity. Strippel was arrested in 1948 in Frankfurt am Main. He was sentenced in 1949 at a trial by jury to 21 life sentences for the murder of 21 Jewish prisoners in 1939 at the Buchenwald concentration camp. A Frankfurt court reduced the sentence in 1970 to 6 years. The reduction was justified on the basis that he had already spent 20 years in prison. He received compensation of 121,500 deutschemark (DM) for the "innocent prison time." The Hamburg State Prosecutor stopped investigations into the murder of the children at Bullenhuser Damm.

**SOURCES** The most important source on the history of the Bullenhuser Damm subcamp is Hermann Kaienburg's published dissertation on the Neuengamme concentration camp



*“Vernichtung durch Arbeit”: Der Fall Neuengamme*, 2nd ed. (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1991); as well as his general study *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1997). Research by journalist Günther Schwarberg was instrumental in ensuring that the murder of the children at Bullenhuser Damm was not forgotten: *Der SS-Arzt und die Kinder. Bericht über den Mord vom Bullenhuser Damm* (Hamburg: Gruner und Jahr, 1979); and *Der SS-Arzt und die Kinder vom Bullenhuser Damm* (1988; Göttingen: Steidl Verlag, 1997). Fritz Bringmann, a former prisoner orderly at Neuengamme, published a report on the murder of the children at Bullenhuser Damm, *Kindermord am Bullenhuserdamm* (Frankfurt am Main, 1978). An earlier account of the Bullenhuser Damm subcamp is by Danish historian Jørgen H. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne* (Copenhagen: Forlaget Zac, 1969), pp. 239–240.

References to the Bullenhuser Damm subcamp are found in a number of archives that are referred to by Hermann Kaienburg. The SS-Quarterly Report by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski dated March 29, 1945, is located in the bequest by Hans Schwarz that is held in FZH. The draft contract between the city of Hamburg and the DESt is located in BA, and the actual contract dated January 3, 1945, is located in StA-HH. Of fundamental importance (especially for the murder of the children at Bullenhuser Damm) are the files of the Third Neuengamme Trial by a British military court, which took place between March and May 1946 at the Curio Building in Hamburg. They are located in AG-NG. The investigation files are held at FZH.

Katharina Hering  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Draft Contract Hamburg-DESt and covering letter October 25, 1944 (BA NS, 3-1344).
2. Yearly Report of the DESt Neuengamme 1944 (Excerpt Point IVe, FZH in Hamburg 13-6-13); Affidavit Johann Frahm 2. May 1946 (Ng. 3rd Case, 1/96); Statement Ewald Jauch (Ng. 3rd Case, 1/44); Ewald Gondzik, Report 22. September 1945; Nachlass Hans Schwarz, FZH.
3. Contract January 13, 1945 (StA-HH, FBI 21-602-1/1).
4. Jørgen H. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne* (Copenhagen: Forlaget Zac, 1969), p. 239.
5. Neuengamme 3rd Case, 13-7-6-3, FZH.

## HAMBURG-SASEL-POPPENBÜTTEL

The Neuengamme subcamp at Hamburg-Sasel-Poppenbüttel most probably existed between September 1944 and the end of April or the beginning of May 1945. While it operated, it was a camp solely for women prisoners. It was situated not far from the Mellingburg Lock (Mellingburger Schleuse), between what was later to become Hohensasel Strasse and Saseler Mühlenweg, in the Hamburg suburb of Hamburg-Sasel.

The barracks camp at the Mellingburger Schleuse, which had previously held prisoners of war (POWs), consisted of several accommodation barracks for women, a kitchen barracks, a sick bay, a washroom, and toilets.

The Sasel-Poppenbüttel camp for women was probably occupied by 500 Polish Jewish female prisoners on September 13, 1944. This date is taken as the date the camp opened because most of the customs officials who were to guard the women commenced duty at the camp on September 13, 1944.

The prisoners had been sent from the Neuengamme/Hamburg-Geilenberg (Dessauer Ufer) subcamp for women to the camp at Sasel-Poppenbüttel. Before that they had been in Auschwitz and then sent to Dessauer Ufer in the middle of August 1944. Most of the Polish women were held for a short time in the so-called C Camp of Auschwitz II-Birkenau, arriving there in early August 1944. Prior to that they had been in the Łódź ghetto.

There were probably two camp leaders at Sasel-Poppenbüttel. Hauptmann Mercker was in charge for the first six weeks after the establishment of the camp. On November 1, 1944, Leonhard Stark took command. According to the British trial files, Stark was born on September 30, 1891. Before he joined the SS, reaching the rank of Oberscharführer, he had worked as a gardener. In 1946, he was sentenced by the British military court in Hamburg to 15 years in prison for war crimes.

The female prisoners at Sasel-Poppenbüttel were guarded inside the camp by female SS wardens. Outside the camp they were guarded by retired customs officials. There were about 25 female SS wardens in the camp. Some of them were charged together with Stark in 1946 before a British military court in Hamburg and sentenced to prison terms of between a few months and several years for mistreating prisoners. Those charged included Ursula Eberstein, Lieselotte Müller, Johanna Freund, Elfrieda Ignatowitz, Magdalena Roper, Ilse Sass, Sofie Wisch, Elisabeth Luth, Ida Römer, and Hildegard Lenz. According to some surviving personnel files, the number of male guards was about the same as the number of female guards. After the customs officials retired, they were forced to join the Waffen-SS and undertake guard duty. In rotating shifts they had to secure the external perimeters of the camp at Sasel-Poppenbüttel and accompany the prisoners to their various work sites, together with the female SS wardens.

The female prisoners were used in the first instance in the construction of emergency accommodations for bombed-out Hamburg families. They worked under the supervision of German tradesmen from the construction firms Möller, Kowal & Bruns, Wayss & Freytag, and Volkenreich, building houses at the “Plattenbüttel” settlement, as it was called by the local population. They built the houses from the foundation to the roof. They also pushed the building material on small mine cars to the storage facilities, under the supervision of civilian workers from the railway station at Poppenbüttel. According to former inhabitants of the houses, the prisoners constructed about 50 slab-built homes. Emergency housing was still being built at the end of the war, and in the first post-war year, work was continued by the owners of the houses.

About 50 women from the camp at Sasel-Poppenbüttel did not work directly in the construction of the Plattenbüttel housing estate but worked for the companies Möller, Kowal & Bruns in the so-called Beef Hall (Rinderhalle) in

the Heiligengeistfeld district of the inner city of Hamburg. Here the women had to grind the rubble, which was made into concrete slabs. The prisoners not only produced the slabs but were also responsible for transporting them to Poppenbüttel.

Some of the women who were originally to work on the construction of the emergency housing were also used to remove rubble from the Hamburg city area, as Hamburg continued to be bombed right up to the end of the war. The prisoners were taken daily, either by foot or on a special train, to the inner city of Hamburg to remove the rubble from the streets. Madeleine Schulps, a survivor of the camp, recalls the following: "From the middle of the winter we were itinerant workers. We never stayed at one place for too long. We always went where we were needed. . . . Driven on by the SS men we worked until we were exhausted. . . . We [were] required to remove the rubble from a foundry after a bombing raid. There was a large square there and most of the work was done in the open air. There were other workers besides our group—French and Russian prisoners of war. . . . It was strenuous working the whole day in the open in the cold weather. We did not have gloves and had to lift the cold heavy concrete blocks with our bare hands."<sup>1</sup>

The Sasel-Poppenbüttel subcamp was probably evacuated on April 7, 1945. After a two- or three-day odyssey, the women reached the holding camp at Bergen-Belsen, where, if they survived that camp, they were liberated by the British on April 15, 1945. As part of the evacuation of numerous camps in Germany in the last days of the war, the Sasel-Poppenbüttel subcamp after the evacuation of the Jewish prisoners was occupied by female prisoners from the subcamp at Beendorf and possibly the Hamburg female subcamps at Hamburg-Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll), both of which were Neuengamme female subcamps.

**SOURCES** The basis of this essay on the Sasel-Poppenbüttel camp are two studies by students at Gymnasium Oberalster: Gymnasium Oberalster, ed., *Geschichte eines Aussenlagers: KZ Sasel* (Hamburg, 1981); and *Lebenszeugnisse aus dem KZ Sasel* (Hamburg, 1998). Reference should also be made to Thomas Krause, *Gedenkstätte Plattenhaus Poppenbüttel: Geschichte des KZ-Aussenlagers Hamburg-Sasel* (Hamburg, 1990).

The AG-NG holds numerous interviews and memoirs of the female survivors of the camp at Sasel-Poppenbüttel. I have also conducted a number of interviews with former camp prisoners. Other reports are held in YVA and AG-BB. Lucille Eichengreen has published a report titled *Von Asche zum Leben: Lebenserinnerungen*, 2nd ed. (Hamburg, 1993). The British trial files are in BA-K and provide details on the female guards and the camp commander. Files on the male guards are held in the investigation files of Sta. Hamburg. They are now held in the LG-Hamburg. There are no original documents that, for example, provide details of the period that the camp at Sasel-Poppenbüttel existed or when the accommodation barracks were constructed.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. Report by Madeleine Schulps in Gymnasium Oberalster, ed., *Lebenszeugnisse aus dem KZ Sasel* (Hamburg, 1998), p. 43.

## HAMBURG-STEINWERDER (BLOHM & VOSS)

The decision to use concentration camp prisoners at the Hamburg shipyards of Blohm & Voss was made in August 1944 by the local Hamburg Business Committee (Wirtschaftsgremien). Shortly after that, the shipyard management made contact with a manager of the Drägerwerk in order to gain details of its experiences with concentration camp prisoners. Once the report was received, which was positive about the prisoners' labor, the most important owner of the shipyard, Rudolf Blohm, decided to house the prisoners in the Male-reigebäude (paint buildings) in the shipyards. This was after the shipyard's management had skeptically viewed the establishment of a camp.

At the beginning of October 1944, the first prisoners arrived at the shipyard: 68 prisoners in the first detachment were from the Alt-Garge subcamp, where they had been chosen by shipyard employees. On October 19, the manager of Machine Hall I at the shipyard, Dechow, inspected the Neuengamme concentration camp and chose another 84 prisoners. The detachment probably quickly reached its planned strength of 500 prisoners. However, the conditions in the camp meant that there were soon transports of sick prisoners back to the Neuengamme main camp. These prisoners were replaced with several transports from the Hamburg-Hammerbrook (Spaldingstrasse) subcamp.

Shortly after the war, a committee of former political prisoners compiled a list of 572 names of prisoners who worked at Blohm & Voss. The list then categorized the prisoners according to nationality, including 202 Poles, 201 Soviets, 45 French, 34 Belgians, 30 Dutch, 15 Yugoslavs, and 12 Germans.<sup>1</sup> All that is known about the prisoner-functionaries is that a German Polish Kapo was noted for his brutality. It is most likely that the few German prisoners had the key positions in the prisoner hierarchy. A survivor has stated that the camp elder was a German prisoner with a green triangle. According to another Soviet prisoner, a few German criminal prisoners, notorious for their violence, were once beaten by German Communist prisoners.<sup>2</sup> The commandant of the camp was SS-Oberscharführer Peitz. It is known that he often beat the prisoners with a rubber truncheon or set dogs on the prisoners. Security was largely provided for by naval infantrymen.

Some 1,500 square meters (16,146 square feet) in the former shipyard's paint building were available to accommodate the 500 prisoners. In justifying its actions after the war, a representative of the shipyard stated that the prisoners were given iron bed frames with sacks of straw and two woolen blankets per man. On the other hand, a wharf laborer stated that the prisoners had to sleep on a blanket on the floor. In the building's cel-

lar, there were washbasins and six showers. There were also toilets and a separated sick bay in the paint building.

There is a record of a dispute between Blohm and the Neuengamme commandant, Max Pauly, on the prisoners' food supply. Pauly had originally insisted that the paint building have its own kitchen, which would be operated by the camp administration. Rudolf Blohm successfully insisted that the prisoners be fed by the factory kitchen. However, this seems not to have brought any advantages to the prisoners. The food available to them was basically no different to the hunger rations in other subcamps. A Dutch prisoner described the situation as follows: "We were badly treated. There was insufficient food, inadequate breaks. . . . In the evening we were given a piece of bread and a little brown, warm water, occasionally coffee. The food came from the factory kitchen. When this was struck during a bombing raid there was for weeks no warm food."<sup>3</sup>

The concentration camp prisoners were put to work in the shipyard's Machine Hall I. Here they were assigned work by the Blohm & Voss foremen. Blohm wished to increase the hours worked to 69 per week, and even this was exceeded. At the end, the prisoners worked 72 hours a week. This meant that, after deducting breaks, the prisoners worked 11 hours a day from Monday to Saturday and 6 hours on Sunday. The hours worked each week by prisoners were at least 10 hours above that worked by other shipyard workers. The prisoners worked mainly in producing U-boat parts using a lathe, drilling, and assembly tools.<sup>4</sup> An advantage for the prisoners was the lack of resources. There was little sense in trying to work at breakneck speeds when the raw materials were unavailable.

Despite the relatively good working conditions inside a fairly dry building, sickness and death ruled in the Blohm & Voss subcamp. Rashes, ulcerated wounds, and dropsy were prevalent. The death rate for the production detachments was relatively high. In 1946, a shipyard laborer swore in a statutory declaration that a political prisoner had told him that 227 prisoners had died in the six months of the camp's existence.<sup>5</sup> The Neuengamme Memorial identified the names of 89 dead prisoners.<sup>6</sup> This number includes almost exclusively those prisoners who died in the subcamp and not those sick prisoners who were transported back to Neuengamme.

A report by the SS-Standortarzt, prepared shortly before the evacuation, reveals that of the originally healthy detachment only 419 prisoners were alive in the subcamp.<sup>7</sup> The shipyard management from the beginning of 1945 became increasingly concerned that Allied troops could find the prisoners in the shipyard and lobbied within the Hamburg Wirtschaftsgremien and the relevant SS offices for the timely evacuation of the prisoners. The prisoners of the Blohm & Voss camp were transported back to the Neuengamme main camp on April 12, 1945, before the arrival of Allied forces.

After the war, a committee of former prisoners collected information on the Blohm & Voss subcamp to use it, inter alia, for a trial by a British military court. The committee was supported by the shipyard's management, which collected statements from its employees. However, none of the members

of the shipyard management or the camp command were prosecuted.<sup>8</sup> The establishment of the Central Office for State Justice Administrations in Ludwigsburg (ZdL) and the search for information by the Hamburg State Prosecutor did not proceed beyond preliminary investigations.<sup>9</sup>

**SOURCES** The secondary sources used in this essay are Ludwig Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," 1999, 2 (1995): 57–73; and Andreas Meyerhoff, *Blohm und Voss im Dritten Reich: Eine Hamburger Grosswerft zwischen Geschäft und Politik* (Hamburg, 2001), pp. 484–490. Both authors disagree with the claim by Susanne Wiborg, in *Walter Blohm: Schiffe und Flugzeuge aus Hamburg* (Hamburg, 1993), p. 102, that the use of prisoners at the shipyard was a result of a decision by the Hauptausschuss Schiffbau. See also Ludwig Eiber, "Das KZ-Aussenlager Blohm & Voss im Hamburger Hafen," in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opfaden, 1996), pp. 227–238. On the guards, see p. 233 of the latter article. On the evacuation of this camp, see Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung. Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen, 2000), 2: 33.

Information on the subcamp is largely based on original Blohm & Voss files, which were handed over to the StA-HH. Another important source is the statements by the brothers Blohm as well as several company employees after the end of the war, which are held in the BA-BL (SAPMO, BY 5/V 279/66). A few statements by former prisoners are held in the archives of the Neuengamme Concentration Camp Memorial.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. As cited in Ludwig Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," 1999, 2 (1995): 64.
2. Report of the Soviet prisoner B., in AG-NG, 2.8./1247; Report M.T., in AG-NG, 2.8./1069.
3. Cited by Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," p. 63. Eiber notes that the kitchen ceased to operate from March 1945.
4. Report of Soviet prisoner M.T., in AG-NG, 2.8./1069.
5. As cited in Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," p. 65.
6. Datenbank, AG-NG.
7. See the "Vierteljährige Bericht des SS-Standortarztes vom 29. März 1945," in StA-N, KV-Anklage, 2169-PS.
8. As cited in Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," p. 67.
9. BA-L, ZdL 404 AR 1545/67, p. 57.

## HAMBURG-STEINWERDER (STÜLCKENWERFT)

In October 1944, a subcamp of Neuengamme was established in the Steinwerder district of Hamburg near Norderelbstrasse/Rohrweg. The Stülckenwerft subcamp was 1 of over 15 Neuen-



gamme subcamps in Hamburg and its surroundings and one of several subcamps attached to the Hamburg shipyards. In the aftermath of the destruction of large areas of Hamburg in late July 1943 from Allied air raids, commandos of inmates from Neuengamme were deployed throughout the city to clear rubble, reconstruct buildings, and bury corpses. To lessen the inmates' transportation time between the camp and work sites, subcamps were created throughout Hamburg and its surrounding districts. In addition to clearing rubble from the streets, many of the subcamps also provided labor to private firms, including shipbuilding companies such as Blohm & Voss, Stülcken-Werft (Stülckenwerft), and Deutsche Werft.

Nazi Party Provincial Chief (Gauleiter) Karl Kaufmann and head of the Armaments Commission (Rüstungskommission) Otto Wolff arranged for the introduction of concentration camp inmates as laborers in the Hamburg shipyards in late summer 1944. According to a report issued from a meeting of the armaments commando (Rüstungskommando) in July 1944, private firms in Hamburg would receive between 4,000 and 5,000 inmates from Neuengamme. Companies were to pay 6 Reichsmark (RM) for each worker per day, and the SS would supply meals for the prisoners, as well as guard personnel. Due to a marked increase in U-boat production in the latter half of 1944, coupled with a severe shortage of skilled workers, at least 2,000 inmates were allotted to the shipbuilding industry in Hamburg in August 1944. An agreement between the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) and Dr. May, the labor allocation group leader (Arbeitseinsatzgruppenleiter) for the Hamburg shipyards, authorized the use of concentration camp inmates as workers in the shipbuilding industry.

In October–November 1944, an unknown number of inmates were deported from Neuengamme to the Stülckenwerft factory in Steinwerder. Although various secondary sources have listed the opening date of the Stülckenwerft camp as October 1944, several former inmates including Laszlo Kohn, as well as testimonies from Hungarian former inmates given to the National Committee for Attending Deportees (DEGOB), have noted that they were deported to the camp on or around November 22, 1944.<sup>1</sup> The inmates were all male and had been deported from various countries, including Hungary, Holland, and Germany. According to a quarterly report submitted by SS garrison doctor Trzebinski, who oversaw medical treatment in the Neuengamme camp system, there were at least 230 inmates in the Stülckenwerft subcamp during the time period covered in the report from December 26, 1944, to March 25, 1945.<sup>2</sup> There is no further information about exact numbers, demographics, or rate of death of the inmates imprisoned in the camp.

The inmates were housed in a factory building on the grounds of the Stülckenwerft firm. According to one former inmate, who had been deported from Budapest to Neuengamme and from there to the Stülckenwerft subcamp, "The factory building was a proper brick building with stories; we were lodged on the highest, third floor. We were all kept in a big room, everybody had their own beds, there was central heating, electric lighting, so we could wash ourselves, [and]

everybody had their own dish and cutlery."<sup>3</sup> At some point during the camp's existence, during one of the many air raids, the building where the inmates were housed was hit, and the inmates were moved to the second floor.<sup>4</sup> The inmates were awakened at 5:00 A.M. every morning and were given little to no food before they were sent to work in the shipbuilding factory. In some cases, the Kapos stole food from the inmates.<sup>5</sup>

Inmates in the subcamp were employed in the ship construction factory at Stülckenwerft, where they performed electrical and welding work or cleared rubble after air raids. The prisoners made up about 10 percent of the Stülckenwerft staff, and during their work, German foremen (most likely Kapos, although this is unclear from the protocols or from secondary literature) supervised the inmates. According to one former inmate, the foremen were particularly cruel and beat the inmates constantly; some inmates were reported to have died from this brutal treatment.<sup>6</sup> The prisoners suffered constant bombardments during the 12-hour work shifts but were permitted to take shelter. Upon their return from work assignments, the inmates endured roll calls, which could last for hours.<sup>7</sup> From December 31 to March 22, 1945, female inmates from the Hamburg-Fuhlsbüttel camp were forced to clear rubble at Stülckenwerft. However, they were most likely not housed in the barracks there but rather in a labor education camp (*Arbeitserziehungslager*) in Wilhelmsburg.

There is no information about the guards in the Stülckenwerft camp or about the commandant of the camp. Like all other Neuengamme subcamps in Hamburg, they answered to and were administered by the Hamburg base, which was located at the Hamburg-Hammerbrook (Spaldingstrasse) subcamp, and fell under the leadership of SS-Obersturmbannführer Karl Wiedemann. According to a list of subcamps attached to the translation of Trzebinski's quarterly report (which includes the names of SS overseeing doctors, number of prisoners, and number of guards for each), the SS doctor who oversaw medical care at Stülckenwerft was Dr. Hintzelmann, and his assistant was SS-Rottenführer Joerss. The report also lists 44 guards at Stülckenwerft; however, there is no further information about their ranks or affiliations.<sup>8</sup>

Just prior to the dissolution of the camp in April 1945, a group of inmates from Stülckenwerft was most likely evacuated to barracks at the nearby Deutsche Werft in March 1945, where they were employed again in the clearing of rubble. Living conditions were terrible, and they suffered several air raids, which destroyed parts of the camp. Inmates transferred from Stülckenwerft at this time may have been housed in the subcamp barracks in Hamburg-Finkenwerder, the location for inmates deployed to work at the Deutsche Werft.<sup>9</sup>

With the nearing of the front, the subcamp at Stülckenwerft was evacuated on April 21, 1945. Some of the inmates may have been evacuated to Bremervörder or Brillit by train or on foot to the receiving camp at the Sandbostel prisoner-of-war camp.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Steinwerder (Stülckenwerft) subcamp. This entry builds predominantly upon the research of Max Andree, who com-



piled a series of essays for the MHG, titled *Konzentrationslager in Hamburg: Ansichten 1990* (Hamburg: MHG, Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur, 1990). This publication also includes a photograph (in 1990) of the former grounds of the camp. For further contextual information on the use of concentration camp inmates in the Hamburg shipbuilding industry, see also Ludwig Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," 1999, 2 (April 1995): 57–73, although this essay focuses mainly on the subcamp at Blohm & Voss. Another important secondary source of information on the Hamburg subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a reproduction of a quarterly report on numbers of inmates in the Stülckenwerft camp (among others) by the SS garrison doctor (Standortarzt) Trzebinski (March 29, 1945). For a broad history of the Stülckenwerft company (but no relevant information on the subcamp), see Ernst Hieke, *H.C. Stülcken Sohn: Ein deutsches Werfischicksal* (Hamburg: Hanseatischer Merkur, 1955). The two volumes of *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung*, ed. Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2000), contain some brief information about the evacuation of the Stülckenwerft subcamp.

Primary sources on the Stülckenwerft camp are scarce; in his essay, Ludwig Eiber has noted the usefulness and location of scant materials related to the Hamburg shipyard subcamps. The AG-NG contain reports from former inmates of the camp. The StA-HH has some files that pertain to the creation and dissolution of subcamps in Hamburg but contain little to no information about conditions within the camps. Finally, the HJMA contains thousands of DEGOB protocols from surviving Hungarian Jewish deportees taken in 1945 and 1946. Several protocols briefly describe conditions in the Stülckenwerft camp; see especially Protocols 3484, 250, and 1950. Others refer to Hamburg shipyards in general but give little specific information as to the location or name of the employing firm (Protocols 2990, 875, and 1492).

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. See report from former inmate Laszlo Kohn, AG-NG, as quoted in Max Andree, *Konzentrationslager in Hamburg: Ansichten 1990* (Hamburg: MHG, Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur, 1990), n.p. See also testimony of Hungarian inmates: HJMA, DEGOB Protocols, Protocol 3484 (G.W.); Protocol 250 (A.W.) (states November but no exact date); and Protocol 1950 (I.B. and K.B.). [All DEGOB protocols translated from Hungarian to English by Gábor Kádár.]

2. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). The archives of the USHMM, RG-59.016M, Reel 5, also contains a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Her-

mann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126.

3. Protocol 3484 (G.W.), HJMA, DEGOB Protocols.

4. Ibid.

5. Protocol 250 (A.W.), HJMA, DEGOB Protocols.

6. Protocol 3484 (G.W.), HJMA, DEGOB Protocols.

7. Protocol 250 (A.W.) and Protocol 1950 (I.B. and K.B.), HJMA, DEGOB Protocols.

8. Trzebinski report, p. 2 of attachment.

9. Protocol 3484 (G.W.), Protocol 250 (A.W.), Protocol 1950 (I.B. and K.B.), HJMA, DEGOB Protocols.

## HAMBURG-TIEFSTACK

The Hamburg-Tiefsack subcamp existed probably between the beginning of February and the end of March or beginning of April 1945. It was a subcamp of the Neuengamme concentration camp and during its short existence solely held female prisoners. It was located on a street known later as Andreas-Meyer Strasse, not far from Billwerder Cove in that part of Hamburg known as Billbrook.

According to workers of the optical factory Müller & Co., the camp comprised three wooden barracks. Two barracks were used to accommodate the prisoners, and the third served as a kitchen, canteen, and washroom. Within the enclosed area of the camp there was also a latrine and two bunkers.

Former employees of the optical factory, where some of the women were employed, have reported that most probably about 500 Czech Jewish female prisoners were admitted to the Tiefstack subcamp on February 6, 1945. They had been sent from the Hamburg-Neugraben subcamp for women.

Prior to their arrival at Neugraben, the Jewish women had been held in Hamburg-Geilenberg (Dessauer Ufer), also a subcamp of Neuengamme. They had been held there since the middle of July 1944 after they had arrived from the Auschwitz concentration camp. In Auschwitz II-Birkenau, the Czech Jewish female prisoners were held in the so-called Family Camp. They had been sent there from the Theresienstadt ghetto between December 1943 and May 1944.

The Tiefstack subcamp, like Neugraben, was under the command of Friedrich-Wilhelm Kliem, who was born in 1896 in Paderborn. Kliem was called up by the Wehrmacht on August 26, 1939, as a noncommissioned officer. Because of his age, he was recalled from active duty on the Eastern Front in May 1944. He was transferred to the Allgemeine-SS on July 6, 1944. In the SS he reached the rank of Hauptscharführer. Kliem worked in the office of the Neuengamme concentration camp's Dessauer Ufer subcamp until he was appointed commandant of Neugraben on October 18, 1944, and subsequently commandant of Tiefstack.

Kliem was arrested in November 1945. The British War Crimes Court found him guilty on July 3, 1946, of mistreating the camp prisoners in Neugraben and Tiefstack. He was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. Kliem was released from Werl Prison in 1955 for good behavior.

Female SS wardens guarded the prisoners inside the Tiefstack camp. Retired customs officers were responsible for external security. One can assume from the survivors' reports that the Neugraben camp guards were transferred in toto to the Tiefstack camp together with the prisoners. According to a statement by Kliem, five female SS wardens were responsible for guarding the female prisoners. One of the wardens was Anneliese Kohlmann, who was born on March 23, 1921, in Hamburg. She joined the Nazi Party on April 1, 1940. She worked as a tram conductor until the beginning of November 1944. On November 4, 1944, she became a warden at the Neugraben subcamp. In February 1945, she was transferred, together with the prisoners, to the Tiefstack camp, where she remained as a warden until the beginning of April 1945. She was arrested on April 17, 1945. On May 16, 1946, she was charged as a member of the Hamburg camp personnel with the mistreatment of the prisoners. Kohlmann was found guilty on May 16, 1946, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. She died on September 17, 1977, at the age of 56.

According to the surviving personnel records, there were probably between 20 and 25 customs officers or auxiliary customs officers who, in shifts, guarded the external perimeters of Tiefstack.

The optical factory workers stated that the female prisoners were put to work in the factory producing concrete slabs for emergency accommodation. During the last weeks of the war, some of the prisoners were put to work removing rubble in the southern parts of Hamburg and in Buxtehude, digging tank trenches for the defense of Hamburg, and removing snow from the inner city of Hamburg. However, it is unclear whether the women were first engaged in this work when they were in the Tiefstack subcamp or whether they had already been engaged in this work when they were still in the Neugraben camp.

Margit Hermann, a survivor, who as an inmate of Tiefstack was put to work in the removal of rubble, had the following to say in her memoirs:

In February 1945 we were transferred to another part of Hamburg, the industrial area Tiefstack. Countless air raids had transformed the city into a stone desert. . . . We worked in what can only be called a no man's land, in a people-less environment, between the ruins of burnt-out houses, threatened by the collapse of unsound walls. In the middle of the ruins a light railway had been laid down. It was our task to load the small tip-wagons with bricks. Our hands were grazed and bloody. We were hungry and frozen and dropping like flies. It was a work site difficult to survey and our guards carefully avoided the ruins so as to avoid injury. They lit a fire, warmed themselves and did not bother about us. . . . We worked at a snail's pace and hid behind the remaining walls which protected us from the wind. . . . The war had lasted too long; we were physically and spiritually demoralized and our chances of survival diminished from day to day.<sup>1</sup>

According to Kliem, the Tiefstack subcamp was destroyed during an Allied air raid on Hamburg at the end of March 1945, possibly on March 20, 1945. Following the destruction of the camp, the Jewish female prisoners were temporarily held on the grounds of the optical factory, before they were transported in the direction of Bergen-Belsen. One can only assume the women reached Bergen-Belsen at the beginning of April 1945, where, if they survived, they were freed by Allied troops on April 15, 1945.

**SOURCES** The Hamburg-Tiefstack subcamp is only incidentally mentioned in publications on the Neuengamme concentration camp. Some information is provided in an article by Karl-Heinz Schultz, "Das KZ-Aussenlager Neuengamme," in *Harburg: Von der Burg zur Industriestadt; Beiträge zur Geschichte Harburgs 1288–1938*, ed. Jürgen Ellermeyer, Klaus Richter, and Dirk Stegmann (Hamburg, 1988), pp. 493–503.

In AG-NG there are records of numerous interviews with and memoirs of female survivors, a few of which give some information about the Hamburg-Tiefstack camp. The author conducted many interviews with the former prisoners of the camp. Further records are to be found in YVA and AG-BB. Ruth Bondy published her recollections in a book titled *Mehr Glück als Verstand: Eine Autobiographie* (Gerlingen, 1999). This book contains some information on the camp. Margit Hermann's memoir is published as "Hamburger Intermezzo," *HarJb* 18 (1993): 175–192. Some of the court documents relating to the trial of Friedrich-Wilhelm Kliem, which give information about his career, are to be found in BA-K. These documents also provide information about the Hamburg-Tiefstack camp. The court documents relating to the trial of Anneliese Kohlmann are also in BA-K. Documents about the male guards are to be found in the preliminary proceedings against Walter Kümmel (camp commander of the subcamp Hamburg-Eidelstedt). These documents are kept in the archives of the Hamburg District Court. Original documents, which, for example, could provide information about the dates the camp was occupied or when the wooden barracks were erected, have not survived.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. Margit Hermann, "Hamburger Intermezzo," *HarJb* 18 (1993): 186.

## HAMBURG-WANDSBEK

The Hamburg-Wandsbek subcamp existed between the summer of 1944 and the beginning of May 1945. It was a subcamp of the Neuengamme concentration camp and during its existence solely held female prisoners. It was located at 162 Ahrensburger Strasse, close to the Tonndorf cemetery, in the Wandsbek part of Hamburg.

A section of the camp (two accommodation and wash barracks), used from the summer of 1944 as a Neuengamme subcamp, had been erected in June 1942 to accommodate 200

female forced laborers from Eastern Europe. These facilities were expanded in 1944 with the construction of a kitchen barracks, another two accommodation barracks, and barracks to house SS personnel. According to a letter by the Building Authority of the Tenth District of the city of Hamburg, approval was given on June 8, 1944, to expand the camp. The camp complex bordered directly on the Drägerwerke factory premises in Hamburg.

Studies of the Wandsbek subcamp, relying on prisoners' reports, have assumed that the approval to build at the beginning of June 1944 also marked the arrival of a minimum of 500 female prisoners from the Ravensbrück concentration camp. The SS-Business Administration Main Office's (WVHA) prisoner card index file kept in Oranienburg near Berlin, which has recently been discovered, contradicts this assumption. According to the prisoner index, following a selection in Ravensbrück, the women departed from that camp on August 31, 1944. Presumably they arrived in Hamburg on the following day.

The female prisoners were of different nationalities. The largest group probably was composed of Poles, Russians, and Ukrainians; Germans and Slovenians each constituted 10 percent of the women. In addition, there were Czech, Dutch, Belgian, French, and Hungarian women in Wandsbek. All the women were so-called political prisoners. Because the women offered some form of resistance to the German occupiers, they had been removed from their homelands and brought to Ravensbrück. Most of them arrived in Ravensbrück during the course of 1944, but some had arrived earlier.

So far as is known, Wandsbek had two camp leaders. Unterscharführer Johannes Heinrich Steenbock had responsibility for the camp from August 1944 to December 3, 1944. Steenbock joined the SS in October 1938. In 1941 he was appointed as a guard in the main Neuengamme camp, where he rose to the rank of Unterscharführer. In December 1944, Friedrich Wilhelm Hinz replaced Steenbock as commander of Wandsbek. He held this position probably until April 27, 1945. Hinz joined the Nazi Party on March 1, 1933. He joined the Wehrmacht in February 1940, serving at a Wehrmacht prison camp in Munster, which was operated by the Wehrmacht's military police (Feldgendarmarie). As with Steenbock, prior to service at the Wandsbek camp, Hinz had been a guard at the main Neuengamme camp.

Apart from the camp commandants, the prisoners were guarded in the camp by between 15 to 20 SS female wardens. About 10 retired customs officials were responsible for external security. The following SS female wardens are known: Johanna Edith Anders, Anita Brennfeld, Helga Bramberger, Loni Gutzeit, Adolphine Horn, Hildegard Knoedler, Georgina Pehlcke, Maria Schulz, Mrs. Wilke, Emmi Wanschura, Ursula Krahle, and Annemarie van der Huelst.

Proceedings against the Wandsbek guards took place before the British military court in Hamburg between May 15 and July 21, 1947. The proceedings were against the two camp commanders, Steenbock and Hinz, one of the male guards, Hermann Ludwig Dreier, and the SS female wardens Anders, Bramberger, and Knoedler. Steenbock, Dreier, and Anders were

found guilty of mistreating the prisoners and were sentenced to 20, 15, and 5 years in prison, respectively. Hinz, Bramberger, and Knoedler were acquitted because of lack of evidence.

The female prisoners in the Wandsbek camp worked in the Drägerwerke factory in two shifts, each of 12 hours. They produced gas masks and tubes for oxygen and diving equipment. The production in the Hamburg Drägerwerke factory was part of the so-called Brandt Equipment Program. The Nazi leadership feared a gas attack by the British in retaliation for the German attacks using the secret V-1 and V-2 weapons. By means of the Brandt Equipment Program, it aimed to accelerate the production of gas masks. The production of gas protection devices strongly declined until the end of 1943, and it was planned to dramatically increase the production at the beginning of 1944. Hitler's special representative, his personal physician Dr. Karl Brandt, was appointed to obtain sufficient supplies of the requisite raw materials, to procure additional labor, and to accelerate production. The Drägerwerke firm assumed a leading role in the production of the gas masks because in addition to its other products, it supplied firms with tools and machines to produce gas masks and managed the production process in other factories. Tanja Jaklic-Florjancic, a survivor, had the following to say about the production of the gas masks:

I was young and healthy and for that reason I was assigned to the heavy labor working at the presses. In the large hall there were several connected rows, each of six presses. In front of each press there was a long table with an iron plate and next to it was a vat filled with cold water. On the table were iron molds in the shape of faces, pieces of rubber, chalk (white, red and yellow), and gloves. Each prisoner operated two presses. I did the following: I placed a piece of rubber in the opening of the press, laid the iron mold on top and pressed them together by operating a lever on the press. At the high temperatures and after a certain period of time vulcanization took place. I then opened the press by hand, removed the hot mold, and put it in the water. I did the same work interchangeably on both presses in the prescribed manner. I then removed the rubber from the cooled mold. The rubber had the shape of a face and served as the foundation for the production of the gas mask. I had to examine every gas mask and mark a cross on it with the chalk: a white cross meant "good," yellow meant "repairs required" and red meant "reject." The last was often disastrous for us.<sup>1</sup>

During the last weeks of the war, as production in the Drägerwerke factory decreased and at the same time the attacks on the city of Hamburg increased, many prisoners were put to work removing rubble and constructing barricades in the center of Hamburg. Production in the Drägerwerke factory finally ceased at the end of April 1945.

Most of the female prisoners left the Wandsbek camp at the end of April or the beginning of May 1945. However, prior to



this, the camp was the final destination of many evacuation transports that took place in Germany during the last days of the war. Some of the female prisoners of the Beendorf camp, also part of the Neuengamme concentration camp, probably reached the Hamburg female subcamp on April 20, 1945.

Most of the female prisoners from Wandsbek were marched to the Hamburg railway station, Altona. Here the Swedish Red Cross took control and sent the women by train to Denmark. The remaining women from Wandsbek were sent to the Hamburg-Eidelstedt subcamp, where they were freed by a British tank unit on May 5, 1945.

**SOURCES** This article is based on the following publications about the Hamburg-Wandsbek camp: Stefan Romey, *Ein KZ in Wandsbek. Zwangsarbeit im Hamburger Drägerwerk* (Hamburg, 1994); and Bernhard Lorentz, *Industrieelite und Wirtschaftspolitik 1928–1950; Heinrich Dräger und das Drägerwerk* (Paderborn, 2001).

In AG-NG there are records of a few interviews with and memoirs of female survivors, which give details about the history of the Wandsbek camp. Some references are to be found at AG-R. Documents of architect Konstantin Gutschow, which give details about the construction dates of the first barracks in Wandsbek, are kept in StA-HH. British court records in BA-K provide information about the former guards and the camp commanders. A copy of the SS-WVHA prisoners' card index file, which at least verifies the date on which the female Ravensbrück prisoners departed for Hamburg, is to be found in AG-NG and AG-R. Documents that could provide details about the transport of the women at the end of April or the beginning of May 1945 have not survived.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. Report by Tanja Jaklic-Florjancic in 1985, quoted by Stefan Romey, *Ein KZ in Wandsbek. Zwangsarbeit im Hamburger Drägerwerk* (Hamburg, 1994), p. 69.

## HAMBURG-WILHELMSBURG

Several Neuengamme subcamps were created in Hamburg and its surrounding areas in the aftermath of severe damage caused by Allied bombing in late July 1943. Inmates from the main Neuengamme camp were deployed throughout the city to perform clearing work, to rebuild bombed-out areas, and to search for bodies. To lessen transportation time between the main camp and the work sites, several subcamps were established at or near work sites, including at various factories and firms such as the Hamburg shipyards as well as the railroad.

The accelerated effort to rebuild Hamburg industrial and living areas fell under the Geilenberg Program, a plan initiated by the Reich Housing Commissar (Reichswohnungskommissar) to enable further wartime production. The Senate Attorney for the General Plenipotentiary for Construction Management (Generalbevollmächtigter für die Baubewirt-

schaftung Senatssyndikus) Wilhelm Tegeler, Nazi Party Provincial Chief (Gauleiter) Karl Kaufmann, and head of the Armaments Commission (Rüstungskommission) Otto Wolff arranged with the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) for the use of concentration camp inmates in the Geilenberg Program. According to the stipulations of the plan, a Neuengamme subcamp was created in the Wilhelmsburg district of Hamburg on October 12, 1944.

Between October 12, 1944, and April 1945, 100 to 300 male inmates were imprisoned in the Wilhelmsburg subcamp. The inmates were deported to Hamburg-Wilhelmsburg from Neuengamme and represented various nationalities, ages, and prisoner groups, including political prisoners, "asocials," so-called professional criminals, and others. According to a quarterly report submitted by SS garrison doctor (Standortarzt) Trzebinski on March 29, 1945, 84 inmates were imprisoned in the "Jung Wilhelmsburg" camp between December 26, 1944, and March 25, 1945.<sup>1</sup> There is no further demographic information about the prisoners in Wilhelmsburg or exact numbers of prisoners on incoming or outgoing deportations.

The subcamp in Wilhelmsburg was located on Witternstrasse 14/16. The inmates in Wilhelmsburg worked for Jung Mineralöl-Werke and Schindler Ölfabrik. Additional guarded commandos of prisoner workers were deployed to Wilhelmsburger Bleiwerk and Firma Dittmers (both located on Witternstrasse), Firma Frank, and the Wilhelmsburg Bahnhof.

There is no information about the commandant of the Wilhelmsburg camp or the guard staff. According to an attachment to the copy of Trzebinski's quarterly report stored in the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), the SS doctor who inspected the Wilhelmsburg infirmary was Dr. Spieler. SS-Unterscharführer Genth assisted him.

The Wilhelmsburg subcamp was evacuated in April 1945; the precise date is unknown. Immediately following the end of the war, the occupying British forces took over Jung Mineralöl-Werke.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources specifically pertaining to the Hamburg-Wilhelmsburg camp. This entry builds predominantly upon the research of Max Andree, who compiled a series of essays for the MHG titled *Konzentrationslager in Hamburg: Ansichten 1990* (Hamburg: MHG, Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur, 1990). This publication also includes a photograph (from 1990) of the former camp land. For other specific, although brief, information on the Wilhelmsburg camp, see Klaus-Dieter Brüggemann et al., *Die Anderen: Widerstand und Verfolgung, in Harburg und Wilhelmsburg, Zeugnisse und Berichte 1933–1945* (Hamburg: VVN, Landesverband Hamburg, 1984). Further contextual information on the use of concentration camp inmates in Hamburg for the Geilenberg Program can be found in Ludwig Eiber, "Aussenlager des KZ Neuengamme auf den Hamburger Werften," 1999, 2 (April 1995): 57–73; and Eiber's "Das KZ-Aussenlager Blohm & Voss im Hamburger Hafen," in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1996). Another important secondary source of information on the Hamburg



subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a reproduction of a quarterly report on numbers of inmates in the Jung Wilhelmsburg camp (among others) by Trzebinski (March 29, 1945).

Primary documentation on the Wilhelmsburg camp is scarce. Some relevant materials may be stored at the AG-NG, which contains witness reports, including that of the former inmate Victor Baeyens, as well as other files related to Neuengamme and its subcamps. The StA-HH has some files related to the creation and dissolution of subcamps in Hamburg, but they contain little to no information about conditions within the camps. A copy of the Trzebinski report, originally filed at the FZH (File Hans Schwarz), is stored in the archives of the USHMM, JAG War Crimes Case Files, Second World War, RG-59.016M (Reel 5).

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTE

1. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). The archives of the USHMM (JAG, War Crimes Case Files, Second World War, RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also contains a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126.

## HANNOVER-AHLEM

At the end of November 1944, SS-Untersturmführer Otto Harder received orders to move his camp from Hannover-Stöcken at the Continental Gummiwerke factory to the nearby town of Ahlem. Prior to the official transfer of the prisoners from Stöcken, Harder sent a group of 100 inmates under the supervision of SS-Rottenführer Wilhelm Damann to prepare the site. The camp was created to supply prisoners for labor to the nearby asphalt tunnels, which were to be cleared to accommodate the underground, accelerated construction of aircraft and panzer parts for Continental Gummiwerke and Maschinenfabrik Niedersachsen Hannover (MNH). This program came under the jurisdiction of the “Special Staff” (Sonderstab) of SS Hans Kammler. About 850 inmates were marched from Stöcken to Hannover-Ahlem on November 30, 1944.

Removed from residential areas, the Ahlem subcamp was surrounded by electrified barbed-wire fencing. Four watchtowers flanked the camp’s perimeter, and the SS barracks stood outside the entrance of the camp. There were five barracks in total in the camp. The only stone building had toilets, washbasins, and showers, although the plumbing system did not function. Instead, the prisoners used a centrally located ditch near the roll-call area as a “latrine.” Near the

stone building stood the barracks for the laundry and infirmary. The kitchen building also had living quarters.

The prisoners’ living quarters had narrow, two- and three-tiered bunks. Often two inmates slept on one straw mattress for lack of space. Each barracks had two small stoves, although fuel was seldom available. Typically, the inmates were awakened at 4:00 A.M., spent an hour cleaning the barracks, and then received a sparse breakfast. Next they endured morning roll call, standing outside for long periods during harsh weather. The Kapos meted out punishments and beatings arbitrarily throughout the morning, the entire work period, the evening roll call, and at mealtimes. Kapos beat the prisoners into submission with shovels. Their beatings sometimes resulted in death.<sup>1</sup>

The inmates in Ahlem were marched to work daily to the asphalt tunnels; they worked underground in narrow pathways that were damp, cold, and filled with water. According to one former inmate, in one instance an elevator that transported materials to the surface had been destroyed during a bombing, “so [the excavated material] was piled and closed [off] the air, thus we could hardly breathe.”<sup>2</sup> The inmates had to break apart boulders with hammers and pickaxes, and for larger impasses, they used dynamite to blast through the rock. They loaded the debris onto trucks and hauled it away. Working conditions were dangerous. According to Benjamin Sieradzki, an inmate who survived the Ahlem camp, “People committed suicide in the tunnel, and we had to carry them out on wooden boards.” Sieradzki witnessed the death of his work partner who was flattened by falling rock.<sup>3</sup>

Although the inmates initially worked in three 8-hour shifts, they soon were divided into two 12-hour shifts. The prisoners alternated day shifts and night shifts each week. The Kapos replaced the SS once the inmates entered the underground tunnels. The only chance the inmates had of escaping the Kapos’ cruelty was to remain as inconspicuous as possible, although this did not always exempt them from “punishment.”



A German Red Cross worker administers medicine to a Polish survivor of the Hannover-Ahlem subcamp of Neuengamme, April 11, 1945. USHMM WS #07600, COURTESY OF NARA

In addition to work in the asphalt tunnels, some inmates worked within the camp itself. Kitchen duty was the most coveted position because of the possibility of obtaining extra food. Other inmates worked in the SS laundry, as carpenters performing maintenance work, or as tailors repairing SS uniforms.

The prisoners in Ahlem were initially all male Jews, predominantly Polish, who had been transported from Auschwitz II-Birkenau to Stöcken, and from Stöcken to Ahlem. As the rate of death increased due to the harsh conditions and lack of food, others, from Russia, Poland, Denmark, Netherlands, France, and Latvia, were brought in to replace the original transport. By December 1944, about 25 of the initial larger transport of 850 had died. In January 1945, the commandant of Neuengamme, Max Pauly, visited Ahlem, and about 250 to 350 weak inmates were deported to Neuengamme; in exchange, some 300 to 350 inmates of various nationalities were transported to the camp. On March 26, 1945, a final group of about 200 to 250 prisoners, mostly Hungarian Jews, were marched into Ahlem from the Hildesheim camp.<sup>4</sup> The exact total number of prisoner deaths in Ahlem is difficult to ascertain; historian Christoph Gutmann has determined that over 200 of the first large transport from November 30, 1944, died. Historian Hermann Kaienburg has estimated that between 230 and 850 inmates died in total in Ahlem.

As in Hannover-Stöcken (Continental), SS-Untersturmführer Harder was the commandant of the Ahlem camp. "Tull" Harder was a celebrated soccer player prior to his entry into the Nazi Party in 1932, the SS in 1933, and his service as a guard in the Sachsenhausen camp. He requested reassignment to the Neuengamme camp in 1939 and took over the Hannover-Stöcken camp in August 1944. In early March 1945, he was transferred to another camp; his replacement was a Wehrmacht captain named "Dirks."<sup>5</sup>

Most of the SS who served under Harder in Ahlem were sentries; a few performed administrative duties in the camp. SS-Oberscharführer Hans Harden supervised the guards at their posts and conducted roll calls. SS-Rottenführer Damann was Harden's assistant and patrolled the camp with his dog. He received daily reports from the senior camp inmate (Lagerältester) Johann Heinrich Wexler on prisoner deaths and illnesses. Other inmates appointed to positions within the camp were the block elders (Blockälteste) Hans Deckert and Ferdinand Grosse. Heinrich Lindner (SS rank unknown) ran the SS canteen and distributed the guards' rations, and Peter Fuchs (SS rank unknown) supervised the kitchen. One SS guard, the Czech-born Stefan Streit (nicknamed "Palästina") was especially known for his cruelty.

There were few escape attempts from Ahlem. According to Sieradzki, some of the Russian inmates who had been transported into the camp as "replacements" escaped the camp by throwing blankets over the barbed-wire fence and scaling it at night. Sieradzki recalled that during roll call the following day the other inmates were told that the escapees had been captured and hanged.<sup>6</sup> Other inmates escaped during the evacuation of the camp.<sup>7</sup>

In early April 1945, the SS prepared to dissolve the camp. They compiled lists of incapacitated prisoners, and on April 6, they supervised a group of about 600 inmates as they marched out of the camp toward Bergen-Belsen. Those remaining prisoners were locked inside the camp.<sup>8</sup> Two German Red Cross workers, Karl Bade and Ernst Koch, entered Ahlem on the evening of April 6 and attempted to collect food and clothing for the prisoners. On April 7, 1945, an SS guard and two civilians returned to the camp in a truck to gather about 18 inmates. According to David Klipp, who was among those taken away, the officer was supposed to deliver them to a location to be executed but instead released and abandoned the prisoners.<sup>9</sup>

On April 10, 1945, the 335th Regiment of the 84th Infantry Division of the U.S. Army arrived at Ahlem and attempted to assist the surviving inmates, many of whom died in the following weeks from tuberculosis and other conditions. In April–May 1947, a British military tribunal in Hamburg tried several of the Ahlem guards and Kapos. Otto Harder was convicted and sentenced to 15 years in prison; Wilhelm Damann and Stefan Streit were sentenced to death. Harden was sentenced to a 1-year imprisonment. Ferdinand Grosse was sentenced to death and executed.<sup>10</sup> Camp elder Wexler, tried in 1975–1976 by the regional court of Hannover, was sentenced to life imprisonment. The sentence was changed to 15 years, but he was released in 1982. Wexler died in 1985.

**SOURCES** There are several primary and secondary sources that contain detailed information about the Hannover-Ahlem subcamp of Neuengamme. Most of the information for this entry builds upon the research of Christoph Gutmann's "KZ Ahlem: Eine unterirdische Fabrik entsteht" in the extensive, two-volume study of concentration camp prisoner labor in Hannover by Rainer Fröbe et al., *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Hildesheim: Verlag August Lax, 1985). Another extensive resource on the Ahlem camp and vital to this entry is Janet Anschütz and Irmtraud Heike, *"Wir wollten Gefühle sichtbar werden lassen" Bürger gestalten ein Mahnmal für das KZ Ahlem* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2004). This text documents the creation of a memorial at Ahlem but also includes an exhaustive list of archival resources on the camp, as well as some witness reports. Another important secondary source of information on the Hannover subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and some specific information about the Ahlem subcamp, including an account by former inmate Moritz Widawski as well as a reproduction of a quarterly report on numbers of inmates in the Ahlem camp (among others) by SS garrison doctor (Standortarzt) Trzebinski (March 29, 1945). For information about the U.S. military's encounter of the camp, see Theodore Draper, *The 84th Infantry Division in the Battle of Germany, November 1944–May 1945* (New York, 1946). Analysis of the trials of former SS guards and Kapos in Ahlem can be found in "Zur Nachkriegsgeschichte der hannoverschen Konzentrationslager," in Fröbe et al., *Konzentrationslager in Hannover*, pp. 573–574.

Several archives and repositories contain materials relevant to the history of the Hannover-Ahlem subcamp, and both Gutmann's work and Anschütz and Heike's texts make extensive use of these materials. Documentation related to the trials of Harder and the other guards from the Ahlem camp can be found at the PRO (London) under the JAG's Office WO 235/348. Harder was called as a witness in the trial of Neuengamme commandant Max Pauly (WO 235/163), and some information on Ahlem and Hannover-Stöcken at Continental Gummiwerke is also provided here. The WO files are copied in part at the USHMMA, "JAG's Office, War Crimes Case Files, Second World War," RG-59.019M. Information about Ahlem originating from the trial against camp elder Johann Heinrich Wexler is stored at the AStLG-H (11 Ks 1/74). For business reports and other information related to the asphalt tunnels in Ahlem, see the BA-K, R 7/1185 and R 7/1217. For personal accounts of life in the Ahlem camp, see the oral history conducted with David Klipp, USHMMA, RG-50.030\*0345, as well as the collection of Vernon Tott, USHMMA, Acc.1997 A0287. Tott's collection also includes a series of black-and-white photographs of the Ahlem camp at the time of the liberation. Another group of materials from a liberator of the Ahlem camp is in the collection of Jennifer Orth and Dr. William Hagood Jr., including testimony about the U.S. liberation of the camp, photographs, and cartoons drawn of Ahlem by Dutch former inmate Jan Dirk van Exter. Finally, the HJMA contains thousands of reports from surviving Hungarian Jewish deportees taken in 1945 and 1946 by the DEGOB. Several protocols describe conditions in the Ahlem camp; see especially Protocols 1693, 509, and 1964. A series of 25 photos of the Ahlem camp at the time of liberation is also located in the USHMMPA, designation 53.495; these photos are stills from a short film taken by the U.S. 168th Signal Corps, stored at NARA: NWDNM (m)-342-USAF-12900; Record Group 342.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. HJMA, DEGOB Protocol 1693 (L.H., E.M., and G.M.), Protocol 509 (E.K.), Protocol 1964 (S.G. and I.G.).

2. HJMA, DEGOB Protocol 509 (E.K.). All DEGOB protocols translated from Hungarian to English by Gábor Kádár.

3. Benjamin Sieradzki, "A Teenager Survives the Holocaust," (p. 27) Vernon Tott collection, Hannover-Ahlem concentration camp records and photographs, USHMMA, Acc. 1997 A 0287.

4. See testimony of Hungarian inmates: HJMA, DEGOB Protocol 1693 (L.H., E.M., and G.M.), Protocol 509 (E.K.), and Protocol 1964 (S.G. and I.G.).

5. Curiohaus-Prozess trial documentation, PRO (London), WO 235/348 and WO 235-163 (copied in part in USHMMA, "JAG's Office: War Crimes Case Files, Second World War," RG-59.016M).

6. Sieradzki, pp. 29–30.

7. HJMA, DEGOB Protocol 509 (E.K.).

8. There are several discrepancies as to how many inmates were remaining in the camp at the time of the U.S.

Army's arrival. According to Gutmann, there were 200 to 250 inmates remaining; other sources, including Sieradzki and Tott, who was part of the U.S. medical detachment that first encountered the camp, note that there were only about 30 inmates alive; sources from the Hagood collection (another liberator) recall 100 inmates. Further research is needed (possible viewing of footage in NARA); also, some inmates may have left the camp in the period between the Red Cross entrance and the opening of the camp by the U.S. military.

9. Oral history with David Klipp, USHMMA, RG-50.030\*0345, transcript, p. 43.

10. See records of the PRO, London, WO 235/348, 235/129.

## HANNOVER-LANGENHAGEN

The Hannover-Langenhagen subcamp operated as a subcamp of the Neuengamme concentration camp from October 2, 1944, to January 6, 1945. During this period, it was occupied solely by female prisoners. The camp was located on Hackethalstrasse, not far from the street Am Brinker Hafen, in Hannover-Langenhagen.

According to factory workers, the camp barracks were probably constructed in the middle of 1944. The camp consisted of seven barracks, built in a row, four of which accommodated the prisoners. The camp kitchen, washrooms, latrines, and infirmary were in the other barracks. The SS personnel were housed outside the camp.

On October 2, 1944, 500 Polish, Russian, Latvian, and Lithuanian so-called political prisoners from the Stutthof concentration camp occupied the Langenhagen subcamp for women. The Poles were by far the largest national grouping. There is hardly any information about the persecution suffered by the Russian, Latvian, and Lithuanian women. It is known that the Polish prisoners were arrested during the Warsaw Uprising in August 1944. They were carried off to the Pruszków transit camp and from there, probably on August 31, 1944, deported to the Stutthof concentration camp. The prisoners remained in Stutthof until the end of September 1944, when following a "selection" they were sent in the direction of Hannover. The relocation of the prisoners is referred to in the Stutthof concentration camp Commandant's Order Nr. 64, which provides as follows (although reference is made to Jewish prisoners, other correspondence referring to the transport simply refers to "protective custody" prisoners):

According to FS [*Fernschreiben*, telegram] Nr. 9485 from the head of Office Group D of the SS-Business Administration Main Office [WVHA] dated 8 September 1944, 500 female Jewish prisoners will be transferred to the Hannover-Vinnhorst railway station siding no. 2 on 29.9.1944. The Neuengamme concentration camp will make the prisoners available for the Brinker factory. The transferees were chosen in accordance with discussions with the camp protective custody commander, SS camp doctor, and the



labor supervisor. The head of administration is to ensure that the transferees are impeccably dressed. He is personally responsible to me that the prisoners are given proper clothes and footwear. The departure of the prisoners will be on 29.9.1944 at 2.30 pm from Stutthof-Waldlager. The exact departure time will follow. At 6.35 pm the prisoners will depart from Tiegenhof by means of the Deutsche Reichsbahn in 8 G and 1 C carriages. The prisoners are to be loaded between 5.00 pm and 6.00 pm. SS Oberscharführer Mertens, of the 3rd Company, will be in charge of the transport. For support he will have an escort of 5 men from the camp commandant's office and 10 female wardens, who will be chosen by SS-Hauptsturmführer Meyer. The head of administration is to give the escort and prisoners rations for one day. In accordance with regulations SS-Oberscharführer Mertens is to hand over the prisoners at Hannover-Vinnhorst. The handover is to be immediately confirmed either by telegram or telephone. Following the successful handover SS-Oberscharführer Mertens and the escort are to immediately return to Stutthof. SS-Oberscharführer Mertens is to collect the travel papers from the adjutant's office at 12 noon on 29.9.1944.<sup>1</sup>

The "handover" confirmation for the Stutthof female prisoners, which SS-Oberscharführer Mertens received from SS-Obersturmführer Klebeck at the Hannover-Vindhorst railway station, has survived. We therefore know when the prisoners reached Hannover. The handover notice states as follows: "On 29.9.44, in accordance with the FS dated 9.9.44 from the head of Office Group D of the SS-Business Administration Main Office, 500 female protective custody prisoners from the Stutthof concentration camp were transferred to the Hannover-Vinnhorst railway station and put at the disposal of the Neuengamme concentration camp. The transport arrived here on 2.10.44 and control was assumed in accordance with the regulations. Personnel files were handed over for delivery to the Neuengamme concentration camp."<sup>2</sup> Max Pauly, commandant of the Neuengamme concentration camp, confirmed the next day the arrival of the women from Stutthof. A telegram to the commander of the Stutthof concentration camp reads as follows: "500 female prisoners arrived at Brinker Hannover on 2.10.44. From 4.10.44 they will be kept at current strength—signed. Pauly."<sup>3</sup>

The female concentration camp prisoners were put to work in Hannover at the Brinker Iron Factory. According to survivors' reports, the prisoners were divided into two groups. One group was put to work in Factory I, manufacturing munitions, and the other group worked in Factory II, producing airplane fuselages and dismantling airplane wrecks. The women had to remove airplane parts that could be reused from the wrecks; they cleaned, painted, and riveted them and forwarded them to that part of the factory where

airplanes were produced. Elżbieta K., a Polish survivor, reported the following about the work in Factory II:

I worked with a woman from Latvia in the airplane industry in Langenhagen. We could not communicate with one another because we did not have a common language. . . . We worked together as riveters. I had to put a rivet into a hole and work with it so that it was completely smooth. I held the whole thing together and the Latvian used the rivet gun so that the rivet was flush with the surface. What we were working on was raised off the ground. It was large, semi-oval, and narrower at the top than at the bottom. It looked as if it was half of something. It was screwed onto the thing that raised it off the ground. The parts could not wobble; otherwise the rivets would have been askew. I had no idea what the purpose of these parts was. Sometimes I was totally exhausted. The Latvian operated the gun because she was older than me. I put the rivets in from the other side and held the pieces together. Everything had to be riveted together exactly; otherwise we would be screamed at. The Latvian stood between both parts and I stood on the outside. We worked for 12 hours with a 15-minute break. . . . If you wanted to go to the toilet you had to raise a finger and give a sign. Then you waited for the warden's permission."<sup>4</sup>

All the prisoners in both factory halls of the Brinker Iron Works worked under a two-shift system. The day shift was from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., and the night shift lasted from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M.

The name of the Langenhagen commandant remains unknown. According to survivors' reports, he could have been an Oberscharführer. The prisoners secretly called him "Oberek." In addition to the commandant, 20 SS female wardens were responsible for security inside the camp, and male guards, probably older Wehrmacht soldiers, had the responsibility outside the camp.

As with other large cities, Hannover toward the end of the war became more and more frequently the target of Allied air raids. During the raid on January 6, 1945, the Langenhagen subcamp was completely destroyed. The Brinker Iron Works factory halls were severely damaged. All the prisoners, bar two women, survived the attack, because they were escorted to the factory bunker. A former prisoner, Genowefa J., described the situation as follows:

When we were all together we were led into the bunker. It was on the factory grounds. In the meantime the next attack took place. It was called carpet-bombing. The earth trembled. If you looked up the sky was brightly lit up as if it was New Year's Eve. Then the bombs fell, which destroyed everything. There were incendiary and explosive bombs. During the next raid smoke and flames penetrated the bunker.



We were on the top floor. The whole bunker rocked. The women were screaming. They had a terrible fear of being burnt alive. The whole place was full of smoke. After a while fresh air entered the bunker. It seemed to us as if the whole thing lasted an eternity. When we were allowed to leave the bunker next morning it was very cold outside—between approximately minus 10 and 15 degrees. Although we only had on our worn out and ripped striped uniforms we had to wait outside. We must have looked like monsters.<sup>5</sup>

After the raid the female prisoners of Langenhorn were gathered together, counted, and sent to the Hannover-Limmer subcamp for women in the Neuengamme concentration camp system. The women remained there until the camp was evacuated at the beginning of April 1945. Many of them continued to work in Factory I of the Brinker Iron Works. They were taken there from Limmer, either by truck or by streetcar.

**SOURCES** This article on the Hannover-Langenhagen camp is based on the following publications: Claus Füllberg-Stolberg, “Frauen im Konzentrationslager: Langenhagen und Limmer,” in *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, by Rainer Fröbe et al. (Hildesheim, 1985), 1:277–329; and Janet Anschutz and Irmtraud Heike, *Man hörte auf, ein Mensch zu sein. Überlebende aus den Frauenkonzentrationslagern in Langenhagen und Limmer berichten* (Hamburg, 2003).

The AG-NG, AG-BB, and YVA today contain a few interviews with and memoirs of the female survivors. Around the turn of the century, a research project on Langenhagen was conducted, with 21 Polish survivors interviewed. The results are kept in the ASt-Lang. Documents about the transport from Stutthof to Hannover are kept in AMS and USHMMA (RG 04.058 M). Documents about the construction of the Langenhagen camp and sources that could give information about the guards have not survived.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. See Stutthof concentration camp Commandant's Order No. 64, dated September 28, 1944, AG-NG, Best.: Lists and Transports to Neuengamme, AG-N 3.2.3.10.

2. See the Handover Confirmation dated October 2, 1944, USHMMA, Collection: Stutthof Concentration Camp, RG-04.058 M, Reel 213.

3. See Telegram from the Neuengamme Concentration Camp to the Stutthof Concentration Camp dated October 3, 1944, USHMMA, Collection: Stutthof Concentration Camp, RG-04.058 M, Reel 213.

4. Report of Elżbieta K, quoted by Janet Anschutz and Irmtraud Heike, *Man hörte auf, ein Mensch zu sein. Überlebende aus den Frauenkonzentrationslagern in Langenhagen und Limmer berichten* (Hamburg, 2003), p. 65.

5. Report of Genofewa J., quoted in *ibid.*, p. 95.

## HANNOVER-LIMMER

The Hannover-Limmer subcamp most probably existed as a subcamp of the Neuengamme concentration camp from the end of August 1944 to the beginning of April 1945. During this period, the camp contained only female prisoners. The camp was located on undeveloped land between the Continental Rubber Factory and the old village of Limmer, on Wunstorfer Strasse and the Leineabstieg Canal.

It is possible that a part of the barracks was used at an earlier time to accommodate prisoners of war (POWs). The camp itself consisted of three wooden barracks for the prisoners' accommodation, a room for washing and latrines, kitchen, infirmary, and possibly an office.

Descriptions of Limmer are based on prisoners' reports. It is assumed that the camp was first occupied in June 1944 by 266 women from the Ravensbrück concentration camp. This assumption is contradicted by the more recently discovered prisoners' index cards kept by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) in Oranienburg near Berlin. According to the index cards, a “selection” took place in Ravensbrück on August 31, 1944. Following the selection, the women left Ravensbrück and probably on the same or the following day arrived at Limmer. According to a report dated March 29, 1945, by SS-Standortarzt Dr. Alfred Trzebinski, 1,011 women were incarcerated in the camp on March 25, 1945.<sup>1</sup> Female prisoners from the Watenstedt subcamp, probably in either November or December 1944, and female prisoners from Hamburg-Langenhagen, following the destruction of that camp on January 6, 1945, were also relocated to the Limmer camp.

Only so-called political prisoners occupied Limmer. The women came from many different countries in Europe, but the largest group originated in France. They all had been deported from their homeland to Ravensbrück because they had resisted, in some form or another, the German occupiers. Most of them were sent to Ravensbrück during the course of 1944, but some had arrived earlier.

The largest group of female prisoners in the Limmer camp was put to work at the Continental Rubber Factory. As part of the “Brandt Equipment Program,” they manufactured gas masks in a system of two shifts, each of 12 hours. Fearful of a British gas attack in reprisal for the German secret weapons V-1 and V-2, the National Socialist leadership accelerated the production of gas masks with the help of this special program. The production of gas protection devices had steadily declined until the end of 1943, with the result that at the beginning of 1944 a dramatic increase in production was planned. Hitler's special representative, his personal physician Dr. Karl Brandt, was appointed to obtain sufficient supplies of the requisite raw materials, to secure additional labor, and to accelerate production. Stephanie Kuder, a survivor, commented on the production as follows:

The rubber is cut in slabs, lined, and molded on the iron-mold. The “heads” follow each other on the conveyor belt always at the same distance; the edges

are marked on the conveyor belt by a white line. The conveyor belt has its own tempo, which can be shortened by each person's dexterity. . . . Each of the women, who are sitting around in a chain, when it's her turn, lifts up the iron head of the future gas mask, attaches it to a hook, does the precise hand movements required and puts the mask back on to the conveyor belt. Another mold has arrived in the meantime. You can't afford to make a superfluous movement as the mask is not allowed to go past you to the end of the chain. . . . Rejecting them meant punishment. Especially during the small hours, when your arms are tired and you can barely lift the iron heads, when your eyes can't see anything, the masks became insatiable gods demanding a human sacrifice. The conveyor belt is unrelenting. It constantly delivers new heads, one goes and another is there and 10, 20, 30 are on the conveyor belt, 10, 20, 30 motionless heads at constant pace, moving forward and we must serve them. . . . A few women do men's work: they operate the presses, transport the masks on badly oiled carts, and operate the furnace. German civilian workers from the factory make a final check of the gas masks. After about six weeks after our arrival in Hannover our apprenticeship was over and we became regular workers, which meant that we had to achieve a minimum target. In each shift of 11 hours we had to produce 12,000 masks.<sup>2</sup>

The women who were not involved in the production of gas masks (in part, meaning the women who at the beginning of January 1945 were transferred from Langenhagen to Limmer) produced munitions at the Brinker Iron Works in Hannover or were put to work in removing rubble from the factory, caused by the bombing. In addition, another group of female prisoners worked on the grounds of the Harry Habag Bakery, which had been destroyed by the bombing raids on Hannover. Wanda J. had the following to say on that work: "We were forced to go to Hannover to remove rubble. The factory was very big. It was a large parcel of land. At the beginning, i.e., in the vicinity of the entrance gate, baking continued, but the other buildings had been destroyed. In the bakery we found a lot of conserved food destined for soldiers at the front. Then we discovered a type of syrup used in the manufacture of Lebkuchen [a type of ginger bread]. Our work in the bakery lasted for about a week. It was a very big bakery. We passed fresh bread and sweet smelling bread rolls and could not control ourselves. One after another took something."<sup>3</sup>

Little is known about the commanders of the Limmer camp. It is only known that SS-Hauptsturmführer Otto Thümmel took command of the camp for about six weeks at the beginning of March 1945. Thümmel was born on October 10, 1896, in Braunschweig. He was a farmer. As a reserve officer he was called up on September 1, 1939. In April or May 1944, he was

released from military service due to his age. He arrived at Oranienburg in May 1944 and a little later was sent to Neuengamme for training. In October 1944, he assumed command of the Wilhelmshaven camp. Differences arose with Max Pauly, and as punishment, he was transferred at the end of December 1944 to Salzgitter. He arrived in Hannover at the beginning of 1945, where he assumed command of the Limmer camp.

In addition to the camp commanders, SS female wardens were responsible for guarding the female prisoners within the camp, and male guards, probably older soldiers, had the responsibility for external security. Of the male and female guards, only Lina Hillebrecht has been identified. Hillebrecht was born on December 14, 1919. Until June 1944 she worked at the Continental Factory. She then volunteered for the SS and was trained in Ravensbrück as a guard. At first she was deployed to the Buchenwald subcamp Magdeburg (Polte), where she remained until October 1944. She was then transferred back to Hannover. She remained there as a guard until April 5, 1945.

Probably on April 6, 1945, over a thousand women from the Limmer camp, excluding some prisoners who were ill or incapable of marching, were forced to march north. British soldiers liberated those who remained in the camp on April 10, 1945. An order had been given to evacuate Hannover on April 6, 1945. All subcamps in the Hannover and Braunschweig areas were to be evacuated in the direction of Neuengamme. This destination could not be reached, most probably due to the Allied advance. The destination was changed so that all prisoners from Hannover were to be delivered to Bergen-Belsen. The women had to march from Hannover to Bergen-Belsen within three days and arrived there on the evening of April 8. It is most likely that the women during the march slept at Fuhrberg and again at Oldau, either in an open barn or in a sand pit. Those women who survived the catastrophic conditions in the "reception camp" Bergen-Belsen were liberated by British troops on April 15, 1945.

**SOURCES** This article on Hannover-Limmer is based on the following publications: Claus Füllberg-Stolberg, "Frauen im Konzentrationslager: Langenhagen und Limmer," in *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, by Rainer Fröbe et al. (Hildesheim, 1985), 1:277–329; and Janet Anschutz and Irma Heike, *Man hörte auf, ein Mensch zu sein. Überlebende aus den Frauenkonzentrationslagern in Langenhagen und Limmer berichten* (Hamburg, 2003). On the Trzebinski report, see Werner Johe, *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg*, 3rd ed. (Hamburg, 1982).

The AG-NG, AG-BB, and YVA today contain a few interviews with and memoirs of the female survivors of the Limmer camp. Around the turn of the century, a research project on Langenhagen had been conducted, with 21 Polish survivors interviewed. During the interviews, the survivors also reported on Limmer. The results are kept in the ASt-Lang. The surviving prisoners' card index of the SS-WVHA is kept in AG-NG. Documents on Otto Thümmel are kept at ZdL (now BA-L). Details about Lina Hillebrecht are taken from the British military court proceedings, copies of which, in part, are kept in

AG-NG. Written records on the construction of the Limmer camp and the rest of the guards have not survived.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. See the report by SS-Standortarzt Dr. Alfred Trzebinski, dated March, 29, 1945, quoted by Werner Johe, *Neuengamme: Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg*, 3rd ed. (Hamburg, 1982), p. 76.

2. Report by Stephanie Kuder quoted in Claus Füllberg-Stolberg, "Frauen im Konzentrationslager: Langenhagen und Limmer," in *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, by Rainer Fröbe et al. (Hildesheim, 1985), 1:324.

3. Report by Wanda J., quoted by Janet Anschutz and Irmtraud Heike, *Man hörte auf, ein Mensch zu sein. Überlebende aus den Frauenkonzentrationslagern in Langenhagen und Limmer berichten* (Hamburg, 2003), p. 106.

## HANNOVER-MISBURG

A subcamp of Neuengamme was established in Hannover-Misburg in late June 1944 to supply labor for the Gewerkschaft Neue Deutsche Erdöl-Raffinerie Aktiengesellschaft firm (Deurag-Nerag). Crucial to the German war effort, Deurag-Nerag manufactured oil and aircraft fuel. An Allied air raid severely damaged the Misburg Deurag oil refinery on June 20, 1944. Therefore, negotiations were accelerated between the Deurag-Nerag administration and the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) to introduce concentration camp inmates into the labor force. Only one week separated the partial destruction of the refinery—and ensuing acute need for workers—from the arrival of the initial group of Neuengamme prisoners in Misburg.

The first group of about 500 inmates from Neuengamme was transported to Misburg on June 25 or 26, 1944, and was used to clear rubble from the bombing of the Deurag-Nerag factory and to begin building the camp. The SS selected prisoners for the initial transports from three groups in Neuengamme: newly arrived prisoners—mostly Frenchmen who had been deported to Neuengamme between May and July 1944; prisoners recuperating in the convalescent blocks (*Schonungsblocks*), who had been assigned to "lighter work"; and Reichsdeutsche (German nationals), who continued to serve as Kapos and senior camp inmates (*Blockälteste*) in Misburg. The inmates began to construct the camp shortly after their arrival. They slept in large tents provided by the Wehrmacht until the barracks were built.

The construction site for the camp was located about 91 meters (100 yards) west of the Deurag-Nerag refinery. As in other camps, prisoner areas were cordoned off from outer areas in the Misburg subcamp. The inner prisoner area was surrounded by barbed wire and included four barracks for prisoner living quarters with an infirmary attached to one of these, a kitchen barracks, roll-call area, two latrines, and a

makeshift shower area. Four watchtowers were built in the corners of the prisoner area. The outer area included the administrative barracks, commandant's office, and guards' living quarters. The construction of the camp was completed over several months despite frequent aerial attacks throughout the winter of 1944–1945. For shelter during air raids, bunkers were built for the guards, and small covered trenches were available to the prisoners.

After the initial group of prisoners was brought to Misburg, additional transports arrived throughout the summer months. On July 14, 1944, another 500 prisoners were transported from Neuengamme, and on July 23, 200 arrived from Buchenwald. By September 1944, there were nearly 1,600 prisoners in the camp. The total number of prisoners in Misburg fluctuated because often weakened prisoners were exchanged for "healthy" prisoners from Neuengamme.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners were all male, and their countries of origin reflected national groups imprisoned in Neuengamme and Buchenwald: Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), Ukrainians, Poles, French who were imprisoned in Compiègne for political reasons and deported to Neuengamme, some 38 Reichsdeutsche who mostly held functionary positions within the camp; 20 to 25 Dutch, 15 Belgians, and 40 Danes who remained in Misburg from February 20 to mid-March 1945, when they were transferred to the Hannover-Stöcken (Akkumulatorenfabrik) camp. The few Jews imprisoned in Misburg were there due to resistance activities or political affiliations, not for racial reasons. Half of all Misburg prisoners were younger than 30 years of age, and only 20 percent were older than 40.

Prisoners in the Misburg camp were divided into various work commandos, mostly deployed to the Deurag-Nerag firm. The Deurag-Nerag administration recruited laborers from lists drawn up by Misburg roll-call leader Heinrich H. The prisoners were generally not responsible for skilled labor at Deurag-Nerag but were used to clear debris from bombed-out areas. Work shifts usually lasted from 10 to 12 hours. At least one guard supervised every commando, depending on the number of prisoners in the group. Kapos also supervised the prisoners while at work. To ensure the rapid work pace of prisoners in the commando, the Kapos beat the inmates, which often resulted in serious injury or death. Certain commandos were more dangerous than others. Especially dangerous work assignments included the Abbruchkommando, in which prisoners had to remove rubble, or the Bombensuchkommando, in which prisoners detonated unexploded bombs. There were many accidents and injuries, and prisoners had no protective clothing, shoes, or any other kind of protection against the hazards of their work.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the inmates were provided little protection against frequent air raids.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to Kapos who supervised the prisoners at work, SS men and other guard units patrolled the camp. Police officers (Polizeibeamten) accompanied the original transport of prisoners from Neuengamme under the direction of a police lieutenant. A Wehrmacht officer who served in Misburg for three weeks replaced the lieutenant. Little other information



about these first two commandants of Misburg can be found. Between the arrival of the transports on July 14 and 23, 1944, SS-Obersturmbannführer Max Pauly, the commandant of Neuengamme, appointed SS-Obersturmbannführer Karl Wiedemann as the commandant of Misburg. Wiedemann, who entered the SS in 1933, arrived in Misburg on July 20, 1944. He remained in Misburg until mid-September 1944, when he became commander of the Hamburg base camp (*Stützpunkt*) and then commandant of the subcamp Drütte near Salzgitter. Wiedemann was replaced by SS-Hauptscharführer Hans Gehrt, who oversaw Misburg until its evacuation in April 1945. The few SS men in the camp, about 15 in total, served as the commandant's staff and supervised the kitchen and storage cellar. The largest group of guards in Misburg—between 50 and 80 men—consisted of territorial guardsmen (*Landeschützen*).

Living conditions in the Misburg camp were harsh. The prisoners endured grueling work, minimal food rations, minimal shelter, poor sanitary conditions, lice, disease, and frequent abuse meted out by the guards. Their miserable daily routine hindered organized resistance or escape attempts. However, former inmate Jean-Pierre Renouard has recalled that some individuals attempted to flee, and Misburg Gestapo records confirm the escape of Soviet POW Viktor K.<sup>4</sup> According to the trial testimony of Karl Wiedemann, another Soviet inmate named Romenko escaped from a work detachment in June or July 1944.<sup>5</sup> Those who were caught escaping were brought back to the camp and executed.

The exact number of deaths in the Misburg subcamp is difficult to reconstruct. The death rate of the inmates varied over the camp's 10-month period of operation. According to historian Rainer Fröbe's analysis, between June 1944 and April 7, 1945, 55 prisoners died. However, this number does not include every death in Misburg, the hundreds of ill and weak prisoners who were deported back to Neuengamme in exchange for "healthy" prisoners in late November 1944, and those who succumbed to exhaustion or were murdered during the camp's evacuation.

Misburg was evacuated beginning on April 7, 1945. The SS sent those capable of walking on a march to Bergen-Belsen. On April 8, the remaining 214 prisoners were gathered in trucks for transport toward Bergen-Belsen; there are no exact numbers of survivors of this transport.

After the war, a Belgian military tribunal tried the *Landeschützen* Richard W. for the murders of Belgian and French inmates in February 1945; he was sentenced to death by shooting in 1949. However, he was released in 1954 after a short prison term because his sentence was changed. In 1967, a new trial was brought against W. by the *Landeskriminalamt* (State Criminal Police Office, LKA) in Nordrhein-Westfalen, but W. died before a verdict was reached. In connection with the same incident, former *Rapportführer* Heinrich H. was tried; he too died during the proceedings, and on April 4, 1978, the case was closed. Wiedemann was tried in 1946 by a British military tribunal. He was sentenced to a 15-year prison term but was released in 1955. He died in 1968.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** Several primary and secondary sources contain detailed information about the Hannover-Misburg subcamp of Neuengamme. Most of the information for this entry builds upon the research of Rainer Fröbe, "Arbeit für die Mineralölindustrie: Das Konzentrationslager Misburg," in the extensive, two-volume study of concentration camp prisoner labor in Hannover by Rainer Fröbe et al., *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Hildesheim: Verlag August Lax, 1985). For analysis of the evacuation of the Misburg camp and other camps in Hannover, see Herbert Obenaus, "Die Räumung der hannoverschen Konzentrationslager im April 1945," in the same volume. Another important secondary source of information on the Hannover subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and some specific information about the Hannover-Misburg subcamp. It includes a personal account of the Abbruchkommando (pp. 219–220); a reproduction of a quarterly report on numbers of inmates in the Misburg camp (among others) by the SS garrison doctor (*Standortarzt*) Trzebinski (March 29, 1945); as well as a reproduction of a Gestapo report on the escape of the Soviet POW Viktor K. (p. 230). Two memoirs that provide detailed, personal information about life in the Misburg camp include Jean-Pierre Renouard, *My Stripes Were Earned in Hell (Uniforme rayé d'enfer)* (J.P. Renouard, 1993); and Bernard Morey, *Le voyageur égaré* (Paris: France-Empire, 1981). For specific information on the Danish prisoners transported from Misburg to Stöcken, see Jørgen H.P. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne. En Beretning om Koncentrationslejre og Fængsler, hvor der sad Danskere 1940–1945* (Copenhagen: Frihedsmuseets Venners Forlags Fond, 1994).

Primary documentation on the Hannover-Misburg camp is located in various archives, and Rainer Fröbe's extensive analysis has made ample use of these resources. Documentation related to the trial of Karl Wiedemann can be found at the PRO (London) under the JAG's Office WO 235/162-169 (reproduced in part at USHMMA, RG 59-016M). Information related to the trials of Richard W. and Heinrich H. is located at the AStALG-H, 11 Js 12/73. For information related to the bombing of the Deurag-Nerag factory, see the USSBS (Oil, Chemical and Rubber Division): Deurag-Nerag Refineries at Misburg (Porta) and Peine near Hannover Germany, NARA, RG 243/110. This file also includes photographs of the Deurag-Nerag firm (published in Fröbe et al.). For aerial photos of Deurag-Nerag taken by the British military on September 12, 1944, see PRO, AIR 40/737. For other photographs of the Deurag-Nerag firm, including stills that chronicle the damage caused during air raids, see the archives of the *Gewerkschaft Erdöl-Raffinerie Deurag-Nerag in Hannover-Misburg*.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. According to a quarterly report filed by SS-*Standortarzt* Trzebinski, there were 672 prisoners in Misburg in March 1945; FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). The USHMMA (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also contains a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly



and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126.

2. See Jean-Pierre Renouard, *My Stripes Were Earned in Hell* (J.P. Renouard, 1993), pp. 11–12, for his account of two coworkers who were crushed under falling brick.

3. Bernard Morey, *Le voyageur égaré* (Paris: France-Empire, 1981), p. 181.

4. See Renouard, p. 37; Gestapo report regarding the flight of Soviet POW Viktor K. on 12 September 1944 during an air raid, Fahndungsmeldung der Staatspolizeileistelle Hamburg (5 October 1944), BA-K, R70 Lothringen, p. 27, as reproduced in Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945*, p. 230.

5. See examination of Karl Wiedemann by Dr. Lappenburg, Curiohaus-Prozess, PRO (London), WO 235/165, reproduced in USHMM, RG-59.016M (Reel 5).

6. See the records of the Curiohaus-Prozess, PRO (London), WO 235/162–169, reproduced in part in USHMM, RG-59.016M.

## HANNOVER-MÜHLENBERG-LINDEN

In the Mühlenberg-Linden district south of Hannover, a subcamp of Neuengamme was established in early February 1945 to supply labor to either Hannoversche Maschinenbau (Hanomag) or Rheinmetall-Borsig, firms that produced anti-aircraft weapons. The inmates in the Mühlenberg subcamp were transferred from Laurahütte, a subcamp of Auschwitz III-Monowitz, where they had been forced to work in armaments production for Rheinmetall-Borsig. According to historian Rolf Keller, it is not completely clear whether Hanomag or Rheinmetall-Borsig requested the inmates for work at the factories. Of the two firms, Rheinmetall most likely continued to employ the Laurahütte inmates, but it also may have rented two work halls in the Hanomag factory to continue its anti-aircraft weapons production. Keller has noted that the archives of neither Hanomag nor Rheinmetall-Borsig have documentation that would clarify this question.<sup>1</sup> Although the Mühlenberg subcamp operated for only about two months, its prisoners continued performing the same labor functions they had begun in Laurahütte in April 1944.

Ahead of approaching Soviet troops, the SS dismantled the Auschwitz III-Monowitz camp complex, including its subcamps, in early 1945. The Laurahütte camp was evacuated on January 23; nearly 1,000 inmates were transported by freight train to the Mauthausen camp, where they arrived six days later. From there, they were marched to Mauthausen subcamp Gusen II, where they stayed for two days. The SS “selected” about 500 inmates, considered “skilled workers” or “capable of work,” for transfer to Hannover. The transport left on February 1, 1945, and arrived in Mühlenberg on February 3, 1945.

The Mühlenberg camp was located on the outskirts of Hannover in the industrial Mühlenberg-Linden area. Situated just north of a large slave labor camp (*Zwangsarbeiterlager*) that

also provided labor to Hanomag, the subcamp consisted of 10 stone barracks surrounded by barbed wire. Fencing separated the prisoner area from the SS and guard barracks. In the first days after their arrival in Mühlenberg, the inmates reconstructed various areas of the camp; for example, fencing had to be mended and electrified, searchlights erected, and toilets repaired. The prisoners were sent to work outside the camp to the Hanomag factory beginning on February 12, 1945. Due to increasingly intensive Allied air attacks, and after the halt in production at Laurahütte, manufacturing anti-aircraft weapons gained special urgency. Hanomag produced half of the Reich’s supply of this artillery.

Some 95 percent of the prisoners in the Mühlenberg subcamp were Jews, most of whom had been deported from Poland and Hungary to Auschwitz. The rest of the Jewish inmates had been deported from Western Europe—France, the Netherlands, and Belgium. There were also small numbers of Romanian, Czech, Slovak, and Italian Jews.<sup>2</sup> German nationals (Reichsdeutsche), prisoners in “protective custody,” and so-called professional criminals (*Berufsverbrecher*) were also incarcerated in Mühlenberg. Most of the prisoners were between the ages of 21 and 30. The youngest prisoners, 2 Hungarian Jews, were 14 and 15 years old; the oldest prisoner was a Polish Jew aged 59. In addition to the original transport of 500 inmates, the Swedish Red Cross (the so-called Bernadotte Action) transferred about 500 “weak inmates” (*Muselmänner*) from Neuengamme to subcamps in Hannover; about 72 arrived in Mühlenberg in late March 1945.<sup>3</sup>

Daily, the inmates were marched to the Hanomag factory some 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) from the camp, where they were divided into various work details; for example, some drilled holes in metal plates, and others performed locksmith tasks. The prisoners worked in two 12-hour shifts, which changed weekly. Conditions in the factory were terrible. Portions of the work halls had been destroyed during bombing attacks and were thus open to the elements. The inmates were poorly fed and suffered abuse from the Kapos and SS. Former inmate Moshe O. has recalled that as the prisoners were forced to run through the camp gates after their work assignments were over, camp elder (Lagerältester) “Otto” hit them arbitrarily with a hammer. Some weaker inmates did not survive this beating.<sup>4</sup>

In the Hanomag factory, the subcamp inmates worked together with civilian workers, foreign workers, and prisoners of war (POWs). Although contact between the groups was strictly forbidden, some were able to organize extra food rations or exchange lighter workloads with their fellow laborers. Organized sabotage attempts generally could not be implemented, as most of the finished weapons were tested on the grounds of the factory itself. However, some individual acts of sabotage caused the breakdown of production equipment.

During work in the factory, Kapos and guards from the subcamp supervised the inmates’ work. The administration and guard contingent consisted of 51 men, 11 SS officers, and 40 naval soldiers (Marinesoldaten). The commandant of the camp was SS-Oberscharführer Walter Friedrich Wilhelm Quakernack. Quakernack joined the SS in 1929, was deployed

to the front in 1939, and returned home after he was wounded. He was assigned to the political office in the Auschwitz main camp, and in 1944, he became a block leader (Blockführer) in Monowitz. Quakernack was appointed to command the Laurahütte subcamp in April 1944, and in January 1945, he transferred with the prisoners to Mühlenberg.

SS-Oberscharführer Quakernack's assistant was SS-Oberscharführer Otto B., who also transferred from Laurahütte. The office of roll-call leader (Rapportführer) alternated between Rottenführer Alfred Grams and Rottenführer Friedrich-Wilhelm Rex. Born in Poland, Grams was an ethnic German who worked in Neuengamme, Sachsenhausen, Auschwitz, and Laurahütte. Rex, a member of the German Labor Front (DAF), served in the Wehrmacht until the end of 1943 when he was injured. He was transferred to oversee a small POW camp in Dommitzsch. From there, he was assigned to Auschwitz in June 1944 and then Laurahütte. Other SS officers in the Mühlenberg camp included SS-Rottenführer Hans Tauschek, SS-Unterscharführer Plasa, and SS-Rottenführer Hans Rebtschuk.

There is comparatively little information on the sentries in Mühlenberg, which consisted of naval soldiers declared unfit for the front due to age and other reasons. The naval soldiers patrolled the camp outside the fencing that enclosed the prisoner area, supervised the inmates en route to work, and guarded the entrances of the factory halls. Prohibited from entering the prisoner area of the camp, they had little direct contact with the prisoners. According to most prisoner reports, the guards behaved less cruelly than the SS.

Due to poor working conditions, unsanitary living conditions, lack of food, and inadequate medical care, several inmates died in the Mühlenberg camp. They suffered from dysentery, exhaustion, starvation, and pneumonia; some died from beatings they received from Kapos and SS men. It is difficult to reconstruct the exact number and prisoner death rate because the only known records, those of the local Seelhorst cemetery, do not account for every prisoner death.<sup>5</sup> Historian Rolf Keller has estimated that between 110 and 180 prisoners died in the camp from February 3, 1945, until its evacuation on April 6, 1945. This number does not include inmates who died or who were murdered during the evacuation of the camp.

The SS conducted a final roll call on April 6, 1945. Those prisoners who were determined capable of marching were separated from those who were not. About 110 inmates, including the 72 inmates transported to Mühlenberg by the Swedish Red Cross, remained behind. A few SS officers returned with trucks to evacuate them the following day; about 50 inmates who tried to hide were shot. The SS marched the rest to Bergen-Belsen, where they arrived after three days. Quakernack and his SS officers murdered at least 36 inmates during the march.

After Quakernack was found guilty of the murder of inmates on the evacuation march to Bergen-Belsen and guilty of ordering guards to shoot those too weak to march, he was sentenced to death by a British military tribunal in 1946. He was hanged in October 1946. Also accused of murder during the evacuation, the former Rottenführers Rex and Grams were

tried before the regional court (Landgericht) of Hannover beginning in 1980. At the conclusion of the trial in 1981, Grams was found innocent. Rex was sentenced to a six-year prison term; however, the higher regional court (Oberlandesgerichts) in Celle exempted him from serving the sentence.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** Several primary and secondary sources contain detailed information about the Hannover-Mühlenberg-Linden subcamp of Neuengamme. Most of the information for this entry builds upon the research of Rolf Keller, "Das KZ Mühlenberg: Auschwitz in Hannover," in *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkriegs*, by Rainer Fröbe et al. (Hildesheim: Verlag August Lax, 1985). For an analysis of the final days of the Hannover subcamps, including Hannover-Mühlenberg, see Herbert Obenaus, "Die Räumung der hannoverschen Konzentrationslager im April 1945," in the same volume. Another important secondary source of information on the Hannover subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a reproduction of a quarterly report on numbers of inmates in the Mühlenberg camp (among others) by the SS garrison doctor (Standortarzt) Trzebinski (March 29, 1945). For further information on Mühlenberg, see Markus Deckert, *Das KZ-Aussenlager Hannover-Mühlenberg: "Vernichtung durch Arbeit"* (Hannover: Freizeit- und Bildungszentrum Weisse Rose, 1981).

Primary sources related to the Hannover-Mühlenberg camp can be found in various archives and repositories, and Rolf Keller's extensive analysis has made ample use of these resources. See especially the FZH for a transport list to KZ Mühlenberg (13-6-13) and report by Arnost Basch on Laurahütte, Hanomag, and Hannover-Linden (13-6-17). Trial proceedings of the case against Walter Quakernack, although scanty in detail, are stored at the PRO London, WO 235/658 (Second Belsen Case). This file is copied partially at USHMMA, JAG's Office: War Crimes Case Files, Second World War (1945–1953), RG-59.016M. Another file related to Quakernack in Celle, currently listed as "wanting" or missing from the PRO, is WO 235/152. Trial proceedings against Friedrich Wilhelm Rex and Alfred Grams are located at the AStALG-H (11 Ks 3/76 and 11 Js 6/79). The ASt-H contains production statistics for Hanomag dated August 23, 1945. Reports from former inmate Arthur Lehmann are stored at YV; see especially 02/309, "Das Arbeitslager Hannover-Mühlenberg" (3.2.1945–6.4.1945) [1946]. Aerial photographs of Mühlenberg can be found at the IWM, London. Finally, further information, including photographs and plant reports, are located at the NA, Washington, DC, USSBS Plant Report No. 107a (I), Hannoversche Maschinenbau AG, 22/23 May 1945, RG 243.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Only one document, the quarterly report filed by Dr. Trzebinski, notes the number of inmates in "Hannover-Hanomag," although this most likely refers to the inmates' workplace, not the firm that actually submitted the request

for inmates to the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA).

2. See Rolf Keller, "Das KZ Mühlenberg: Auschwitz in Hannover," in *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkriegs*, by Rainer Fröbe et al. (Hildesheim: Verlag August Lax, 1985), p. 448, for a detailed chart based on the transport list of Lauerhütte prisoners from Mauthausen to the Neuengamme camp system. The transport list dated February 7, 1945, is located at the Forschungsstelle für die Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus in Hamburg, Hamburg, 13-6-13, and is reproduced in part in Fröbe et al., Abb. 106-107.

3. Herbert Obenaus, "Die Räumung der hannoverschen Konzentrationslager im April 1945," Fröbe et al., *Konzentrationslager in Hannover*, pp. 526-527.

4. Moshe O., as quoted in Keller, "Das KZ Mühlenberg," pp. 466-467.

5. See Keller, "Das KZ Mühlenberg," pp. 476-484, for a reconstruction of the monthly death rate from the Seelhorst cemetery records as well as from witness accounts.

6. "Todesmarsch von Hannover: Sechs Jahre für Ex-SS-Mann Rex," *Neue Presse* (1./2. August 1981), reproduced in Markus Deckert, *Das KZ-Aussenlager Hannover-Mühlenberg: "Vernichtung durch Arbeit"* (Hannover: Freizeit- und Bildungszentrum Weisse Rose, 1981).

## HANNOVER-STÖCKEN [AKKUMULATORENFABRIK]

The first Neuengamme subcamp in the Hannover area was established in Stöcken in July 1943. The camp was created to supply prisoner labor to the nearby Akkumulatorenfabrik AG (later Varta Batterie AG), a firm that manufactured batteries for submarines and torpedoes. At a time of increased submarine production and shortage of skilled laborers, an agreement forged by the Naval High Command (OKM), the Reich Ministry for Weapons and Ammunition, the Armaments Detachment (Rüstungskommando) Hannover, and the Akkumulatoren firm introduced the use of prisoner labor into the factory's workforce. The Neuengamme main camp financed the transport of prisoners to and from Hannover, and it also provided for clothing, food, and other supplies for the inmates and guards. In turn, Akkumulatoren paid the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) a wage for each prisoner. The prisoners did not receive compensation for their work. At the height of wartime production, Akkumulatoren employed more than 6,500 workers, including some 1,500 concentration camp prisoners and 3,700 slave laborers.

The camp was built 120 meters (394 feet) south of the Akkumulatoren factory. Originally, the structure was intended to accommodate 500 prisoners; the actual number of prisoners incarcerated in the camp throughout its years of operation far exceeded that number. On July 17, 1943, the first commando from Neuengamme was transported to Hannover-Stöcken to begin construction of the camp under the leadership of SS-Oberscharführer Johannes P. The group of 50 prisoners, including Germans, Serbs, and Poles, was

treated brutally by the Oberscharführer and his Oberkapo "Toni." In the following weeks, additional transports arrived from Neuengamme; by March 1944, the numbers rose to 790 prisoners, and by August 1944, 1,533 prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

In the Stöcken-Akkumulatorenfabrik camp, there were large groups of prisoners from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, Poland, and the Soviet Union. A smaller number of prisoners had been deported from Greece, Italy, Latvia, Estonia, and Czechoslovakia, although the exact number in each of the groups is unknown. In the fall of 1943, there were two large transports of 500 prisoners each, and in the summer of 1944, another transport of 500 prisoners arrived, all from Neuengamme. Some inmates had been imprisoned for their political or religious affiliations or sexual orientation (especially the German prisoners), others for their resistance activities or their status as "asocials" or criminals. A final group of weakened inmates was transported from Neuengamme to Stöcken days before its dissolution in April 1945 as part of an action by the Swedish Red Cross. Because of the difficult work the inmates performed, the sparse food rations they received, and the abuse they suffered by the guards and Kapos, there were many ill and weakened inmates whose conditions remained untreated. Inmates too feeble to work were exchanged for "healthy" prisoners from Neuengamme.

The Stöcken camp at the Akkumulatoren factory consisted of five prisoner barracks, an infirmary, a kitchen barracks, a roll-call area, and an execution area with gallows. The camp was surrounded by electrified barbed wire, and the barracks for the commandant, his guard staff, and administrative offices were located outside the camp's entrance. Watchtowers stood at the four corners of the camp, and a fenced-in pathway (distinct from the entrance to the camp) led to the Akkumulatoren factory.

The working conditions at the factory were brutal. Prisoners were separated into labor divisions—such as the lead or the plastics departments—and split into 12-hour shifts. Because inmates were not given protective equipment, there were several accidents and cases of poisoning from harmful gases. According to Theodor M., a Greek prisoner transported from Neuengamme to Stöcken, the inmates were prohibited from drinking water at work and thus resorted to drinking from the toilets.

The administration of the Hannover-Stöcken camp changed a number of times. SS-Untersturmführer Benediek replaced Oberscharführer Johannes P. as commandant in August 1943. SS-Obersturmführer Herbert Griem, infamous for his cruelty, succeeded him. During Griem's service as commander of the camp, Oberscharführer P. became the roll-call leader (Rapportführer) and oversaw the administrative duties of the camp. SS-Hauptsturmführer Kurt Adolf Klebeck, who came to Stöcken at the last stage of construction, replaced Griem in July 1944. SS-Untersturmführer Paul Maas took over as roll-call leader. Klebeck had entered the Nazi Party in 1933 and served in the Waffen-SS beginning in February 1940. He was a guard in Sachsenhausen from March to July 1940, then a supervisor in the Oranienburg subcamp, as well as in various other work commandos. Klebeck was also the chief of the SS-





German civilians view corpses outside Gardelegen, April 18, 1945, where the SS burned 1,016 prisoners in a barn. The prisoners originated from various camps, including from the Hannover-Stöcken (*Akkumulatorenfabrik AG*) subcamp of Neuengamme and the Mittelbau subcamp of Rottelberode.

USHMM WS #08054, COURTESY OF JAMES HERRIMAN

7th Wachkompanie and supervised some 600 SS in the Hannover area.

The guard staff was mostly drawn from the SS; however, from July 1944, the OKM ordered guards to Hannover-Stöcken from Wilhelmshaven. SS guards and Kapos controlled the prisoners at work and within the camp. The SS were divided between those who served as sentries in the camp and those who supervised the administration of the camp.

In addition to deaths caused by poor living conditions and brutal work detail, there were also executions in the camp. Inmates selected for a death sentence were hanged, and all other inmates in the camp were gathered to witness it. The SS also executed prisoners by shooting, which was implemented outside the camp. At work, in the camp, and especially during roll calls, the SS guards and Kapos beat the prisoners arbitrarily, and this maltreatment, coupled with diseases like dysentery and tuberculosis, resulted in many prisoner deaths.<sup>2</sup> The inmates also died from frequent air raids; they were not provided with adequate

shelter. Over 400 prisoners died in the Stöcken camp, excluding an unknown number of prisoners returned to Neuengamme in exchange for “healthy” inmates.

The inmates responded to and coped with daily tyranny in various ways. Some inmates were able to barter for food to supplement their meager rations, which helped sustain their physical health. For example, Theodorus M. recalled that Danish prisoners received packages from the Red Cross, a privilege not afforded to other prisoners in the camp. He exchanged cigarettes for extra food.<sup>3</sup> Several inmates engaged in resistance and sabotage activities. Theodorus M. also recalled that he produced faulty parts deliberately.<sup>4</sup> Other testimony emphasized that some inmates smuggled a radio into the camp and were able to listen to foreign broadcasts. French prisoner René Baumer clandestinely sketched several scenes of camp life and portraits of his fellow inmates, and the sketches survived the war.<sup>5</sup> Finally, according to the records of the nearby Seelhorst cemetery, there were at least eight in-



mates who attempted to escape the Stöcken camp. All of these attempts failed. The inmates were caught and either shot or brought back into the camp and hanged.

The SS began to evacuate the camp in two stages on April 7 and 8, 1945. During roll call, prisoners who were too weak to walk were separated from those who were able. The latter group was marched out of the camp to Bergen-Belsen, guarded by armed SS. The remaining 600 prisoners, many of whom were part of the Swedish Red Cross transport from Neuengamme, were gathered and transported by train. Those who survived the transport were marched to Gardelegen, where they were locked in a barn with inmates from other evacuated camps (1,016 in total) and burned alive. On April 15, members of the 102nd Infantry Division of the U.S. Army encountered the charred remains of the dead.<sup>6</sup> The Allies occupied the grounds of the Akkumulatorenfabrik on April 20, 1945.

SS-Hauptsturmführer Klebeck was tried by a British military court in 1947 and was sentenced to 10 years in prison. Rapportführer Paul Maas was tried in 1964 and was given a 3.5-years prison sentence.

**SOURCES** There are several primary and secondary sources that contain detailed information about the Hannover-Stöcken subcamp of Neuengamme at the Akkumulatorenfabrik. Most of the information for this entry builds upon the research of Hans Hermann Schröder, “Das erste Konzentrationslager in Hannover: Das Lager bei der Akkumulatorenfabrik in Stöcken,” in the extensive, two-volume study of concentration camp prisoner labor in Hannover by Rainer Fröbe et al., *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Hildesheim: Verlag August Lax, 1985). Another important secondary source of information on the Hannover subcamps is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and some specific information about the Stöcken subcamp, including a personal account of the evacuation to Gardelegen (p. 277) as well as a reproduction of a quarterly report on numbers of inmates in the Stöcken camp (among others) by the SS garrison doctor (Standortarzt) Trzebinski (March 29, 1945). See also Janet Anschütz and Irmtraud Heike’s *Feinde im Eigenen Land: Zwangsarbeit in Hannover im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Bielefeld: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte, 2000) for an overview of Hannover-Stöcken at the Akkumulatorenfabrik in the context of slave labor in the Hannover region; it also includes a personal account of life in the camp. Günther Wackernagel’s witness report can be found in the collection *Als Letztes Starb die Hoffnung: Berichte von Überlebenden aus dem KZ Neuengamme*, ed. Christoph Ernst and Ulrike Jensen (Hamburg: Rasch und Röhrling Verlag, 1989). For specific information on the Danish prisoners in Stöcken, see Jørgen H.P. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne. En Beretning om Koncentrationslejre og Fængsler, hvor der sad Danskere 1940–1945* (Copenhagen: Frihedsmuseets Venners Forlags Fond, 1994). For an account of the Gardelegen massacre, see Diana Gring, *Die Todesmärsche und das Massaker von Gardelegen: NS-Verbrechen in der Endphase des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Gardelegen: Stadtmuseum Gardelegen, 1993).

Primary documentation about the Stöcken camp is stored in various archives, and the research of Hans Hermann Schröder has made extensive use of many of these resources in his study in *Konzentrationslager in Hannover*. For documents from the trial of Paul Maas and other relevant files, see the AStALG-H, 2 Ks 2/63. Documentation related to Klebeck’s trial can be found at the PRO (London) under the JAG’s Office WO 235/348. For correspondence, lists of deaths, and other relevant files, see the Nachlass Hans Schwarz at FZH. A collection of René Baumer’s drawings is stored at the Musée de l’Ordre de la Libération, Paris. Archives at USHMM contain files related to the Allied recovery of the remains of the Gardelegen massacre; see the Chris Battersby collection, RG-09.036; the 1981 International Liberators Conference collection, Gardelegen, RG-09.005\*15; KZ Bilderbericht aus fünf Konzentrationslager, RG-04.045 (with photos); and signatures of Gardelegen witnesses, RG-09.017\*01. The USHMM also has an extensive collection of photographs of Gardelegen at liberation, in particular of the barn where inmates from Stöcken were murdered; see USHMPA, designation numbers 535.5455 and 535.4542.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Janet Anschütz and Irmtraud Heike, *Feinde im Eigenen Land: Zwangsarbeit in Hannover im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Bielefeld: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte, 2000), p. 193.
2. See testimony of Theodorus M., in *ibid.*, pp. 193–195.
3. See testimony of Theodorus M., in *ibid.*, pp. 193–194.
4. Anschütz and Heike, *Feinde im Eigenen Land*, p. 193.
5. Rainer Fröbe et al., *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Hildesheim: Verlag August Lax, 1985): See “René Baumer—Ein Zeichner im KZ. Kunst, Widerstand und Identität im Konzentrationslager,” pp. 109–130.
6. For reports on the Allied encounter with Gardelegen, see USHMM, RG-09.036, RG-09.005\*15, RG-04.045, and RG-09.017\*01. See also Diana Gring, *Die Todesmärsche und das Massaker von Gardelegen: NS-Verbrechen in der Endphase des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Gardelegen: Stadtmuseum Gardelegen, 1993), p. 22.

## HANNOVER-STÖCKEN (CONTINENTAL)

In August 1944, SS-Untersturmführer Otto “Tull” Harder, who worked in the administrative office of the Neuengamme main camp, received orders from the commander of Neuengamme, SS-Sturmbannführer Max Pauly, to take over the administration of a work commando that was to be sent to Hannover. In the late summer of 1944, a subcamp of Neuengamme was established in Hannover-Stöcken for the Continental-Gummiwerke AG, a rubber factory located in Stöcken. The creation of the camp stemmed from a contractual agreement between the SS and Continental to use camp inmates for labor in the armaments industry. The camp was located on Stelinger Platz (later Stelinger Strasse) in close proximity to the factory.

VOLUME I: PART B



View of the Continental rubber factory where prisoners from the Hannover-Stöcken (Continental) subcamp of Neuengamme were sent to work, 1944–1945.

USHMM WS #98827, COURTESY OF GFH

On September 10, 1944, about 1,000 Jews were brought from Auschwitz to Hannover on a grueling transport by freight train that lasted several nights. According to one survivor of the deportation, they received little, if any, food during the trip, and a single bucket in the corner of the car served as a toilet for about 80 people.<sup>1</sup> Upon their arrival, some of the prisoners were taken directly to the infirmary, and three days later, the first inmate died, weakened from the brutal conditions of the transport.

The inmates were brought to a former slave labor camp that consisted of three prisoner barracks surrounded by electrified barbed wire. Outside the barracks stood the living quarters for the SS as well as the barracks for the kitchen and infirmary. Each of the five buildings measured 63.75 meters long by 12.5 meters wide (209 feet long by 41 feet wide). Four watchtowers guarded the camp's perimeter, and air-raid shelters reserved for the guards were located outside the camp.

Barely a week had passed after their arrival when the inmates were forced to work in the Continental factory. The commander of the camp, SS-Untersturmführer Harder, requested 20 German prisoners—most of whom were considered criminals—from Neuengamme's main camp to serve as Kapos to oversee prisoner work. Some of the most notorious Kapos were camp elder (Lagerältester) Johann Heinrich Wexler, block elder (Blockältester) Hans Deckert, and inmates Emil Krause (nicknamed "Zigeuner"), and Ferdinand Grosse. Civilian foremen employed by Continental entered the camp to divide the prisoners into work groups. The prisoners were employed in the fabrication of rubber for airplane tires as well as electrical and galvanizing work.

The prisoners were divided into two 12-hour shifts. Those who worked the day shift were awakened at 4:00 A.M. and given a small breakfast, which included about 80 grams (2.82 ounces) of bread and unsweetened coffee. After the morning roll call, work began at 6:00 A.M. The prisoners were marched daily to the factory guarded by armed SS and Kapos. Conditions in the factory were terrible—the prisoners were exposed to noxious gases, were given no protective equipment, and

suffered brutal mistreatment and abuse from the Kapos and the Continental foremen. At around noon, work was briefly interrupted. Lunch, which consisted of a liter (4.2 cups) of turnip soup with no fat, was served in the factory canteen. Work in the rubber factory then recommenced after lunch and continued until 6:00 P.M.

When the inmates returned to the camp, they received a sparse evening meal and then endured evening roll call. During the work shift, the Kapos had compiled a list of prisoners whose work performance was slow or who had otherwise attracted the guards' attention. The list was submitted to Wexler. The Kapos then beat the inmates ruthlessly with rubber truncheons as punishment for their "inadequate" work performance.

Some prisoners were employed in other intermittent work assignments, including clearing debris after bombings. Benjamin Sieradzki, a former inmate in the Stöcken Continental camp, had been assigned to one of the commandos sent to clean out demolished houses not far from the camp. "We had to dig out and remove all kinds of rubble, people's household items and personal possessions, dead animals, piled up old bricks, lumber, metal, et cetera," recalled Sieradzki. "We always looked for old food inside the ruins, and sometimes we found some raw potatoes, stale bread, or other old rotten food."<sup>2</sup> Other inmates were recruited for work in the infirmary, kitchen, and other duties within the camp. Two prisoners employed in the infirmary were Leon Fajwlowicz and Dr. Ilja Margolis.

The prisoners in the Hannover-Stöcken camp at the Continental factory were male Jews who had been deported from the Łódź ghetto to Auschwitz and selected for work outside the camp. The exact dates and rate of death of the inmates are unknown; however, former inmates noted that many died from the terrible conditions and abuse meted out by the Kapos and guards. "A lot of us got sick or injured," Sieradzki has noted, "and soon after we arrived, people started to die on a daily basis. I saw several people dying during a roll call and after severe beatings."<sup>3</sup> In October 1944, between 80 and 85 ill and weakened inmates were transferred from Stöcken to the Neuengamme main camp, where they most likely died. One month later, at the end of November 1944, the remaining 850 inmates were evacuated to Hannover-Ahlem. Therefore, there were some 65 other deaths in the Stöcken Continental subcamp during its three-month existence.

SS-Untersturmführer Harder was the officer in charge (Lagerführer) of the Hannover-Stöcken subcamp at Continental. After his service in World War I, Harder began his career as a professional soccer player, known then as "Tull" Harder. He joined the Nazi Party in 1932, the SS in 1933, and became a guard in Sachsenhausen prior to his service in Neuengamme in 1939. Harder was in charge of 60 SS men who were transferred from Neuengamme to serve as sentries in the Stöcken camp. They were organized under the 7th Wachkompanie, which provided guards for the Hannover camps. At least a part of the guard troop in Stöcken-Continental changed sometime between October and November 1944. About 25 SS men were sent from Neuengamme to Stöcken, among them at least one soldier from the Luftwaffe.

The only successful flight from the Stöcken camp was carried out by one of the Kapos, Karl H. He fled from the Continental factory on October 9, 1944. The camp administration and chief of the 7th Wachkompanie contacted the Gestapo office in Hannover immediately. The Gestapo investigated the Kapo's connections with the woman who worked in the factory canteen, Emmi W. Unlike other inmates who worked in the Continental factory, the Kapos were permitted to circulate the grounds, and if they had money, they purchased drinks from the canteen. Although camp commander Harder had prohibited the canteen to sell goods to the prisoners or the Kapos, Emmi W. believed that her superiors at the factory had given her permission. Thus she was seen communicating frequently with the Kapo Karl H. and was suspected of aiding him in his escape.

The Stöcken Continental camp was evacuated on November 30, 1944. The surviving inmates were summoned and then marched to another subcamp of Neuengamme in Hannover-Ahlem, about 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) away. Harder and his guards were also transferred to the new camp. Harder was tried by a British military tribunal in 1947 for crimes committed in the Hannover-Ahlem subcamp; he was sentenced to a 15-year prison term. In 1946, Grosse was tried, sentenced to death, and executed. Wexler was tried by the Regional Court (Landgericht) Hannover in 1975–1976 and sentenced to life imprisonment. The sentence was changed to 15 years, but he was released in 1982. Wexler died in 1985.

**SOURCES** Several primary and secondary sources contain detailed information about the Hannover-Stöcken (Continental) subcamp of Neuengamme. Most of the information for this entry builds upon Christoph Gutmann's "Das Lager der Continental Gummi-Werke AG in Hannover" in the extensive, two-volume study of concentration camp prisoner labor in Hannover by Rainer Fröbe et al., *Konzentrationslager in Hannover: KZ-Arbeit und Rüstungsindustrie in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (Hildesheim: Verlag August Lax, 1985). Additional information on the transfer of inmates from Stöcken to Ahlem, as well as several witness testimonies from both the Stöcken and Ahlem camps, can be found in Janet Anschütz and Irmtraud Heike, "Wir wollten Gefühle sichtbar werden lassen." *Bürger gestalten ein Mahnmal für das KZ Ahlem* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2004). Another important secondary source of information on the Hannover subcamp is Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and some specific information about the Continental and Akkumulatorenfabrik subcamps in Hannover.

Primary sources with information on the Stöcken (Continental) subcamp are located in various archives and are extensively documented in Christoph Gutmann's essay in the two-volume *Konzentrationslager in Hannover* as well as the exhaustive listing of resources in Anschütz and Heike. Most information gathered from primary documentation can be found in files associated with the Hannover-Ahlem camp, to which the inmates and guards were transferred in November 1944.

The evidence gathered for several postwar trials conducted for crimes committed in Ahlem also contains information about the Continental camp. In London, the IWMA holds aerial photos of the Stöcken Continental grounds (taken October 20, 1945); one of them is also reprinted in Fröbe et al. Also see the archives of the War Office Military Tribunal in the PRO (London) for information about the trial conducted against Harder and other SS leaders (WO 235/348) (WO 235 is copied in part at USHMMA, "JAG's Office, War Crimes Case Files, Second World War," RG-59.016M). Harder was called as a witness in the trial of Neuengamme commandant Max Pauly (WO 235/163), and some information on the Ahlem and Stöcken Continental camps is also provided here. The BA-K contains information related to the entry of Continental into the armaments industry in the files of the Reichsministerium für Rüstungs- und Kriegsproduktion (RMfRK). Letters from the Continental factory to municipal authorities in Hannover, architectural plans for the Continental subcamp, and other information are located at the ASt-H. Information about the trial against camp elder Johann Heinrich Wexler is stored at the AStLG-H (11 Ks 1/74). Finally, the Historische Seminar at the Universität Hannover also contains various records related to the Stöcken camp. For personal accounts of survivors recorded after the war, see the Vernon Tott collection (Acc. 1997 A 0287) and the oral history of David Klipp (RG-50.030\*0345) at USHMMA, as well as those published in Anschütz and Heike (Moshe Miedzinski, Katriel Monitz, and Benjamin Sieradzki). A photograph of the Continental rubber factory in Hannover-Stöcken, taken in 1944 or 1945, can be found at USHMMA, WS # 98827 (RG 10851).

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Benjamin Sieradzki, "A Teenager Survives the Holocaust," Vernon Tott Collection, Hannover-Ahlem concentration camp records and photographs, USHMMA, Acc. 1997 A 0287, p. 21.
2. Ibid., pp. 24–25.
3. Ibid., p. 25.

## HILDESHEIM

The establishment of a subcamp in Hildesheim was a reaction to the massive destruction during a bombing raid on February 22, 1945, of the goods railway yard and the main railway line from Hildesheim to Dresden via Leipzig. Labor was needed to repair the destruction. Nevertheless, there are contradictory statements about the exact dates for the establishment of the camp: survivors state they were sent from Bergen-Belsen to Hildesheim at the end of February; the guards date the arrival as February 24,<sup>1</sup> while the Bergen-Belsen transport lists put March 2 as the date on which the detachment left for Hildesheim. This latter date is supported by an instruction by the Hildesheim mayor to prepare accommodations for March 1.<sup>2</sup>



The Hildesheim prisoners had been evacuated to Bergen-Belsen from Riese/Wüstegiersdorf, a Gross-Rosen subcamp, as part of the evacuation of camps in the eastern parts of Germany. Of the original 800 prisoners, only 500 arrived, and this group, almost unchanged, was sent on to Hildesheim. The prisoners were all Jewish—there were around 340 Hungarian Jews and 160 Jewish prisoners from Italy, Poland, Russia, Yugoslavia, Austria, and Germany. This mix did not change.<sup>3</sup> A young Hungarian was shot on a work site, the only concrete example of a homicide at Hildesheim. However, it is hardly possible to calculate the exact number of prisoners who died, as the camp lists are not available. Most prisoners presumably did not die of mistreatment, malnutrition, and the heavy work but in the heavy bombing raid on March 22, 1945, which destroyed large parts of Hildesheim including the goods railway yard and the city hall where the prisoners were accommodated. Some 250 prisoners probably died, but the number is only an estimate, as the Bergen-Belsen transport lists merely refer to a prisoner transport to Hildesheim without giving details on the number of prisoners.

In Hildesheim, Reichsbahnoberinspektor Laurenz Rappers, who described himself as responsible for the “Acquisition and Use of Labor to Reinstate the Railway Facilities,” had demanded the labor.<sup>4</sup> The prisoners were required by the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways) to clean up the railways, remove the damage, and reinstate the railway facilities.

Members of the SS, who had accompanied the prisoners part of the way from Wüstegiersdorf, accompanied the prisoners on the transport to Hildesheim and remained at the camp.<sup>5</sup> The only details known on the SS guards are from the camp commandant, SS-Hauptsturmführer Otto Heinrich Paul Thümmel.<sup>6</sup> Originally a captain of the artillery, he was discharged from the Wehrmacht in March 1944 due to his age and transferred to an SS-Guards Battalion in Oranienburg. His first assignment as camp commandant was in October 1944 when he was assigned to the subcamp at Wilhelmshaven-Banter Weg. At the end of 1944, he was sent via Wedel to one of the subcamps at the Salzgitter Hermann-Göring-Werke.<sup>7</sup> He remained there until the end of January 1945. At the beginning of March, he commanded the Hildesheim camp for 10 days; 3 days after the attack on March 22, 1945, the camp was evacuated to Hannover-Ahlem.

The prisoners from Hildesheim remember, much more than the SS, the Volkssturm men who guarded the prisoners on the way to work. The Volkssturm platoon was not part of the normal chain of command but was responsible directly to the district party leader, Meyer, or the camp commandant. Albert Rosin was in command of the platoon. Their duty was accomplished in two rotating daily shifts. The Volkssturm soldiers had not been called up to the Wehrmacht because of their age or because they had proved to be indispensable for their jobs. Although they had been recruited directly from their jobs and at the direction of the SS, some of them treated the prisoners with extraordinary brutality.<sup>8</sup> Besides Rosin, one cruel guard was Volkssturm private Hermann Dettmer. A building cleaner from Hildesheim born in 1887, Dettmer

had been a member of the Nazi Party from May 1933.<sup>9</sup> He is described as being about 1.6 meters (5 feet 3 inches) tall, wearing a leather jacket and armed not only with a gun but with a thick stick, with which he often beat the prisoners unconscious.<sup>10</sup>

Not only was Dettmer feared, but so was his superior, platoon leader Rosin. The son of a miner, he was born on September 15, 1900, in Sarstedt near Hildesheim. He served in World War I as a soldier and worked finally as a clerk at a mill in Sarstedt. It was here that he was called up to the Volkssturm.<sup>11</sup> He had been a member of the Nazi Party from May 1937.<sup>12</sup> Rosin did the only known shooting at the Hildesheim subcamp. It happened at the railway goods yard when a young Hungarian who had taken a tin of food from a destroyed railway wagon was shot on railway premises. No investigation was carried out into the theft despite the fact that other Volkssturm members had allowed the prisoners to take damaged food from the destroyed wagons.

The dissolution of the Hildesheim camp followed the attack on Hildesheim on March 22, 1945, in which large parts of the city, the prisoners’ workplace, and accommodation were destroyed. It made no sense to attempt to repair the damage done.

The surviving prisoners then commenced a march lasting several days to Hannover to the Ahlem subcamp. They were evacuated from there on April 6, with the Ahlem prisoners, to Bergen-Belsen.

The events in Hildesheim were investigated in several trials after the end of the war: Dettmer, the former member of the Volkssturm, was convicted by a British military court on August 28, 1946, and sentenced to five years’ imprisonment.<sup>13</sup> New investigations began in 1949 against Dettmer and another Volkssturm member, Hermann Schröder, at the Hildesheim Local Court. However, the proceedings ceased on June 19, 1950.<sup>14</sup> Rosin was convicted of shooting the young prisoner and in the appeal case was sentenced by the State Court at Hildesheim on January 25, 1952, to five years in jail.<sup>15</sup> Thümmel, on the other hand, was convicted by a British military court in 1947 and sentenced to five years’ imprisonment for mistreating and killing Allied subjects in the Wilhelmshaven-Banter Weg work detachment. The events at Hildesheim were only a peripheral matter during this trial.

**SOURCES** Secondary sources useful for this essay are Eberhard Kolb, *Bergen-Belsen: Vom “Aufenthaltslager” zum Konzentrationslager 1943–45* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1985), p. 68; Mandy Gur, “Von Bergen-Belsen nach Bergen-Belsen,” *YalMor* 29 (May 1980): 7–18; and Studienkreis zur Erforschung und Vermittlung der Geschichte des Widerstandes 1933–1945 und Präsidium der VVN—Bund der Antifaschisten, ed., *Heimatgeschichtlicher Wegweiser zu Stätten des Widerstands und der Verfolgung 1933–45*, vol. 3, *Niedersachsen II Regierungsbezirke Hannover und Weser-Ems* (Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1986), p. 79. The latter source furnishes a mortality estimate for the Hildesheim bombing raid.

Primary sources for this essay are found in PRO, WO 235/144; NHStA-H, Nds 721 Hi Acc 90/99 Nr. 160 and Acc



106/80 Nr. 119; ASt-Hild, Best. 803, Nr. 113; AG-BB; BA-L, ZdL 404 ARZ 159/73; and BA-BL.

Kathrin Clausing  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. NHStA-H, Nds 721 Hi Acc. 106/80 Nr. 119, p. 9, Statement by Albert Rosin; and *ibid.*, p. 28, Statement by Erich Kinder.
2. ASt-Hild, Best. 803, Nr. 113.
3. PRO, WO 235/144 Bl. 84, Statement Heinrich Wilhelm August Fischer.
4. NHStA-H, Nds 721 Hi Acc. 106/80 Nr. 119, p. 21.
5. AG-BB, Interview with G.F. 14 March 1995, p. 20.
6. For details, see Sta. Hannover 2 KS 2/63 Bl. 53f, Criminal matter of Wilhelm Genth and Paul Maas charged with murder in BA-L, ZdL 404 ARZ 159/73, B. 35–39.
7. BA-L, ZdL 404 ARZ 159/73, Bl. 37.
8. NHStA-H, Nds 721 Hi Acc. 106/80 Nr. 119, p. 26; Statement Wilhelm Werth, p. 27; Statement Erich Kinder, p. 28; and Statement Alex Schwarz, pp. 38–39.
9. NSDAP-Member Card Index, BA-BL.
10. Statement Heinrich Wilhelm August Fischer, PRO, WO 235/144, p. 84.
11. NHStA-H, Nds 721 Hi Acc. 106/80 Nr. 119, p. 7.
12. NHStA-H, Nds 721 Hi Acc. 106/80 Nr. 119, p. 10.
13. PRO, WO 235/144.
14. NHStA-H, Nds 721 Hi Acc 86/60 Nr. 33, p. 91.
15. NHStA-H, Nds 721 Hi Acc 106/80 Nr. 120, p. 42.

## HORNEBURG

The Horneburg subcamp probably existed as a subcamp of the Neuengamme concentration camp from the end of October 1944 to the end of April 1945. During this period, it was exclusively occupied by female prisoners. The camp was located outside the small Lower Saxony town of Horneburg, Stade County, on the road to Bliedersdorf.

The prisoners' accommodation barracks at the Horneburg camp had been constructed during the summer months of 1944. On February 17, 1944, the Hamburg company Valvo Röhren- und Halbleiterwerke GmbH (Valvo Pipe and Semiconductor Factory, Ltd.) applied to the Building Plenipotentiary at Albert Speer's Reich Ministry for permission to build three wooden barracks. Because of the sustained air raids on Hamburg, Valvo, which had its headquarters in Hamburg, for security reasons began to relocate parts of its factory to Horneburg in 1943. In addition to the three prisoners' accommodation barracks, there was an additional barracks for the camp guards.

In October 1944, two groups of prisoners arrived at the Horneburg women's camp. According to the prisoners' card index of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), 48 mostly Dutch women from the Ravensbrück concentration camp arrived in Horneburg probably on either October 9 or 10, 1944. A transport list has survived for this transport, although it is dated October 19, 1944. A comparison of the prisoners' numbers on this list with the prisoners' cards of the WVHA,

which have survived, reveals that the departure of the women from Ravensbrück occurred on October 9, 1944.<sup>1</sup> A few days later, 200 Hungarian Jewish women arrived from the Auschwitz concentration camp. Most of the Dutch women had been arrested at the beginning of 1944 and transported to the Herzogenbusch concentration camp, from where, during the course of 1944, they were transferred to Ravensbrück. The Hungarian women were expelled from their homes in the spring of 1944 and locked up in various ghettos throughout the country. From the ghettos they were deported to Auschwitz. In Auschwitz the women were held in C Camp, the so-called transit camp, where following a "selection" they were chosen for work in Horneburg.

The Horneburg prisoners were put to work at the Valvo Röhren- und Halbleiter factory as part of the armaments industry. According to survivors' reports, the Horneburg camp prisoners, together with German employees and prisoners of war (POWs), produced mostly radio valves and lightbulbs. Some reports suggest that telephonic equipment was also manufactured there. Most probably the lightbulbs were manufactured at Valvo for use in military aircraft and warships. Many survivors from Horneburg reported the production of the lightbulbs. It was precise mechanical work using magnifying glasses and tweezers. Each workday was 12 hours long. The work caused a great deal of eyestrain. Magda Eggens, a survivor, has the following to say about the work: "My section produced lightbulbs. A few girls had to learn how to blow the glass for the bulbs. I had to put the small wires into the bulbs. I quickly learned the work and my section leader said that I was diligent. It is much more difficult to blow glass and turn the hot glass. The glass blowers were always being burned."<sup>2</sup>

A report by the Dutch survivors suggests that the Dutch women not only were put to work in the factory but, from time to time, were engaged in different open-air tasks outside the factory. For example, they dug and built fortifications in the small Horneburg harbor and unloaded bricks, among other things, from a few ships.

Horneburg was commanded by Peter Klaus Friedrich Hansen. Hansen was born on June 21, 1905, in Kiel. After he completed elementary school, he became a salesman. From 1930 to 1937, he was in charge of a grocer's shop. In 1937 he took over his father's cattle agency. He joined the Allgemeine-SS in 1934 and reached the rank of Rottenführer. He joined the National Socialist Party on May 1, 1937, and the Waffen-SS on November 7, 1939, where he received military training until the beginning of January 1940. From the beginning of 1940 until March 1941, Hansen was a sentry in Gusen (a subcamp of the Mauthausen concentration camp). At the beginning of March 1941, he was transferred to Neuengamme, where he was at first a sentry and from September 1942 a clerk in the commandant's office. During this period he reached the rank of Unterscharführer. Hansen's work in the commandant's office came to an end on September 1, 1944, when he took command of a prisoner clean-up squad, composed of Neuengamme prisoners, in Kiel. Finally, at the beginning of October 1944, he assumed command of Horneburg, where he remained until the end of April 1945.

According to Hansen, about 10 female wardens guarded the female prisoners inside the camp. Former Wehrmacht soldiers were responsible for the camp's external security.

Probably at the end of February 1945, the Hungarian and Dutch women were evacuated from the Horneburg camp. They were transferred to the subcamp Porta Westfalica, also a subcamp of Neuengamme.

According to the surviving workers' logbook for the Jewish prisoners of the Weisswasser women's subcamp, a satellite of the Gross-Rosen concentration camp, the prisoners from that subcamp were transferred to Horneburg at the end of February 1945. About 300 Jewish women reached the Horneburg camp on February 24, 1945. These women had to do the same work as the other Hungarian women before them.

Most probably at the end of March 1945, the women remaining in Horneburg were divided into two groups. A small group of about 60 women was transferred to the Porta Westfalica camp. The remaining Jewish prisoners were evacuated from the camp on April 8, 1945 (this date is mentioned in the logbook), in the direction of Bergen-Belsen. The logbook also records that they arrived in Bergen-Belsen on April 11. Those who survived the rigors of Bergen-Belsen were freed by British troops on April 15, 1945, after four days in the "reception camp."

**SOURCES** This article is based on a description of the Horneburg camp by Ingo Lange, "Das Arbeitslager Horneburg—Auslenkmando des KZ Neuengamme. Eine Zwischenstation auf dem Wege zum KZ Bergen-Belsen" (unpub. MSS, Horneburg, n.d.); and "Mitten unter uns mussten sie durch die Hölle: Das Frauen-Arbeitslager in Horneburg N.E." (unpub. MSS, Horneburg, 2000). In addition, Harmut Lohmann discusses the Horneburg camp in "*Hier war doch alles nicht so schlimm*": *Der Landkreis Stade in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus* (Stade, 1991), pp. 316–323. On the transfer from Ravensbrück to Horneburg, see also Grit Philipp, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Frauen-Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück 1939–1945* (Berlin, 1999), p. 173.

The AG-NG contains a few interviews with female survivors who recount the history of the camp. I have also interviewed many former camp prisoners. Magda Eggens and Rosa Lagercrantz published their memoirs as *Was meine Augen gesehen haben* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999). Further accounts are to be found at the memorial site at YVA, including the surviving work logbook. A copy of the SS-WVHA's prisoners' card index is kept at AG-NG. Also kept there are the transport lists for the transport from Ravensbrück to Horneburg, which names the 48 Dutch women. This list is also kept in the Ravensbrück concentration camp collection at USHMMA, RG-04.006 M, Reel 20. The military court files, which are kept at BA-K, are a source of information about Peter Klaus Friedrich Hansen's career. Sources that can verify the exact arrival date of the Jewish inmates from Auschwitz in Horneburg or that could provide details about the male and female guards of the female subcamp Horneburg have not survived.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Transfer list of October 19, 1944, from Ravensbrück concentration camp to Neuengamme concentration camp, USHMMA, RG-04.006 M, Reel 20.

2. Magda Eggens and Rosa Lagercrantz, *Was meine Augen gesehen haben* (Frankfurt am Main, 1999), p. 51.

## HUSUM-SCHWESING [AKA HUSUM, SCHWESING, LAGER ENGELSBURG]

The concentration camp work detachment at Husum-Schwesing was located some five kilometers (three miles) northeast of Husum in the North German marshes close to the North Sea shore. The camp was established in September 1944 on the initiative of the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht. It was a subcamp of the Neuengamme main camp under the authority of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). The Husum-Schwesing camp is also mentioned in contemporary sources under the names "Husum," "Schwesing," and "Lager Engelsburg," the latter stating its exact location. It was evacuated in late December 1944.

Husum-Schwesing was a slave labor camp that provided manpower for the construction of a complex of earth fortifications along the North Sea shore known as the Frisian Wall (Friesenwall) and the German border with Denmark. These fortifications were intended to prevent an Allied landing on the shores of western Schleswig and bar the entry of Allied troops from Denmark. Due to the Allied advance on the lower Western Front, the project soon lost its strategic significance and was abandoned by late December 1944 and the involved slave and forced laborers withdrawn. Thus, the Husum-Schwesing camp ceased to exist well before the German forces in the area capitulated to the Allies on May 5, 1945. The surviving prisoners were transported back to Neuengamme by train.

During its short period of operation, the Husum-Schwesing camp belonged to the most horrific German slave labor camps and had a high death rate. The prisoners were forced to dig trenches and antitank ditches in marsh soil that was soaked with water and very heavy. They worked outdoors under harsh fall weather conditions without proper clothing or protection. Work mainly consisted of moving huge masses of earth and mud, and because of the abundant supply of concentration camp slaves, it was performed with shovels and wheelbarrows without the use of earthmoving machinery. For this reason, and because of disastrous living conditions and extreme hunger, work progress was slow. Despite the constant efforts by Kapos and guards to speed up the work pace by means of violent blows and abusive language, productivity remained low. There are examples of prisoners being hit so severely with shovels that they died and of large numbers of prisoners from the infirmary who, despite being so weak they could hardly walk, were commanded to do heavy work. The prisoners, who were without

proper footwear, were frequently forced to work in water up to their knees. Work continued seven days a week. Prisoners had to march up to 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) each way to and from the work site every day.

The camp commandant was SS-Untersturmführer Hans-Hermann Griem, an early joiner of the Nazi Party (NSDAP) and SS, born in 1902 in Berlin. He had served as deputy Schutzhaftlagerführer in Neuengamme from 1942 to September 1944. From November 1 to December 16, he also commanded the nearby Ladelund subcamp. The deputy camp commandant was SS-Oberscharführer Eichler; the only Blockführer of the camp was SS-Rottenführer Erwin Klingler. According to survivors' testimony, Griem was an alcoholic who sold provisions meant for the prisoners' consumption to local peasants in order to get money to buy liquor. He was feared for his brutality and frequently used his revolver against the prisoners, once killing a Russian prisoner at short distance. He and the few other SS men, however, mostly stayed in the camp so the daily beatings on the work site were usually administered by Kapos. Guards who were older servicemen from the Marine Infantry performed acts of violence as well. Griem and Klingler were sentenced to death in the first Curio-Haus Trial in 1946 for atrocities committed against prisoners in Husum-Schwesing and other camps, but Griem managed to escape, and Eichler received a short prison sentence. Five German Kapos received long prison sentences by British military courts; a Dutch Kapo received 20 years' imprisonment by a Dutch court.

The first prisoners' transport arrived on September 26, 1944. Further transports arrived on October 4 and October 15. Some 200 prisoners from Husum-Schwesing were transported to Ladelund on October 4 in order to prepare this new subcamp. According to the International Tracing Service (ITS) records, the average strength of the Husum-Schwesing camp was 2,000 male prisoners. Toward the end, there were 2,500 prisoners in the camp, apparently all non-Jewish. Three transports arrived in the course of time with replacement for sick and exhausted prisoners who were returned to Neuengamme for annihilation. Prisoners were from Denmark (98 resistance fighters), France, Holland, Poland, and the Soviet Union.

The Husum-Schwesing camp was originally erected in 1938 to accommodate 250 German workers employed at constructing a military airfield. By 1944, its buildings were extremely run-down. It was located on an area between the railroad and the main road leading from Husum to Flensburg and consisted of eight prisoners' huts that were very overcrowded, a kitchen building, and a storage building with a tailors' workshop and accommodation for those prisoners who worked in the camp kitchen. Four toilet shacks were very primitive and unhygienic. The quasi-rectangular camp compound was surrounded by a double-barbed-wire fence and had watchtowers at each corner. The camp administration and guards' accommodations were in three huts outside the fence. On the enclosed area was also a *Revier* hut (infirmary),

which had two Danish and one Dutch prisoner physicians assigned to them. Paul Thygesen, the only one of them to survive the camp, at times had more than 700 sick and emaciated prisoners to attend to.

Provisions in the camp were very poor. There was no systematic killing of prisoners, but several deaths occurred due to illness, exhaustion, and random violence by Kapos and guards. An estimated 300 to 500 prisoners died in the Husum-Schwesing camp during its three months of operation. Some 300 were buried in 11 mass graves at the city cemetery of nearby Husum.

**SOURCES** This description of the Husum-Schwesing camp is based on Klaus Bästlein et al., eds., *Das KZ Husum-Schwesing* (Bredstedt, 1983). Another account is Jørgen Barfod, *Helvede har mange navne* (Copenhagen, 1969), p. 171, based on numerous early survivors' accounts; and Poul Riis, ed., *Husum-Schwesing og Ladelund* (Slagelse, n.d.). Preliminary data are found in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990); and Gudrun Schwarz, *Die nationalsozialistischen Lager* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990). This camp is briefly mentioned in various popular books, pamphlets, and articles about the Neuengamme concentration camp and on North Friesland local history. Observations by a Danish physicians' team on the health conditions in Husum-Schwesing and other Nazi camps have been published by Paul Thygesen et al. in *Ams* and other medical journals over the years.

Archival material on the Husum-Schwesing camp is scarce. For documents found in AG-NG and LA-Sch-H, see the references in Bästlein et al. The Hans Schwarz Archive at the FZH holds copies of documents on the camp and its commandant Hans-Hermann Griem. Published and unpublished survivors' accounts are held at the FM-C, ASt-Put, and NIOD. For references to trials against Husum-Schwesing SS personnel and Kapos, see Bästlein et al. The same volume also includes a detailed account by Danish prisoner physician Paul Thygesen, earlier published in Danish by Thygesen, *Læge i tyske koncentrationslejre*, 2nd ed. (Copenhagen, 1964), as well as references to further survivors' accounts such as P. Jorand, *Les Camps de la mort: Husum . . . ici on exterminait!* (Nancy, 1946).

Therkel Straede

## KALTENKIRCHEN

In light of the possible use of the German Luftwaffe against Great Britain and Scandinavian countries, construction of a military air base was begun in 1938 near Kaltenkirchen in Schleswig-Holstein. In time, this project expanded to include units of the Luftwaffe, the navy, the Reichsarbeitsdienst (Reich Labor Service, RAD), and numerous quarters for civilian and foreign laborers. The complex stretched along a road from Hamburg to Kiel (later named

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Bundesstrasse 4), about 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) to the north of Hamburg.

For some years the air base was not used. In late September 1944, the site was chosen for the Messerschmitt (Me) 262 jet fighter, as well as for the Arado 234 jet bomber. The existing runways had to be lengthened, and the shortage of labor caused the Luftwaffe command to use prisoners from the larger concentration camps. They, therefore, established a Neuengamme work detachment at Kaltenkirchen and offered the SS leadership the use of the existing wooden barracks, which would be secured with a barbed-wire fence. The Luftwaffe also put at the disposal of the SS 85 elderly Luftwaffe soldiers who were too old for frontline service.

The largest proportion of prisoners consisted of citizens from the Soviet Union, most of whom were prisoners of war (POWs), followed by Poles, men from the resistance in France, and Belgians, Dutch, and Germans, as well as Italians, Yugoslavs, Spaniards, and North Africans. There were a few criminal prisoners, who were appointed as Kapos by the SS. Johannes Wehres, held in concentration camps since 1933 for being part of the Communist resistance, was the camp elder and responsible for camp order. The number of prisoners varied between 550 and a number close to 1,000. If the number of prisoners declined, they were replaced with new transports from Neuengamme.

The approximately 80-kilometer (50-mile) journey for the prisoners took place by rail. The prisoners were locked in sealed railway cattle trucks. The journey took more than two days. Many prisoners did not survive the tribulations of the trip without food or drinking water and without the chance to either sit or lie down. At the end of the rail trip the prisoners had to march to the camp, carrying with them those who died on the rail journey—this under the eyes of the local population.

The camp was close to the very popular Reichsstrasse 4, and opposite the settlement of Springhirsch, where women and children mostly lived. It was in the northern area of the military base. As a result, many people, both soldiers and civilians, could daily watch events in the camp. The camp was about 100 meters square (328 feet square). The prisoners were accommodated in two large wooden barracks. The camp office was located in another barrack that also held the camp elder's room, the sick bay, and the isolation station, which was established for prisoners suffering from dysentery. There was an additional barracks that served as the washroom and toilet block. In a very small wooden building, known as the "Bunker," prisoners were painfully tortured as punishment. The guards were housed in a roomy barracks outside the camp fence.

The SS appointed a camp leader and two noncommissioned officers to the camp. The leader, SS-Hauptsturmführer Otto Freyer, had been transferred from the Wehrmacht to the SS. The Neuengamme SS command formed the view that he was too mild and weak with the prisoners. His demands to be returned to his southern German home were acceded to without any negative consequences for him. His

successor, Bernhard Waldmann, displayed much greater brutality.

Many Neuengamme prisoners had volunteered for Kaltenkirchen because they hoped to increase their survival chances. They would be disappointed.

The work sites were several kilometers from the camp. Many people witnessed daily the screams of the guards as the prisoners marched and saw the exhausted figures on their return, who had to drag or carry their dead comrades back to the camp. Under the armed guard of the Luftwaffe soldiers, the prisoners were used by private construction firms or put to work on the air base. It is claimed that employees of the construction firms considerably increased the prisoners' suffering by forcing them to work hard and by beating them. (Firms named are Bassow & Torkuhl from Lübeck and the Ohlendorff'sche Baugesellschaft from Hamburg.)

The daily work was made more difficult by the limited and poor-quality rations. There was no food other than a slice of bread and a watery soup in the evening consisting of cabbage and beets. Unanimously, the prisoners reported that civilians and personnel from the camp command pilfered a large amount of the food destined for the prisoners, either to eat it themselves or to sell it on the black market.

The prisoners' clothes were not at all suited for the cold and wet seasons. There was a shortage of underwear, and the prisoners had to wear wooden shoes, usually without socks. The prisoners often returned filthy from their work, and the washroom was too small for them all to fit in. It was impossible to maintain adequate hygiene. Small injuries or illnesses remained untreated. The Russian camp doctor lacked an adequate supply of medicines and instruments. Diarrhea spread, and this in turn led to dysentery. The camp, as a result, was populated by "Muslims" (*Muselmänner*) wandering around the camp, prisoners who were literally skin and bones, suffering from edemas and ulcerated abscesses. Few prisoners survived if they reached this state.

The SS principle of "Destruction through Work" (*Verichtung durch Arbeit*) meant that each morning the prisoners had to set off to work and return in the evening in an exhausted state, after standing for hours at roll call. The original intent of the roll call, to determine the exact number of prisoners, had long become an instrument to victimize the prisoners. Frequent beatings and humiliations of every sort possible ate away the physical and psychic well-being of the prisoners. The comfort that they could have found from national groups was destroyed as the prisoners were mixed with different nationalities. At the work sites the prisoners were shot and hanged. The Poles and Soviets were treated especially brutally, a consequence of the prevailing German attitude of despising Slavic people. When they died, it was said, "Get rid of the filth!" (*Weg mit dem Dreck!*). All of these factors increased the death rate.

During the first few months, there were several French Catholic priests who had been kidnapped as hostages with their comrades. It is said that they prayed with the rosary as the prisoners marched to work. They helped enormously in



giving the prisoners the will to resist. Later, the priests were transferred to Dachau, where they survived.

There were few escape attempts. The prisoners seemed to have sensed the hostility of the local population. As the camp was within a military complex and on the edge of a large moor, recapture was easy. Each failed escape attempt resulted in the death sentence. A shining example of humanity, however, was the case of a guard who helped a Ukrainian prisoner to escape.

The dead were laid out in the toilet next to the cesspit. From here they were taken away each morning. There were 185 named dead who are buried in the Kaltenkirchen area of Moorkaten. The command of the burial detachment was given to a French prisoner, Richard Tackx. Tackx and the Polish prisoner clerk Sergiusz Jaskiewicz, as well as others, have stated that there must have been other burial places because there were many corpses that they had to hastily bury. These mass graves have not been located.

Tackx was able to attach an identification mark to many of his French comrades who were buried and to make secret recordings of the burials. He hoped in this way that what he did, which was punishable with death, would help in exhuming the bodies after the war and make identification easier. He was able to hide his notes with German women on the other side of the street in Springhirsch. The camp scribe, Jaskiewicz, did the same. During an Allied air raid on the air base, a few French prisoners, including Tackx, escaped into the moor. Two German women, Herta Petersen and Else Stapel, took the prisoners in during the cold night and fed them. They risked their lives by saving these prisoners. In 1951, Richard Tackx was in charge of a group appointed by the French government to exhume the burial sites in Moorkaten. Most of the French who had been buried were identified and their remains sent back to France.

The air base was completely destroyed by Allied bombers on April 7, 1945. The Kaltenkirchen detachment was transferred on April 16 to Wöbbelin in Mecklenburg. The majority were liberated by Allied forces on May 2 in Wöbbelin.

**SOURCES** Published sources about this camp include Gerhard Hoch, *Hauptort der Verbannung: Das KZ-Aussenkommando Kaltenkirchen*, 3rd ed. (Bad Segeberg, 1983); Hoch, *Zwölf wiedergefundene Jahre: Kaltenkirchen unter dem Hakenkreuz* (Bad Bramstedt, 1980–1981).

Detailed knowledge about the camp is to be found in the State Prosecutor's investigation files: Kiel Sta., Kiel LG, Ermittlungsverfahren gegen Unbekannt wegen des Verdachts der Teilnahme an NS-Gewaltverbrechen—2 Js 680/72. The investigation ceased on July 10, 1972. Additionally, there are written reports from former prisoners and verbal reports from survivors living in France and Poland given after 1975, as well as in an exhumation report from 1951, *Rapport sur les exhumations dans les cimetières concentrationnaires de Kaltenkirchen-Moorkaten et Springhirst* (1951); the same report is available in German as *Bericht über die Exhumierungen in den Friedhöfen Kaltenkirchen-Springhirsch und Moor-*

*katen* (1951). Written survivors' reports almost always refer to specific circumstances. Of importance are the illegal notes of the Polish camp scribe Sergiusz Jaskiewicz about the prisoner population, which are held in AG-NG, as well as the illegally made notes of prisoner Richard Tackx on the burials in Kaltenkirchen-Moorkaten. On the other hand, the Sta. Kiel investigation files marked "unknown" are of little value. They show negligence by the State Prosecutor, because not even the camp leader Freyer was questioned, even though his address was known.

Gerhard Hoch  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## KIEL

A subcamp attached to and administered by the main Neuengamme concentration camp was created in Kiel (Schleswig-Holstein province) in April or July 1944. Some 50 male inmates were transferred from the main Neuengamme camp to Kiel. As in many other subcamps of Neuengamme, the prisoners were deported to the camp to be used as laborers. They cleared rubble from bombed-out areas and searched for unexploded bombs.

There is little other information about the subcamp created in Kiel. The Kiel subcamp existed until either September or October 1944 (possibly until October 5 or 6, 1944), when the inmates were evacuated to the main Neuengamme camp.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources outlining information about the Neuengamme satellite camp in Kiel. Secondary literature that contains brief information on the existence of the camp includes Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broad analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps; and Ulrich Bauch, *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986). This brief information can also be found in the Kiel entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979), although the exact dates of the opening and closing of the camp differ in these sources.

Primary documentation that sheds light on the Kiel camp is equally scarce.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## LADELUND

The concentration camp work detachment at Ladelund was located northeast of the village of Ladelund in northern Germany, just south of the Danish border. The camp was established on October 4, 1944. It was a subcamp of the Neuengamme main camp and under the authority of the SS-

Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). It was evacuated on December 16, 1944.

Ladelund was a slave labor camp that provided manpower for the construction of earth fortifications along the German-Danish border. These fortifications were intended to bar the entry of Allied troops from Denmark into Germany. Due to the Allied advance on the Western Front in France, the project, however, soon lost its strategic significance, and by mid-December 1944, the Ladelund prisoners were transported back to Neuengamme. Thus, the Ladelund camp ceased to exist well before the German forces of the area capitulated to the Allies on May 5, 1945.

During its short period of operation, the Ladelund camp became one of the most horrific German concentration camps, and its death rate was among the highest in the subcamp system. The prisoners were forced to dig antitank ditches in marsh soil that was soaked with water and very heavy. They worked outdoors under harsh fall weather conditions without proper clothing and protection. Work mainly consisted of moving huge masses of earth and mud, and because of the abundant supply of concentration camp laborers, it was performed with shovels and wheelbarrows without the use of earth moving machinery. For this reason, and because of disastrous living conditions and extreme hunger, work progress was slow. Despite the constant efforts by Kapos and guards to speed up the work pace by means of violence, productivity remained low. The prisoners who were without proper footwear were frequently forced to work in water up to their knees.

The camp commandant was SS-Untersturmführer Hans-Hermann Griem, an early joiner of the Nazi Party and SS, born in 1902 in Berlin. Griem had served as deputy Schutzhaftlagerführer in Neuengamme from 1942 to September 1944. From September 26 to the end of 1944, he was the commandant of the nearby Husum-Schwesing concentration camp, another Neuengamme subcamp providing manpower to the fortification project; thus he commanded two of the most horrific subcamps at the same time. According to survivors' testimony, Griem was an alcoholic who sold provisions that were meant for the prisoners' consumption on the black market. He was feared for his brutality and frequently used his revolver against the prisoners, killing several. The daily administration of the camp was, however, taken care of by Lager- und Verwaltungsführer SS-Oberscharführer Friedrich Otto Dörge, and the daily beatings on the work site were left to the Kapos, who were criminals and extremely brutal. Several prisoners died because of acts of violence committed by them. The guards were naval servicemen numbering some 200. Griem was sentenced to death in the first Curio-Haus Trial, primarily for atrocities that he committed in other concentration camps; however, he managed to escape before the execution.

Sources to the Ladelund camp history are scattered, but all deaths in the camp are well documented due to the Lutheran pastor of the village, Johannes Meyer. Despite being a Nazi, he insisted that the prisoners be properly registered and the dead given a Christian burial.

The first group of approximately 200 prisoners arrived on October 4, 1944, from the Husum-Schwesing subcamp. Some 2,000 prisoners were added on November 1 and 2, arriving on two railway transports from Neuengamme. According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), the average strength of the camp was 2,000 prisoners. Prisoners were non-Jewish and came from 13 countries under German occupation. The largest group were hostages from the Dutch town of Putten who had been deported as a reprisal for an attack on German soldiers by the Dutch resistance.

The Ladelund camp was originally erected in 1938 as accommodation for 250 German workers from the Reichsarbeitsdienst (Reich Labor Service, RAD) employed in forestry, fieldwork, and road construction. By 1944, its buildings were extremely run-down. The guards, however, were accommodated in hired private rooms in the village and nearby farms. Hygiene and provisions in the camp were very poor. There was no systematic killing of prisoners, but 301 prisoners died of illness, exhaustion, or random violence by Kapos and guards during the few weeks the camp was in operation. The dead were buried in nine mass graves at the Ladelund village cemetery.

**SOURCES** This description of the Ladelund camp is based on Jørgen Barfod, *Helvede har mange navne* (Copenhagen, 1969); Poul Riis, ed., *Husum-Schwesing og Ladelund* (Slagelse, n.d.); Heinrich Eichhorn, "Das Lager in Ladelund," *JfSchGeest* (1961): 168–176; and Tj. Wouters, *Opdat bet nageslacht bet wete* (Putten, 1948). Preliminary data are found in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990); and Gudrun Schwarz, *Die nationalsozialistischen Lager* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990). The camp is mentioned many times in several popular books, pamphlets, and articles about the Neuengamme concentration camp and on North Friesland local history.

Archival material on the Ladelund camp is scarce. Some documents can be found at AG-NG and the LA-Sch-H. The Hans Schwarz Archive at FZH holds copies of documents on camp commandant Hans-Hermann Griem. An important source is Pastor Johannes Meyer's wartime town chronicle, published as *Beretning om en sydslesvigsk koncentrationslejr* (Sorø, 1947), partially reproduced in Wolfgang Weimar et al., eds., *Quellen zur Geschichte Schleswig-Holsteins, Teil III* (Kiel, 1982). Local published and unpublished survivors' accounts are held at the FM-C, ASt-Put, and NIOD. Further, there are the records of the first Curio-Haus Trial in Hamburg in 1946.

Therkel Straede

## LENGERICH ("A1")

The Neuengamme subcamp A1 in Lengerich was erected between March 1944 and June 1944.<sup>1</sup> Members of the Organisation Todt (OT) as well as concentration camp prisoners and civilian workers constructed the camp. Prisoners and civilian workers arranged the work area, a tunnel, for armaments pro-

duction. The building foreman operated a tiling business in Münster.<sup>2</sup> The subcamp is mentioned for the first time on March 26, 1944, in the concentration camp death lists. The closed old railway tunnel on the line from Münster to Osnabrück was the deciding factor in the decision to construct a subcamp in Lengerich. Because of the tunnel, it was possible to relocate armaments production underground, thereby giving protection from possible Allied bombing attacks.

The prisoners in Lengerich were "political" prisoners, "protective custody" prisoners, and forced laborers. The prisoners were accommodated in a hall of the Brunsmann Inn, Horst-Wessel-Strasse 15 (later Lienener Strasse 15), about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the tunnel.<sup>3</sup>

The prisoners operated milling machines and manufactured parts for the production of airplanes and rockets. They also did other work. There was no production in the tunnel during Christmas 1944. The prisoners during this period were put to work in excavating an underground air-raid shelter for the Lengerich civilian population.<sup>4</sup> A female eyewitness has reported that when there was a great deal of gardening work to be done at the Hotel Heckmann and help was required, the commander of the SS assigned 10 prisoners and an SS man to the work.<sup>5</sup>

Airplane parts and wing sections produced by Vereinigte Leichtmetall-Werke (United Light Metal Works, Hannover-Linden) and sections for the V-1 and V-2 (Aldinger, Stuttgart) were produced in the armaments factory, which had been relocated into the tunnel. The underground armaments factory was equipped with milling machines of all sizes, a lathe, a large press, and a band saw, together with a number of instruments for sharpening and repairing saw blades. Production occurred at the front of the tunnel, which was already usable. The nearby overland electricity supply from the Ibbenbüren power station supplied the underground armaments factory with electricity by means of a transformer located at the northern exit of the tunnel.<sup>6</sup> Civilian workers from Vereinigte were responsible for the production and quality. They had a rented room in Lengerich or nearby and took over the technical supervision of the concentration camp prisoners.

There were almost 200 concentration camp prisoners in the subcamp. In addition to the Germans, French, Poles, Russians, and Belgians, there were also an Italian and a Swiss person.<sup>7</sup> It is not known to what extent the prisoners, who were completely exploited physically and were seriously ill, were returned to the Neuengamme concentration camp and replaced with prisoners capable of working. The number of prisoners from the Lengerich subcamp who died because of the inhuman living and working conditions varies according to each source: the register of deaths in the city hall of Lengerich for 1945 records the death of five concentration camp prisoners. The Memorial Book "Fellowship of Former Soldiers" for the period from April 1944 to the end of the war in 1945 lists the names of six concentration camp prisoners.<sup>8</sup> The causes of death were recorded as "suicide," "natural death," and "death by accident"—causes that ignore the inhuman living and working conditions of the concentration camp prisoners as

well as their treatment by the SS. A concentration camp prisoner had the following to say about an SS man: "He was unbearable. Without a thought he beat people for the slightest trifle."<sup>9</sup> A member of the guard unit also confirmed that in general the prisoners were brutally treated.<sup>10</sup> Punishment was often meted out by beatings for an "offense." Examples of offenses included: protecting one's feet against the cold by covering them with rags without permission, losing one's cap, or not carrying out an order quickly enough.<sup>11</sup> The beating was usually carried out with an electrical cable, about 3 centimeters (1.2 inches) wide and about 70 centimeters (27.6 inches) long. There were 25 blows to the naked posterior, which often resulted in the prisoner being sent to the infirmary.<sup>12</sup>

Death by hanging was the punishment for a concentration camp prisoner who attempted to escape; committed an act of sabotage, real or suspected; or who assaulted a supervisor. Eight concentration camp prisoners were hanged in the subcamp for attempting to escape: a Russian on April 19, 1944; a Russian and a German on June 6, 1944; two Germans on June 16, 1944; and before the evacuation of the camp, which took place on March 24, 1945, a Pole, a Russian, and a German in the spring of 1945. In March 1945, a Pole and another prisoner were hanged, respectively, for the alleged sabotage of a machine and for allegedly damaging tools. A Pole was also hanged who allegedly attacked his supervisor.<sup>13</sup> At an execution the prisoners and the guards were required to gather in an open square:

In the middle of the square was a large wooden trestle about two meters (6.7 feet) tall. An interpreter, on behalf of the SS camp leader, announced that the three prisoners were to be hanged for attempting to escape. The three prisoners had to undress completely. A carpenter's wooden trestle was then placed in the middle of the first wooden trestle. The three men had to climb one after the other onto the carpenter's trestle. A noose was then put around their necks and a SS man, who was behind the prisoners, pushed the trestle, whereupon the prisoners fell and were killed. They did not even remain hanging for five minutes. The whole execution lasted about fifteen minutes. When the third man was dead, all three were thrown onto a railway cart and pushed to a road works site, about thirty minutes away. They were tipped out into a bushy bank and buried in the bank. The street, an extension of the tunnel, followed the railway line in the direction of Osnabrück. It was the bank on the left side in the direction of Osnabrück."<sup>14</sup>

A female witness later reported that the guards had a party after one hanging.<sup>15</sup>

The senior SS leadership in Lengerich was under the command of SS-Untersturmführer Karl-Heinz Rüster. His deputy was Eduard W. The quarters for the senior SS leadership were at the Hotel Heckmann, Horst-Wessel-Strasse 38. The headquarters of the senior leadership was at the Hitler Youth building at Hermann-Göring-Strasse 107 (later



Bahnhofstrasse 107). Born in 1910 in Hessen, Rüster took part in the Russian campaign (between 1941 and 1943) and had a long career in the SS.<sup>16</sup>

The camp commandant was Georg Janszen. Within the subcamp he had responsibility for the treatment of the concentration camp prisoners. Born in Oldenburg in 1910, Janszen completed his secondary school studies but only after first completing his apprenticeship as a bricklayer. He later studied the building trade at the Berlin Technischen Hochschule so that he could be a technical teacher. Janszen, who could speak English and French, determinedly pursued his SS career. Commencing in the summer of 1941 as an ordinary SS man, he reached the rank of Obersturmführer by November 1944.<sup>17</sup> He died in the garden of the Brunsmann Inn on March 13, 1945, during an Allied air raid on Lengerich.<sup>18</sup> After his death, Konrad Karl Friedrich Wangerin, SS-Hauptscharführer and Kriminalsekretär of the Münster Gestapo, took control of the subcamp and the functions of the SD. He was directly responsible to the Münster Gestapo and not the main camp commandant.<sup>19</sup>

A 30-man Luftwaffe squad from southern Germany (Markt Schwaben) guarded the concentration camp prisoners.<sup>20</sup> They were accommodated at Wichmann's household supply store, Hermann-Göring-Strasse 103.

Although an exception rather than the rule, the actions of a few German civilian workers were not insignificant in ensuring the survival of a number of concentration camp prisoners. One concentration camp prisoner, who worked with a civilian worker as a milling machine operator, had the following to say: "It was marvelous with this German. He brought me bread every day—if an animal was slaughtered at home he brought me some meat the next day."<sup>21</sup> Another concentration camp prisoner explained as follows: "A few Germans [the skilled tradesmen] were responsible for the technical scope of the work and were there to show us how to operate the machines. In Lengerich I never knew of a case where one of the skilled tradesmen mistreated a prisoner. Personally, I spoke good German, and had a very good relationship with my supervisor who allowed me to read his newspapers and did not pay too much attention to my pace of work."<sup>22</sup>

**SOURCES** This entry on the Lengerich subcamp is based on the autobiographical details by Lengerich concentration camp prisoner Paul Kern. He has published the following two books in French: Paul Kern, Marcel Angles, Maurice Choquet, and Pierre Brunet, *Les jours de notre mémoire (1940–1945): Neuengamme, quatre survivants témoignent* (Neuengamme, 1975); and *Un "Toboggan" dans la tourmente en Franche-Comté 1940–1945* (Besancon, 1989). See also Norbert Ortgies and Ursula Wilm-Chemnitz, *Tage im Tunnel: Das KZ-Aussenlager A 1 Lengerich 1944–1945* (Osnabrück, 2001); Gert Schumann, "Sklavenarbeit für den Krieg," *WN*, April 5, 1985. The interview with the concentration camp prisoner Josef K., "Es war Pfingstmontag 44, als ich nach Lengerich kam," was published in the weekly newspaper *WiL*, May 15, 1991.

The Lengerich subcamp is well documented in archival sources. As a result of the specific nature of this essay, the au-

thor has limited the number of references to the essential archival sources. Files held in the BA-B are of great significance for the SS-Führungsstab in the subcamp. The following archives provide information on some aspects such as escape attempts, punishment, execution, and death of the Lengerich concentration camp prisoners: BA-P, DN, AG-NG, ABL/LPD-N/O, ASt Lengerich, and the Friedhofskapelle Lengerich. As part of the author's report in the series on Nordrhein-Westfalen, published in Jan-Erik Schulte, ed., *Konzentrationslager im Rheinland und in Westfalen 1933–1945: Zentrale Steuerung und regionale Initiative* (Paderborn, 2005), the author conducted numerous interviews with eyewitnesses in 2002. These interviews are of significant importance as they provide details of local knowledge, individual perceptions, and evaluations of the events, which often enrich the material held in the archives. (Written records of the interviews are in the author's private collection.)

Hans-Jürgen Milling  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Interview with a witness, July 1, 1997, private collection Milling.
2. Interview with a witness, July 1, 1997, *ibid.*
3. Paul Kern et al., *Les jours de notre mémoire (1940–1945): Neuengamme, quatre survivants témoignent* (Neuengamme, 1975), p. 148.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
5. Interview with a witness, July 1, 1997.
6. Kern et al., *Les jours de notre mémoire*, p. 147; Gert Schumann, "Sklavenarbeit für den Krieg," *WN*, April 5, 1985; Letter by Robert B., March 28, 1998, in Norbert Ortgies and Ursula Wilm-Chemnitz, *Tage im Tunnel: Das KZ-Aussenlager A 1 Lengerich 1944–1945* (Osnabrück, 2001), p. 26.
7. Kern et al., *Les jours de notre mémoire*, p. 142.
8. Sterbebuch der Stadt Lengerich 1945; Stadt Lengerich. Totengedenkbuch der "Kameradschaft ehemaliger Soldaten," Friedhofskapelle Lengerich.
9. Report by the prisoner Frantisek Sterba, AG-NG.
10. Record of interview of George A. conducted by the Bavarian Police, State Police Headquarters, Lower Bavaria/Oberpfalz II a 1 in Regensburg, May 26, 1967.
11. Paul Kern, *Un "Toboggan" dans la tourmente en Franche-Comté 1940–1945* (Besancon, 1989), p. 97.
12. Robert B., letter, March 28, 1998, in Ortgies and Wilm-Chemnitz, *Tage im Tunnel*, p. 31.
13. Kern, *Un "Toboggan" dans la tourmente en Franche-Comté*, p. 97; Kern et al., *Les jours de notre mémoire*, p. 162; BA-P, Doc. Film Record Nr. 56308, Photo 321(Z); Extract from archive Neuengamme Documentary Collection, "Neuengamme Concentration Camp Prisoners in the External Sub-Camp A1," May 12, 1997; Ortgies and Wilm-Chemnitz, *Tage im Tunnel*, p. 35; Interview with Josef K., "Es war Pfingstmontag 44, als ich nach Lengerich kam," *WiL*, May 15, 1991.
14. George A., record of interview, May 26, 1967.
15. Interview with a witness, July 1, 1997.
16. SS Files—Karl-Heinz R.; SS Files Eduard W, BA-BL, formerly BDC; Witness interview July 1, 1997, and Witness interview September 9, 2002, private collection Milling.



17. Files George J., BA-BL.
18. Witness interview, 09.12.1996, private collection Milling; Robert B. Oral Report, August–September 1999 in Ortgies and Wilm-Chemnitz, *Tage im Tunnel*, p. 43.
19. Files Konrad W., BA-BL.
20. Record of interview George A., May 26, 1967; Witness interview February 9, 2002.
21. Prisoner's report, Frantisek Sterba.
22. Robert B., letter, March 28, 1998, in Ortgies and Wilm-Chemnitz, *Tage im Tunnel*, p. 45.

## LÜBBERSTEDT [AKA BILOHE]

About halfway between Bremerhaven and Bremen, in the middle of a thick forest, is the Lübberstedt railway station. Close to the station a branch line leads to a restricted military area. During World War II, a secret factory, “Muna Lübberstedt,” produced munitions for the German Luftwaffe there. The plant was officially listed as LW (Luftwaffe) 2/X—Lufthauptmunitionsanstalt Lübberstedt.

From the end of August or the beginning of September 1944 to the end of April 1945, a Neuengamme subcamp was located close to the factory. It was known as “Bilohe” or “Lübberstedt.”

The camp was originally built around 1941 by a Luftwaffe battalion. It initially held both male and female Ukrainian workers.

The subcamp included buildings for both the SS and the prisoners. The whole area was surrounded by a tall barbed-wire fence that was said to have been lit at night.<sup>1</sup> Watchtowers were placed at critical points.

As soon as the prisoners entered the camp, they stood on the camp street, their only connection to the outside world. On the left-hand side of the street there were probably two barracks for the SS and the guards. They were separated from the prisoners' area by barbed wire. One can assume that there was one barracks for male and one for female personnel. In one of the barracks there was an “office” where the commandant was based and administrative matters were attended to. There was another building in which the heating for the camp and a garage for vehicles were to be found. Next to the SS barracks was a kitchen barracks. In front of it was the roll-call square.

In the kitchen barracks, the only barracks erected with bricklike material, the meals were prepared and distributed. There was also a food store and a tailor's shop. The infirmary was connected to this building. On the east and southern side of the roll-call square were the washrooms and showers. The latrines were in the southernmost corner of the camp, within sight of the SS building.

To the right of the camp road were the prisoners' barracks. An aerial photograph shows at least 6 barracks in this area. Others say that there were 8, possibly 25 barracks, but this cannot be verified.<sup>2</sup> The barracks were described as follows: “One room held sixteen girls. In each barracks there were three such rooms.”<sup>3</sup> There were 48 women in each barracks.

There were 500 Jewish women from Hungary in Lübberstedt. They had been selected in Auschwitz in August 1944. The selection aimed at the formation of work detachments that would mostly work in the armaments industry in the Third Reich. In contrast to Auschwitz, Lübberstedt was regarded by the women as “pleasant.”<sup>4</sup>

The subcamp had three commandants who all were members of the SS. They were older men, and it was only the last commandant who brought “fear and terror” to the prisoners.<sup>5</sup>

The commandant was supported by female SS. There are said to have been four to six female guards. Most accounts speak of five SS women. There were probably two senior female overseers and four female work detachment leaders who accompanied the women to work and supervised their work at the munitions plant.

The remaining guards at the camp were mostly older, disabled Wehrmacht veterans. There were about 10 such veterans.

A day in summer began between four and five in the morning with a morning roll call. All the prisoners in a barracks had to be counted. Breakfast was then eaten. It consisted of a quarter of a pan loaf of bread, a little jam, a little piece of margarine, and half a liter (two cups) of a warm brew called “coffee.” Finally, the barracks were cleaned, the beds made, and the prisoners attended to their personal hygiene.

At 6:00 A.M. the prisoners picked for outside labor marched out of the camp to work. They were all tied to one another with strings around their stomachs as they marched the few kilometers to Muna, singing in German. They worked to late in the afternoon, with a half-hour break at midday. Alternatively they could work in a 12-hour shift. Lunch at Muna consisted of more or less a liter (a quart), of thin beet soup, in which sometimes there was a piece of horse meat. In spring, there was sometimes a small piece of pickled herring. After the end of their work, they walked back to the camp, where there was an evening roll call. The evening meal was basically what they had for breakfast—the only difference was that now and then they got a spoonful of curds, a little sausage, or some warm soup.

The work described here is only that of the outside work detachments. Other women were chosen to work in a Luftwaffe munitions factory. The largest detachment manufactured bombs. At Muna in Lübberstedt, sea mines, flak grenades, and other aerial bombs were made. Among other things, the prisoners had to make the gunpowder, fill the shells, and transport the finished products on small mine cars for loading.

Another detachment was busy in the parachute tower. Toward the end of the war, the prisoners worked outside Muna because there was a shortage of raw materials. They dug trenches, put up blockades, made fortifications, and erected camouflage.

Because of their experiences in Auschwitz, the women feared the infirmary and only went there when it was absolutely unavoidable. There were many infections in Lübberstedt caused by injuries from the prisoners' wooden shoes.

The prisoners were treated for scabbylike rashes, middle ear infections, fever, sore throats, dizziness, and toward the end of the war, an illness similar to diarrhea. In January 1945, about 25 prisoners were ill (4 percent of 495 prisoners); in February, 12 percent; and in March, around 9 percent.<sup>6</sup> There were 5 deaths in Lübberstedt, but only 4 were reported to the authorities. A woman died shortly after her arrival from a lung inflammation, and a weak heart resulted in the death of another on September 4, 1944.

A woman was severely mistreated in September or October 1944, as she had saved a potato and a piece of bread for the following morning so that she would not go to work hungry. This was not allowed. She died because of her mistreatment by the SS female guards. The burial is said to have taken place on Yom Kippur.<sup>7</sup>

A 19-year-old inmate died on March 28, 1945, because of mistreatment by an SS female warden when the prisoner was no longer able to pull a heavy mine car. She was beaten with a stick and did not have the strength to walk back to the camp. She died that evening in the barracks.<sup>8</sup>

On the morning of April 4, 1945, a prisoner failed to appear at the morning roll call. She was so weak that her body had swollen, and she could not stand. She had been heavily beaten a few days before. No one believed that she was sick, so the camp commandant or the last senior female overseer entered the barracks and beat her to death.<sup>9</sup>

Another prisoner died on April 5, 1945. The cause of death was "blood poisoning."

The dead were buried in a communal grave with other camp victims in the Lübberstedt cemetery. The perpetrators were not brought to justice, as there was insufficient evidence to identify them.

Most of the women were evacuated from Lübberstedt on April 20, 1945, by train. After several stops, the train arrived at Eutin in Schleswig-Holstein on May 2, where it was attacked by British aircraft. Over 150 women lost their lives in that attack. The injured were treated in the hospitals at Eutin and were taken in the middle of May to United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) refugee camps at Sierksdorf and Haffkrug.

**SOURCES** The basis for this entry on the Lübberstedt subcamp is the book published by members of the Muna Lübberstedt Arbeitskreis, *Lw. 2/XI—Muna Lübberstedt, Zwangsarbeit für den Krieg* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1966). It depicts not only the subcamp but camps for prisoners of war, the forced labor of the so-called Eastern workers, and of course the history of the munitions plant. The conclusion deals with the end of the war in Lübberstedt as well as the cemetery at Lübberstedt.

Initially it was very difficult to find references to the subcamp. As part of the research, it was possible to check the archives. Of importance are the war diary of the Muna Lübberstedt from January to May 1945 (BA-MA); a questionnaire of former Hungarian prisoners from August 1945 by the Jewish Agency for Palestine (HAFHDCB). The private photograph album of the son of a former officer of Muna was also

made available to the author, which is a valuable source of information. Finally, the HJMA holds thousands of reports from surviving Hungarian Jewish deportees taken in 1945 and 1946 by DEGOB. Several protocols describe conditions in the Lübberstedt camp; see especially 1236, 1574, 1801, and 1827.

Thorsten Gajewi  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Witness statements by Lilli Regina Kallos and Malvina Einhorn, Questionnaire of former Hungarian prisoners, August 1945, DEGOB.

2. Witness statements by Ilonka-Elka Friedmann, Barbara Lorber, Ann Zand, Fritz Friedmann, and Edith Las, DEGOB.

3. Witness statement by Edith Las, DEGOB.

4. Ibid.

5. Witness statements by Tova-Kornelia Hochmann, Helena Kohn-Einhorn, and others, DEGOB.

6. War Diary Muna Lübberstedt, pp. 9, 22, 46, in BA-MA, RL-25/168.

7. Witness statement by Lilli Regina Kallos, DEGOB.

8. Witness statement by Ann Zand, DEGOB.

9. Witness statement by Helena Kohn-Einhorn, DEGOB.

## LÜTJENBURG (*HOHWACHT*)

In December 1944, a subcamp of Neuengamme was created in Lütjenburg (Schleswig-Holstein province). Inmates deported to the Neuengamme subcamp system were used as laborers in construction, repairs, and various other economic and rearmaments efforts. The creation of satellite camps at work sites diminished transportation time for inmates between the main camp and the outlying sites. At least 197 male inmates were deported to Lütjenburg to be used as laborers for various firms, including Anschütz und Co. and Zweigwerk Hohwacht.<sup>1</sup> The inmates worked in the manufacture of navigational and other equipment for the aviation industry.

According to an attachment to a translated copy of the report filed by SS garrison doctor (Standortarzt) Trzebinski, which lists the SS doctors in charge of overseeing medical care within the Neuengamme camps, Dr. Geese and his assistant SS-Unterscharführer Kurt Otto Kemmerich supervised the health of the Lütjenburg inmates. The report also notes that there were 26 SS officer guards in the camp.<sup>2</sup>

The camp in Lütjenburg existed until March 25, 1945, when the prisoners were evacuated to Rathmannsdorf on foot, then further to Kiel and Neumünster. The fate of the Lütjenburg inmates is unknown.

A British military tribunal brought Kemmerich to trial in 1947. He was charged with the murder of a Polish national in the infirmary of the Hamburg-Sasel-Poppenbütte concentration camp. Kemmerich was found not guilty.<sup>3</sup>

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources outlining information about the Neuengamme satellite camp in Lütjenburg. Secondary literature, which contains brief information on the existence of the camp, includes Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broad analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and a reproduction of the Trzebinski report; Werner Johe, *Neuengamme. Zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager in Hamburg* (Hamburg: Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1982); and Ulrich Bauch, *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986). This information (opening and closing dates, number of inmates) can also be found in the Lütjenburg entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979). Finally, for the dates and path of the evacuation of the camp, see the second volume of the two-volume work *Ein KZ wird geräumt. Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung: Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, ed. Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2000).

Primary documentation that offers details on the Lütjenburg camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG, which contains many witness reports from former prisoners, may yield additional information about this camp. For information related to the trial of Kemmerich, see documentation of the Curiohaus-Prozess, PRO (London), WO 235/162–169, as reproduced in USHMMA, RG-59.016M, JAG, War Crimes Case Files.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). USHMMA (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also contains a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126.

2. Ibid.

3. Trial proceedings (Sasel II) against Kurt Otto Kemmerich (1947), JAG's Office: War Crimes Case Files, Second World War, USHMMA, RG-59.016M, Reel 8.

## MEPPEN-DALUM

The Neuengamme subcamp Dalum, located southwest of Meppen, was constructed in the spring of 1938 with a capacity for about 1,500 inmates. However, Dalum was not absorbed into the Neuengamme camp system until January 1945, when over 1,000 inmates from Neuengamme were transported there. Prior to this transport, the Dalum camp served various functions within the Nazi camp system. Its

changing administration reflected the shifting needs of the Nazi regime, including repression of opponents of the Nazi regime, incarceration of those sentenced by civil and military courts, and detainment of prisoners in the Neuengamme camp system.<sup>1</sup>

Beginning in 1933, the camps in the Emsland region were first constructed to incarcerate opponents of the Nazi regime who were kept in “protective custody” (*Schutzhaft*). Prisoners in protective custody were used to cultivate the marshland (*Moore*) near the border for future development. In 1938 construction began on the Dalum camp, one of the eight newly built penal prison camps (*Strafgefangenenlager*) in the Emsland, and was completed in May 1939. The Armed Forces High Command (OKW) took over the Dalum camp in September 1939, and it became one of nine camps in the prisoner-of-war (POW) camp complex (*Kriegsgefangenen-Mannschaftsstammlager*, or “Stalag”) VI C Bathorn. The camp then served as a transit camp (*Durchgangslager*) for Polish, French, and Soviet POWs. In June 1942, the Luftwaffe took over the administration of the camp, and men from Rotterdam between the ages of 17 and 40 were deported to Dalum to work as slave laborers.

On January 3, 1945, over 1,000 inmates were deported to Dalum from the Neuengamme main camp. According to most secondary sources on the Meppen subcamps, 2,500 inmates were transferred from Neuengamme to both Versen and Dalum.<sup>2</sup> However, the exact number of inmates in each camp is unknown. The prisoners in the Dalum subcamp were all men, and as was the case in Neuengamme, they had been imprisoned for various reasons, such as resistance activities, political affiliation, or religion. The prisoners were housed in at least 10 wooden barracks. According to Polish prisoner Zdzisław Sokół, who accompanied the commandant SS-Obersturmführer Hans Griem on his rounds of Ladelund, Husum, Dalum, and Versen, some conditions in Dalum were “the best of the four camps. . . . All camps except Dalum were overcrowded.” However, “the clothing and feeding [were] bad. The sanitary installations . . . at Dalum were still worse [than the other camps].” Moreover, the inmates did not have adequate medical care.<sup>3</sup> Captain Walter Rose, of the postwar War Crimes Investigation Unit, emphasized in a deposition that Versen and Dalum were altered considerably immediately after the war. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) detachment in Meppen, together with the British Military Government detachment, established a displaced persons camp for Polish civilians there.<sup>4</sup>

Working conditions for the Dalum inmates were dreadful. Similar to inmates imprisoned in other Emsland camps, the Dalum prisoners were used for forced labor on the so-called Friesenwall, a Wehrmacht defense installation planned for the Dutch border. With only shovels and spades, the prisoners had to dig massive trenches near the border in a marshland area that was filled with mud from constant rain. Although he was incarcerated in the nearby Versen camp, former inmate Morton Ruge endured the same kind of labor as inmates in Dalum. “The work was completely futile,” Ruge



has emphasized, “because ‘the enemy’ hardly ever came through the forests [over the border], but rather more easily on the streets.” According to Ruge, although the digging was not particularly difficult, the long hours, inadequate clothing, insufficient food, and lack of heat and shelter made for unbearable working conditions.<sup>5</sup>

The Dalum subcamp was administered chiefly by the SS. The commandant of the subcamp was SS-Obersturmführer Hans Griem. According to Sokół’s postwar trial depositions, Griem was either the Lagerführer (camp leader) or a deputy commandant and later supervised the Husum, Ladelund, Dalum, and Versen subcamps. Also according to Sokół, Griem was especially brutal toward the prisoners on his rounds of the camps.<sup>6</sup> SS-Rottenführer Joseph Klingler, a Volksdeutsche from Romania, was appointed as block leader (Blockführer) in Dalum. Klingler joined the SS in 1941, trained in Oranienburg, and was transferred to Dachau in 1943, then to the Neuengamme subcamp Drütte. In April 1944, he returned to the Neuengamme main camp, was reassigned to Husum as Blockführer in October 1944, and after Husum closed, was transferred to Dalum in January 1945. Klingler noted in a postwar deposition that orders to punish prisoners were handed down to him from both Griem and SS-Oberscharführer Seifert, who may have been the Lagerführer in Dalum. Both Griem and Seifert ordered the punishment of prisoners, according to Klingler. In his deposition, Sokół corroborates Seifert’s presence in the administration of the Dalum camp; however, he noted that Seifert was the commandant. It is likely that Griem oversaw the group of camps (judging by the rounds he made) and that Seifert supervised daily operations within the camp (perhaps as Lagerführer).<sup>7</sup> SS-Rottenführer Uhling oversaw the kitchen barracks.

Neither the exact number of prisoner deaths nor the death rate in the Dalum subcamp can be determined. Historians Erich Kosthorst and Bernd Walter have concluded that 566 inmates died between November 16 and March 25, 1945, in both the Versen and Dalum subcamps, mostly from exhaustion, hunger, and lung and intestinal diseases.<sup>8</sup> Some prisoners were punished and beaten for not working to the satisfaction of the Kapos or the guards. According to the postwar deposition of Wilhelm Anton Schneider, a Kapo in the Dalum camp who had been transferred from Husum after it was closed, the Kapos were given the responsibility of monitoring the prisoners en route to the work sites. “If the prisoners did not work properly or committed other offenses we were supposed to report them to the camp commandant,” Schneider recalled. “But on some occasions we took the punishment into our own hands, more or less the Kapos had the liberty to do as they pleased. . . . Griem himself preferred that the Kapos ran about all the time with sticks.”<sup>9</sup> Just prior to the evacuation of the Dalum camp, a quarterly report filed by SS garrison doctor (Standortarzt) Trzebinski noted that on March 29, 1945, 807 prisoners occupied Dalum, indicating that several hundred prisoners either died in Dalum or were transferred back to the Neuengamme main camp.<sup>10</sup>

The Dalum camp was evacuated as Allied troops approached, beginning in late March 1945. Under an agreement forged between Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler and Count Folke Bernadotte of the Swedish Red Cross, an unknown number of Danish prisoners from Dalum were sent to Neuengamme by cattle car on March 15 or 16, 1945. On March 24, 1945, the Hamburg Commander of the Order Police (Befehlshaber der Ordnungspolizei Hamburg, BdO) issued orders to evacuate camps in the Emsland area. The Dalum prisoners were evacuated to the nearby Versen subcamp on the same day. The following day, those capable of walking were rounded up and marched to Cloppenburg; the ill were transported by train and followed the march in closed cattle cars. From Cloppenburg, the inmates were evacuated to Neuengamme. An unknown number of inmates died during the evacuation.<sup>11</sup>

Griem was tried and sentenced to death, but he escaped before he was executed.<sup>12</sup> He died in 1971. Klingler was tried by a British military court, found guilty of the murder and ill treatment of Allied nationals, and was sentenced to death by hanging in 1947. Schneider was tried by the same court for ill treatment of Allied nationals and was sentenced to four years in prison.

**SOURCES** There are scant primary and secondary resources on the Dalum subcamp. However, the most extensive secondary sources on Dalum and other Emsland camps include the studies by Erich Kosthorst and Bernd Walter, *Konzentrations- und Stafgefangenenlager im Emsland, 1933–1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1985); Elke Suhr, *Die Emslandlager* (Bremen: Donat & Temmen Verlag, 1985); and Elke Suhr and Werner Boldt, *Lager im Emsland, 1933–1945: Geschichte und Gedenken* (Oldenburg: Bibliotheks- und Informationssystem der Universität Oldenburg, 1985). For a broad overview of the Neuengamme subcamp system, including the reproduction of a quarterly report submitted by SS garrison doctor Trzebinski on numbers of surviving inmates in Dalum and elsewhere, see Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997). For information on the evacuation, liberation, and subsequent creation of displaced persons camps at Dalum, see Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung, Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2000); Andreas Lembeck, “—to Set Up a Polish Enclave in Germany”: *Displaced Persons in the Emsland, 1945–1950* (Papenburg: DIZ Emslandlager, 2001); and Andreas Lembeck and Klaus Wessels, *Befreit, aber nicht in Freiheit: Displaced persons im Emsland 1945–1950* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1997).

Primary documentation on the Dalum subcamp, used extensively by Suhr and Boldt and Kosthorst and Walter, is located at the FZH Archiv Hans Schwarz, which includes a witness report from former Versen inmate Morton Ruge and the original quarterly report filed by Trzebinski (13-6-11) as well as other related materials. The DIZ-EL in Papenburg contains textual records and photo archives pertaining to the Emsland camps (1933–1945) on the Internet at [www.diz-emslandlager.de](http://www.diz-emslandlager.de). Documentation related to the orders from the



Befehlshaber der Ordnungspolizei Hamburg for the evacuation of the Emsland camps is stored at the StA-Br. Some information about the layout of the Dalum camp can be found in the records of the PRO (London) 235/302 (duplicated at USHMMA, RG-59.016M, Reel 9), in the court deposition of Captain Walter Rose, War Crimes Investigation Unit. These files also contain specific information about Hans Griem, the commandant of Dalum and other camps, as well as other individuals who were in charge of the camp. Finally, information about Griem can be found at the NARA, files of the BDC, SS-Officer Personnel files, series SSO-031A and SSO-131B.

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## NOTES

1. According to the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979), Dalum was a subcommando of Meppen-Versen. Additional research at the DIZ may clarify whether Dalum was attached to Versen or directly to Neuengamme as a subcamp.

2. Erich Kosthorst and Bernd Walter, *Konzentrations- und Strafgefangenenlager im Emsland, 1933–1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1985), p. 109; Elke Suhr and Werner Boldt, *Lager im Emsland, 1933–1945: Geschichte und Gedenken* (Oldenburg: Bibliotheks- und Informationssystem der Universität Oldenburg, 1985), p. 30.

3. Deposition of Zdzisław Sokół (trans.) to Captain Ronald Walter Rose, Essex Regiment, British Army of the Rhine Translation (25 April 1946), PRO (London), WO 235/302 (reproduced in USHMMA, RG-59.016M, Reel 9).

4. Deposition of Captain Ronald Walter Rose, War Crimes Investigation Unit, HQ/BAOR Translation (24 May 1946), PRO (London), WO 235/302 (reproduced in USHMMA, RG-59.016M, Reel 9); includes sketched plans of the camps Husum, Ladelund, Dalum, and Versen. The plans provided for Rose's deposition come from the UNRRA.

5. Morton Ruge, "Aussenkommando Versen bei Meppen des Konzentrationslager Neuengamme," reproduced partially in Kosthorst and Walter, *Konzentrations-*, pp. 113–114.

6. Sokół Deposition, p. 2.

7. Deposition of Joseph Klingler to Captain Walter Rose, BAOR Translation (17 May 1946), PRO (London), WO 235/302 (reproduced in USHMMA, RG-59.016M, Reel 9). Additional research in NARA SSO personnel files may yield further information that might clarify the exact positions of both Griem and Seifert.

8. Kosthorst and Walter, *Konzentrations-*, p. 109.

9. Deposition of Wilhelm Anton Schneider to Captain Walter Rose, BAOR Translation (27 April 1946), PRO (London), WO 235/302 (reproduced in USHMMA, RG-59.016M, Reel 9).

10. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126.

USHMMA (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also has a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167, with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos.

11. Andreas Lembeck and Klaus Wessels, *Befreit, aber nicht in Freiheit: Displaced Persons im Emsland 1945–1950* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1997), p. 23.

12. Further research at the NARA, BDC, SS-Officer Personnel files, Series SSO-031A, may provide additional information. See also French Maclean's, *The Camp Men: The SS Officers Who Ran the Nazi Concentration Camp System* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publications, 1999) for brief biographical information on Griem and Seifert.

## MEPPEN-VERSEN

Located in the borderland area near the Netherlands, the Emsland camp Meppen-Versen (or Veerssen) was absorbed into the Neuengamme concentration camp system on November 16, 1944. Prior to the deportation of prisoners from Neuengamme, Versen served various functions within the Nazi camp system and reflected the changing needs of the administration and German military, including repression of opponents of the Nazi regime, incarceration of those sentenced by civil and military courts, and the establishment of satellite camps in the Neuengamme camp system.

Beginning in 1933, the camps in the Emsland were first constructed to incarcerate opponents of the Nazi regime, who were kept in "protective detention" (*Schutzhaft*) in several camps in the area. Prisoners in protective custody were used to cultivate the marshland (*Moore*) near the border for future development. Versen was constructed in 1938 in the area allocated to the Reich Labor Service (Reichsarbeitsdienst), which had been withdrawn from the Emsland in early 1938 due to the disappointing results of its laborers' work service. The Armed Forces High Command (OKW) took over the Versen camp in 1939. It became one of nine camps in the prisoner-of-war (POW) camp complex (*Kriegsgefangenen-Mannschaftsstaumlager* or "Stalag") VI B in Emsland. Following this administrative change, Versen became a transit camp (*Durchgangslager*) for thousands of POWs from Poland, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. In May 1942, Stalag Versen was absorbed into the Stalag VI C Bathorn system, and from September 1943, Italian military internees (IMIs) were incarcerated in the camp. Although most had been transferred to other camps by November 1944, some Italian prisoners were still interned in Versen when it was shifted to the Neuengamme camp system.

In November 1944, over 1,500 inmates were transferred from the Neuengamme main camp to Versen. According to most secondary sources on the Meppen subcamps, 2,500 inmates were transferred from Neuengamme to both Versen and Dalum. However, the exact number of inmates in each camp is unknown.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners in Versen were men of various nationalities, including Belgian, French, Dutch, Danish, Russian, Polish, as well as some IMIs. As was the case in the

Neuengamme main camp, inmates had been imprisoned for their resistance actions, political affiliation, religion, or other “criminal activity.” They arrived in Meppen by train and were marched from the train station through the town to the camp.<sup>2</sup> The prisoners were housed in several wooden barracks. At first, there were no bunks or straw in the barracks, and the prisoners had to sleep on the bare floor. The roofs of the barracks were damaged and leaked constantly; as Danish historian and former inmate Morton Ruge has recalled, “From November 16 to January 10, 1945 [when packages from the Danish Red Cross were distributed to Danish prisoners], we never had dry clothing.” The inmates first received straw to lie on in mid-December 1944, several weeks after they arrived in the camp. According to Ruge, one barracks served as a washroom; however, prisoners were prohibited from using it.<sup>3</sup> Captain Rose, of the postwar War Crimes Investigation Unit, emphasized in a deposition that Versen and Dalum were altered considerably immediately after the war. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), Detachment Meppen, together with the British Military Government detachment established a displaced persons camp for Polish civilians there.<sup>4</sup>

Working conditions for inmates in the Versen camp were likewise dreadful. Similar to inmates imprisoned in other Emsland camps, the Versen inmates were used for forced labor on the so-called Friesenwall, a defense installation for the Wehrmacht along the Dutch border. Every morning, foremen selected work commandos composed of 50 men each. With only shovels and spades, the prisoners had to dig massive ditches along the border, a marshland area that was filled with mud from constant rain. “The work was completely futile,” Ruge has emphasized, “because ‘the enemy’ hardly ever came through the forests, rather more easily on the streets.”<sup>5</sup> According to Ruge, although the digging was not particularly difficult, the long hours, inadequate clothing, insufficient food, and lack of heat and shelter made for unbearable working conditions.

The inmates were fed insufficiently and infrequently for the amount of work they had to perform. Before the commandos were sent to the Friesenwall each morning, the prisoners were provided with one-quarter liter (one cup) of thin soup. On occasion, they received a supplement of sugar or syrup. In the evenings, they ate soup with two small pieces of bread. All food was distributed outdoors, and as Ruge has noted, this practice was particularly cruel for inmates who were severely ill.<sup>6</sup> Although some Danish prisoners received packages from the Red Cross in January 1945, the packages provided clothing and no supplemental food.

The death rate in Versen was especially high. Ruge has reported that in the first few months, 8 to 10 inmates died per day from hunger, exhaustion, and the terrible work and living conditions in Versen. Between November 16 and December 6, 1944, 199 deaths were recorded in the Versen death register. On December 12 or 13, some 600 ill or weakened inmates were transferred from the Versen camp back to Neuengamme, in exchange for 150 “healthy” inmates. Historians Erich

Kosthorst and Bernd Walter have concluded that 566 inmates died between November 16, 1944, and March 25, 1945, in the Versen and Dalum subcamps, mostly from exhaustion, hunger, and lung and intestinal diseases. These numbers most likely do not include the 600 inmates transferred from Versen back to Neuengamme due to illness or exhaustion.<sup>7</sup> Just prior to the evacuation, a quarterly report filed by the SS garrison doctor Trzebinski noted that on March 29, 1945, there were 1,773 prisoners in the Versen camp.<sup>8</sup>

There is little information about the SS administration, guards, and foremen of the Versen subcamp. In his deposition during the 1947 trial of three SS officers (Klingler, Eichler, and Schneider) accused of murder and maltreatment of Allied nationals in Neuengamme and its subcamps, former inmate and witness Zdzisław Sokół stated that the commandant of Husum, Ladelund, and Dalum was SS-Obersturmführer Hans Griem—said to be particularly cruel. Griem had been transferred from his post in Neuengamme and may have also commanded the subcamp. The information in the deposition is unclear because Sokół did not recall the names of any SS in Versen, but other depositions in the file corroborate that Griem was the commandant of Husum and Dalum.<sup>9</sup> Attached to Trzebinski’s report is a partial list of camps administered by the Neuengamme main camp, which includes the SS doctor who oversaw medical treatment in each camp, as well as the assistant to the doctor, number of SS guards, and number of inmates. According to the report, the supervising doctor in Versen was head doctor (Oberarzt) “Stalag” with assistant SS-Rottenführer Haeger. The report also notes that there were 255 members of the guard staff and 1,778 prisoners.<sup>10</sup>

The Versen camp was evacuated as Allied troops approached, beginning in March 1945. On March 24, 1945, the Hamburg Commander of the Order Police (BdO) issued orders to evacuate camps in the Emsland area.<sup>11</sup> Under the agreement forged between Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler and Count Folke Bernadotte of the Swedish Red Cross, 76 Danish prisoners were marched out of the camp on March 15 or 16 and, together with Danish prisoners from Dalum, were sent to Neuengamme by cattle car. Prisoners well enough to march were evacuated on foot from the camp to Cloppenburg, Bremen-Farge, and then by train to Neuengamme. On April 1, the weakened and severely ill inmates were transported to Neuengamme by train. According to historian Andreas Lembeck, nearly 400 prisoners died during the transportation of the ill inmates and the evacuation of the camp. In April, the 1st Polish Armored Division under supervision of the British and Canadian armed forces occupied the camp.<sup>12</sup>

There is no information regarding trials associated with the administration of the Versen camp. Trial documentation related to the Dalum camp, from which little information on Versen can be extrapolated, is stored at the PRO (London) and reproduced in part at the USHMM. Further research on-site at the FZH may yield more detailed information about the guards who administered the Versen camp.

**SOURCES** Although both primary and secondary sources on the Versen subcamp are scarce, the most extensive secondary sources on Versen and other Emsland camps include the studies by Erich Kosthorst and Bernd Walter, *Konzentrations- und Strafgefangenenlager im Emsland, 1933–1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1985); Elke Suhr, *Die Emslandlager* (Bremen: Donat & Temmen Verlag, 1985); and Elke Suhr and Werner Boldt, *Lager im Emsland, 1933–1945: Geschichte und Gedenken* (Oldenburg: Bibliotheks- und Informationssystem der Universität Oldenburg, 1985). For a broad overview of the Neuengamme subcamp system, including the reproduction of a quarterly report submitted by the SS garrison doctor Trzebinski on numbers of surviving inmates in Versen and elsewhere, see Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997). For information on evacuation, liberation, and subsequent creation of displaced persons camps at Versen, see Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung: Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2000); Andreas Lembeck, “—to Set Up a Polish Enclave in Germany”: *Displaced Persons in the Emsland, 1945–1950* (Papenburg: DIZ Emslandlager, 2001); and Andreas Lembeck and Klaus Wessels, *Befreit, aber nicht in Freiheit: Displaced Persons im Emsland 1945–1950* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1997).

Primary documentation on the Versen subcamp, used extensively by Suhr and Boldt and Kosthorst and Walter, is located at the FZH (formerly FGNS-H), Archiv Hans Schwarz, which includes a witness report from former inmate Morton Ruge and the original report filed by Dr. Trzebinski (13-6-11) as well as other related documents. Files containing detailed information derived from an investigation of mass graves in Versen conducted by the grave commission of the Service Technique de la Délégation Générale pour l'Allemagne et l'Autriche du AN-MACVG (1953) are stored at the NStA-Os. The DIZ-EL in Papenburg contains textual records and photo archives pertaining to the Emsland camps (1933–1945) (see [www.diz-emslandlager.de](http://www.diz-emslandlager.de)). Documentation related to orders from the Hamburg Commander of the Order Police for the evacuation of the Emsland camps, including Meppen-Versen, is stored at the StA-Br. Finally, vague information about the layout of the Versen subcamp can be found in the records of the PRO (London), WO 235/302 (as duplicated at USHMMA, RG-59.016M, Reel 9), in the court deposition of Captain Walter Rose, War Crimes Investigation Unit. Although these files contain documentation from trials of individuals accused of crimes against Allied nationals in various Neuengamme subcamps, there is no specific information about or identification of the commandant, guards, or administration of the Versen camp.

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## NOTES

1. Kosthorst Erich and Bernd Walter, *Konzentrations- und Strafgefangenenlager im Emsland, 1933–1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1985), p. 109; Elke Suhr and Werner Boldt,

*Lager im Emsland, 1933–1945: Geschichte und Gedenken* (Oldenburg: Bibliotheks- und Informationssystem der Universität Oldenburg, 1985), p. 30.

2. Morton Ruge, “Aussenkommando Versen bei Meppen des Konzentrationslager Neuengamme,” reproduced partially in Kosthorst and Walter, *Konzentrations-*, pp. 113–114.

3. Ruge, in *ibid.*, p. 114.

4. Deposition of Captain Ronald Walter Rose, War Crimes Investigation Unit, HQ/BAOR (24 May 1946), PRO (London), WO 235/302 (reproduced in USHMMA, RG-59.016M, Reel 9); includes sketched plans of the camps Husum, Ladelund, Dalum, and Versen. See Andreas Lembeck, “—to Set Up a Polish Enclave in Germany”: *Displaced Persons in the Emsland, 1945–1950* (Papenburg: DIZ Emslandlager, 2001); and Andreas Lembeck and Klaus Wessels, *Befreit, aber nicht in Freiheit: Displaced Persons im Emsland 1945–1950* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1997).

5. Kosthorst and Walter, *Konzentrations-*, p. 114.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

8. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126. USHMMA (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also has a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167, with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos.

9. Deposition of Zdzisław Sokół, Production No. 170, PRO (London), WO 235/302 (reproduced at USHMMA, RG-59.016M, Reel 9).

10. Report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski, PRO (London), WO 235/167, as copied at USHMMA, RG-59.016M, JAG's Office: War Crimes Case Files, Second World War. There is a slight discrepancy between the number of prisoners (1,773) noted by Trzebinski in the report and the number (1,778) in the list of camps and their medical supervision.

11. Lembeck and Wessels, *Befreit*, p. 23.

12. Lembeck, *Polish Enclave*, p. 31.

## MEPPEN-VERSEN/GROSS-HESEPE

Located in the borderland area near the Netherlands, the Emsland camp XI, Gross-Hesepe, was absorbed into the Neuengamme concentration camp system in November 1944. Prior to the deportation of prisoners from Neuengamme to Gross-Hesepe, Meppen-Versen, Meppen-Dalum, these and other Emsland camps served various functions within the Nazi camp system and reflected the changing needs of the administration and German military, including the repression of opponents of the Nazi regime, the incarceration of those sentenced by civil and military courts, and the establishment of satellite camps in the Neuengamme camp system.

Beginning in 1933, the camps in the Emsland region were first constructed to incarcerate opponents of the Nazi regime who were kept in “protective custody” (*Schutzhaft*). Prisoners



in protective custody were used to cultivate the marshland (*Moors*) near the border for future development. In 1938, construction began on the Gross-Hesepe camp, one of the eight newly built penal camps (*Strafgefangenenlager*) in the Emsland. It had a capacity for 1,000 prisoners, but the actual occupancy far exceeded this number. The Armed Forces High Command (OKW) took over the Gross-Hesepe camp in September 1939, and it became one of nine camps in the prisoner-of-war (POW) camp complex (*Kriegsgefangenen-Mannschaftsstammlager*, or Stalag) VI C Bathorn. The camp then served as a transit camp (*Durchgangslager*) for Polish, French, and Soviet POWs, as well as Italian military internees (IMIs).

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS) catalog, the Gross-Hesepe camp was used to incarcerate Neuengamme camp prisoners as a subcamp to the Meppen-Versen subcamp. It also stated that the average number of prisoners was 100. The inmates most likely were forced to work in developing the marshlands and to create the so-called Friesenwall, a Wehrmacht defense installation planned for the Dutch border.

Living conditions in the other camps used as Neuengamme subcamps in the latter years and months of the war were dreadful, and we can surmise that conditions and work assignments were the same or similar in Gross-Hesepe.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary resources on the Gross-Hesepe subcamp. For brief information on Gross-Hesepe, such as opening and closing dates and kind of work, see Martin Weinmann, *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)* (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990). The most extensive secondary sources on the Emsland camps include the studies by Erich Kosthorst and Bernd Walter, *Konzentrations- und Strafgefangenenlager im Emsland, 1933–1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1985); Elke Suhr, *Die Emslandlager* (Bremen: Donat & Temmen Verlag, 1985); and Elke Suhr and Werner Boldt, *Lager im Emsland, 1933–1945: Geschichte und Gedenken* (Oldenburg: Bibliotheks- und Informationssystem der Universität Oldenburg, 1985). For a broad overview of the Neuengamme subcamp system, including the reproduction of a quarterly report submitted by SS garrison doctor Trzebinski on numbers of surviving inmates in Dalum and elsewhere, see Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997). For information on the evacuation, liberation, and subsequent creation of DP camps in the Emsland, see Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung. Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2000); Andreas Lembeck, “—to Set Up a Polish enclave in Germany”: *Displaced Persons in the Emsland, 1945–1950* (Papenburg: DIZ, 2001); and Andreas Lembeck and Klaus Wessels, *Befreit, aber nicht in Freiheit: Displaced Persons im Emsland 1945–1950* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1997).

The DIZ contains textual records and photo archives pertaining to the Emsland camps (1933–1945); brief summaries on the camps, including Gross-Hesepe, can be found on the archive's Web site at [www.diz-emslandlager.de](http://www.diz-emslandlager.de). Documenta-

tion related to the orders from the BdO for the evacuation of the Emsland camps is stored at the StA-Br.

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## MÖLLN

A subcamp attached to Neuengamme was created in Mölln (Schleswig-Holstein province) in either October or December 1944. Inmates deported to the Neuengamme subcamp system were used as laborers in construction, repairs, and various other economic and rearmaments efforts. The creation of satellite camps at work sites diminished transportation time for inmates between the main camp and the outlying sites. At least 20 inmates were transferred to the Mölln subcamp, presumably from the main Neuengamme camp, to work in the Gülzow Sägewerk (Sawmill).<sup>1</sup> They were employed by the Mölln construction administration of the SS (SS-Bauleitung Mölln), and therefore they most likely performed some kind of construction work at the sawmill.

According to an attachment to a translated copy of the report filed by garrison doctor Trzebinski that lists the SS doctors in charge of overseeing medical care within the Neuengamme camps, Dr. Hintzelmann and his assistant SS-Rottenführer Joerss supervised the health of the Mölln inmates.<sup>2</sup>

In his study of the *Kap Arcona* disaster on Lübeck Bay, historian Wilhelm Lange has asserted that there were other work commandos in Mölln at this time. However, it is unclear whether these detachments were connected to the Neuengamme camp system or whether they were part of the same work commando at the sawmill. Lange has noted that at least 200 inmates worked in the armaments industry in Mölln-Breitenfelde, and a smaller group of skilled laborers were employed at the Metallwerke Mölln.

The Mölln subcamp at Sägewerk Gülzow, as well as the other commandos Lange has described, were evacuated to a ship called the *Westpreussen* on Lübeck Bay of the Baltic Sea on April 30, 1945. According to Lange, the *Westpreussen* carried about 254 inmates from various camps, including the labor education camp (*Arbeitserziehungslager*) of Nordmark in Kiel. The ship remained in the bay for several days, during which several inmates died; their bodies were thrown overboard. On May 8, 1945, the ship fell under the control of the Swedish Red Cross.

The fate of the inmates—particularly from the Mölln commando aboard the *Westpreussen*—is unknown. According to Lange, inmates on this ship most likely evaded the lot of other prisoners, who had been evacuated to the *Kap Arcona* and other ships, which the Nazis crowded with camp inmates and then abandoned to be bombed and destroyed by the Allies. Over 8,000 prisoners died during British aerial attacks on the bay on May 3, 1945.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the satellite camp in Mölln. Brief information on the existence of the camp in secondary literature is found in Her-



mann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and which includes a reproduction of the quarterly report filed by SS garrison physician Trzebinski. This information is duplicated—except for the opening date of the camp—in the Mölln entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979). Additional details, which are not corroborated by other secondary sources, come from Wilhelm Lange, *Kap Arcona: Dokumentation* (Eutin: Struve, 1988), pp. 43–45.

Primary documentation that provides information on the Mölln camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information. The original quarterly report filed by Dr. Trzebinski, which lists the subcamp of the SS-Bauleitung Mölln and which is published in various secondary sources, can be found at the FZH.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). USHMM (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also contains a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn: Verlag J.H.W. Dietz Nachfolger, 1997), pp. 123–126.

2. Ibid.

## NEUSTADT IN HOLSTEIN

Among the more than 80 subcamps of the concentration camp Neuengamme, a satellite camp was created in Neustadt in Holstein in December 1944. Inmates deported to the Neuengamme subcamp system were used as laborers in construction, repairs, and various other economic and rearmaments efforts. The creation of satellite camps at work sites diminished transportation time for inmates between the main camp and the outlying sites. Fifteen men were transported to Neustadt in Holstein to be employed by the Neustadt Construction Administration of the SS (SS-Bauleitung Neustadt).<sup>1</sup> The inmates built barracks for a military hospital (SS-Lazarett) in Neustadt. The 15-prisoner subcamp existed until May 1, 1945, when the small camp was evacuated, eventually to a ship, the *Westpreussen* on Lübeck Bay of the Baltic Sea.

Little other specific information about this small satellite commando can be found. However, in his analysis of the *Cap Arcona* disaster in Lübeck Bay, historian Wilhelm Lange has asserted that the 15 inmates had originally been part of the Breitenfelde-Neustadt commando and were transferred to Neustadt in Holstein for construction work. The Breitenfelde commando consisted of Danes, Poles, Russians, and at least

one Dutch and one German prisoner. According to Lange, the guards of the Neustadt subcamp were an unnamed SS-Scharführer and six other ill and recuperating SS officers. On May 1, 1945, the group was evacuated to the work education camp (*Arbeitserziehungslager*) Nordmark (the Kiel camp), where the prisoners were reunited with the original Breitenfelde commando. The inmates were evacuated to the *Westpreussen*, which held 254 inmates in total. The ship remained in the bay for several days, during which a few died; their bodies were thrown overboard. On May 8, 1945, the ship came under the control of the Swedish Red Cross.

According to an attachment to a translated copy of the report filed by SS garrison physician Trzebinski, which lists the SS doctors in charge of overseeing medical care within the Neuengamme camps, Dr. Hintzelmann and his assistant SS-Rottenführer Joerss supervised the health of the Neustadt inmates.<sup>2</sup>

The fate of the inmates particularly from the Neustadt commando aboard the *Westpreussen* is unknown. According to Lange, inmates on this ship most likely escaped the fate of other inmates who were evacuated to the *Cap Arcona* and other ships, which the Nazis crowded with prisoners and then abandoned to be bombed and destroyed by the Allies. Over 8,000 prisoners died during British aerial attacks on the bay on May 3, 1945.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the satellite camp in Neustadt in Holstein. Brief information on the existence of the camp in secondary literature is found in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a reproduction of the quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski. This information (opening and evacuation dates, number of prisoners, and so on) is duplicated in Ulrich Bauche, *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945* (Hamburg, 1986). Additional information (although not corroborated by other secondary sources) comes from Wilhelm Lange, *Cap Arcona: Dokumentation* (Eutin, 1988), pp. 43–45. Finally, for dates and the path of the evacuation of the camp, see the second volume of the two-volume work *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung; Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, ed. Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, Freundeskreis KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme e.V., with contributions by Detlef Garbet and Nina Holsten (Bremen, 2000).

Primary documentation that provides information on the Neustadt camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information. The original quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski, which lists the subcamp of the SS-Bauleitung Neustadt and is published in various secondary sources, can be found at the FZH.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original

report). USHMMA (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also contains a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), pp. 123–126.

2. Ibid.

## **PORTA WESTFALICA/A II BARKHAUSEN [AKA PORTA I, KAISERHOF], LERBECK- NEESEN, HAUSBERGE “HAMMERWERKE”**

The Porta Westfalica complex of the Neuengamme concentration camp consisted of three subcamps established between March 1944 and February 1945 for the purpose of war production. Under the command of the Stützpunktleiter, SS-Obersturmführer Hermann Wicklein, the three subcamps were Barkhausen (also known as Porta I, A II, and Kaiserhof), Lerbeck-Neesen, and Hausberge (“Hammerwerke”).<sup>1</sup>

After the Jägerstab (Fighter Staff) tasked SS-Gruppenführer Hans Kammler, the head of Office Group C (construction) of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), with tunneling operations for the transfer of German aircraft production in March 1944, Kammler dispatched the SS-Führungsstab (Leadership Staff) A II to Porta Westfalica, where there were several existing tunnels. On March 18, 1944, Neuengamme established a subcamp in the ballroom (*Festsaal*) of the Hotel Kaiserhof in Barkhausen, located to the west of the Weser River. Initially populated by 250 Buchenwald prisoners dispatched under the code name “Max I,” Barkhausen had a strength of 983 on March 29, 1945.<sup>2</sup> Although Wicklein was the commandant, his Lagerführer, SS-Rottenführer Hermann Nau, stood out in prisoners’ memories as the camp’s driving force.<sup>3</sup> The camp elder was a green triangle (criminal) prisoner from Buchenwald, Georg Knögl. Nicknamed “Red” because of his hair color, as well as “Popeye” and “Lucifer,” he was recalled in many testimonies as sadistic and an alcoholic.<sup>4</sup> According to historian Rainer Fröbe, there were between 500 and 600 deaths at this camp between March 1944 and April 1, 1945, excluding weakened prisoners returned to Neuengamme. Between 25 and 30 prisoners attempted escape, 7 of whom were hanged.

Barkhausen’s prisoners consisted of many nationalities, especially Ukrainians and Poles, but none were Jewish. Beginning on September 15, 1944, a consignment of 225 Danish political and criminal prisoners entered the camp in several transports. Although favored in the “racial” hierarchy and able to receive Red Cross parcels, 44 percent of the Danes died at Barkhausen, before the remainder were evacuated as part of *Aktion Bernadotte* in late March 1945.<sup>5</sup> This high mortality was traceable to the harsh working conditions, the Danes’ difficulties in “organizing” (stealing) additional food, and their vulnerability to parcel theft by the SS, prisoner-

functionaries, and other prisoners.<sup>6</sup> According to former Auschwitz prisoner Wiesław Kielar, the Danes who consumed their parcels ironically put themselves at the greatest risk of death: the fear of theft led many to devour their parcels in one sitting, which overwhelmed their digestive systems after prolonged hunger.<sup>7</sup>

Most of the tunnel projects were located in the Jakobsberg Mountain, situated across the Weser River from the Barkhausen camp. The site’s location necessitated a lengthy march to and from work via the Weser bridge. The first tunnel project, for the aircraft parts company Firma Ambi-Budd, involved the expansion of a tunnel to accommodate fuselage and aircraft parts manufacturing. In May 1944, a small arms factory, code-named “Stöhr II,” was established inside the “Memorial Tunnels” (Denkmalstollen), inside Wittekindsberg Mountain at a shorter distance from the Barkhausen camp.

In the summer of 1944, the prisoners expanded Jakobsberg’s “Big Tunnels” (Grossen Stollen) to accommodate an underground petroleum refinery operated by Deurag-Nerag (Deutsche Raffinerie AG, Neue Erdölraffinerie AG). Code-named “Dachs I,” the refinery was more than four-fifths complete when the Germans evacuated Porta Westfalica.<sup>8</sup> The U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS) concluded that, with a planned capacity of more than 9,000 tons of crude oil per month, “This is a very pretentious plant. . . . [It] is in no sense a makeshift but was planned as a permanent installation.”<sup>9</sup>

In the fall of 1944, Barkhausen built a nine-story factory, code-named “Hammerwerke,” inside the tunnel “Stöhr I.” Hammerwerke belonged to the German subsidiary of the Dutch company Philips, which relocated its radio assembly factory from the Herzogenbusch main concentration camp [aka Vught] after the German retreat. To install the equipment, Philips selected a 172-man “skilled” work detachment consisting of non-Jews from Sachsenhausen/Oranienburg and other camps in November 1944.<sup>10</sup> This work detachment was accommodated at Barkhausen.

Before the establishment of the Lerbeck camp, 15 Barkhausen prisoners worked as a detachment for the Firma Weber in Lerbeck-Neesen. As a subcontractor for SS-Führungsstab A II, Firma Weber prefabricated ferroconcrete construction materials in late spring and summer of 1944. In September 1944, with the German retreat, the Luftwaffe relocated its Utrecht-based aeroengine repair station at Lerbeck. Subcontracted to the Klöckner Flugmotorenbau GmbH of Hamburg, but for security reasons given the cover name “Firma Bense & Co.,” the station inspected and repaired Type-801 Bayerische Motoren Werke (BMW) aircraft motors. On September 30, 1944, approximately 100 Neuengamme inmates arrived at Lerbeck, where they were housed in a military barracks catercorner to Firma Weber and opposite the Klöckner station. The difficulty obtaining guards for this camp prompted Reich Armaments Minister Albert Speer to lodge a complaint with Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler.<sup>11</sup> Wehrmacht personnel and the civilian Plant Protection Force (Werkschutz) from Weber and Klöckner guarded the prisoners. On March 29, 1945, there were 469 prisoners, all of whom

were non-Jewish, including some long-detained Poles and Austrians from Auschwitz. Although the working conditions were good, the vicious conditions inside the camp and the lack of food caused between 31 and 55 deaths, according to Fröbe. This estimate excluded weakened inmates returned to Neuengamme. The brutal conditions were due to the two commandants, SS-Unterscharführer Heinz Rast (to January 15, 1945) and SS-Oberscharführer Richard Emanuel Eichler, and the camp elder, Heinz Hagenah, a green triangle prisoner and former soldier. Eichler and Hagenah murdered 7 prisoners in the infirmary by lethal injection.<sup>12</sup>

Situated southeast of the Hammerwerke, at the junction of the Kreuzung Mindener Weg and Frettholzweg, the Hausberge subcamp consisted of 967 Dutch and Hungarian Jewish women who arrived in February 1945. The Dutch women had already worked for Philips while imprisoned at Vught, until the SS deported them to Auschwitz in June 1944. At Philips's behest, Deutsche Telefunken selected the women for its Gross-Rosen/Reichenbach radio factory until its destruction in a December 1944 air raid. After briefly working for Philips-Valvo in Hamburg, the women proceeded to the Hammerwerke. Some 300 Hungarian Jewish women who had worked at Philips's Horneburg Kommando were also brought to Hausberge. Because they were skilled workers, Philips took steps to ensure their protection. Under the commandant, an SS-Unterscharführer, the 55 male and 27 female guards harassed the prisoners en route to work; 5 women died in the Hausberge camp.

At Hammerwerke, the Dutch women experienced a sense of déjà vu. One had inscribed her initials in their machinery at Vught and was surprised to see the same equipment located underground.<sup>13</sup> As was true for Barkhausen prisoners, the women worked for 84 hours per week.

The Germans evacuated Porta Westfalica on April 1, 1945. Barkhausen's inmates were evacuated to Beendorf and Schandelah, Lerbeck-Neesen's to Fallersleben, and Hausberge's to Beendorf via Bergen-Belsen. Many of the evacuated prisoners eventually ended up in Neuengamme/Wöbbelin. Former Auschwitz prisoner Hermann Langbein escaped during Lerbeck's evacuation.<sup>14</sup>

In 1947 and 1948, French military tribunals condemned Hermann Nau and camp elder Georg Knögl to death. In 1947, in connection with his prior stint at Neuengamme/Husum-Schwesing, a British military court in Hamburg sentenced Richard Eichler to five years' imprisonment. The Hamburg Schwurgericht (Court of Assizes) sentenced the female SS guard, Lottchen Wilma M., to prison for one year and one month in 1951 for mishandling Hausberge prisoners.<sup>15</sup>

**SOURCES** This entry builds upon the most detailed study of the Porta Westfalica complex, Rainer Fröbe's "‘Vernichtung durch Arbeit’? KZ-Häftlinge in Rüstungsbetrieben an der Porta Westfalica in den letzten Monaten des Zweiten Weltkriegs," in *Verdrängte Geschichte: Verfolgung und Vernichtung in Ostwestfalen, 1933–1945*, ed. Joachim Meynert and Arno Kloenne (Bielefeld: AJZ, 1986), pp. 221–297. Additional sec-

ondary sources useful for this essay are Reinhard Busch, "Zur Geschichte der KZ-Aussenlager an der Porta Westfalica," in "Das Leben ist schön!" *Überlebensstrategien eines Häftlings im KZ Porta*, ed. Wiebke von Bernstorff et al., trans. Gerd Adolf-Hermeling (Bielefeld: AJZ Verlag, 1987), pp. 1–14; Helweg Larsen et al., *Famine Disease in German Concentration Camps: Consequences and Sequels, with Special Reference to Tuberculosis, Mental Disorders, and Social Consequences* (Copenhagen, 1952); Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung; Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2000), 2: 95, 97, 99; for a detailed map of the Philips Kommando's movements from June 1944 to May 1945, P.W. Klein and Justus van de Kamp, *Het Philips-Kommando in Kamp Vught* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Contact, 2003), p. 191; for Porta Westfalica's memorials, Ulrike Puvogel and Martin Stankowski, with Ursula Graf, *Gedenkstätten für die Opfer der Nationalsozialismus. Eine Dokumentation*, vol. 1, *Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Bremen, Hamburg, Hessen, Niedersachsen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Saarland, Schleswig-Holstein* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1999); and the Web site [www.team-porta.de/lager.html](http://www.team-porta.de/lager.html). The Porta Westfalica complex is listed in ITS, *Vorläufigen Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1: 188; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 224, 226, 229; and *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), pp. 109, 452–453.

As cited in Fröbe, archival sources for Porta Westfalica may be found in BA-K, BA-L (former ZdL), NWStA-(D), NWStA (De), and PRO. For the Neuengamme Standortarzt report of March 29, 1945, 2169-PS, see Fritz Bringmann, *KZ Neuengamme: Berichte, Erinnerungen, Dokumente* (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg-Verlag), n.p. There are many prisoner testimonies available for the Porta Westfalica complex, and the Danish testimonies are especially extensive. Two chapters of Pierre Bleton's *Le Temps du purgatoire* (1953; repr., n.p.: Obsidiane, 1990) dealing with Porta Westfalica are available in the German edition cited above. Fröbe reproduces two Danish prisoners' reports in translation, Biørn Karbo, "Bergmann in Porta Westfalica," pp. 298–309 (originally in Johannes Fosmark, ed., *Danske i tyske Konzentrationslejre*, 2nd ed. [Copenhagen, 1945], pp. 104–114); and Jørgen Diemer, "Porta in Westfalen," pp. 310–320 (originally in "Porta i Westfalen," in *I tysk Fangenskap*, ed. Anders Georg [Copenhagen, 1945], pp. 109–118). The testimony of Barkhausen survivor Gunnar Hjelholt is available in Benedicte Madson and Søren Willert, *Survival in the Organization: Gunnar Hjelholt Looks Back at the Concentration Camp from an Organizational Perspective*, preface by Veronika Dalheimer, trans. Edith Matteson (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 1996). According to Hjelholt, the Danish political prisoners published a memorial book, *In memoriam, 50'erne fra Porta* (n.p., 1950). The testimony of Danish bishop Vincent Lind is reproduced in Ulrike Jensen,



Ulrike Jureit, and Karin Orth, *Lebensgeschichten: Gespräche mit Überlebenden des KZ Neuengamme* (Hamburg, 1992), pp. 35–53. The testimony of Jørgen Kieler, Barkhausen's inmate doctor, is available in USHMM, RG-50.391.\*0001, Oral History Interview with Jørgen Kieler, June 10, 1994, interviewed by Alexandra Moltke Isles. Auschwitz survivors Wiesław Kielar and Hermann Langbein deal with their experiences in Barkhausen and Lerbeck, respectively, in Kieler, *Anus Mundi: 1,500 Days in Auschwitz/Birkenau*, trans. Susanne Flatauer (New York: Times Books, 1980); Langbein, *Die Stärkeren: Ein Bericht aus Auschwitz und anderen Konzentrationslagern* (1949; repr., Cologne: Bund-Verlag, 1982), pp. 255–261; and Langbein, . . . *nicht wie die Schafe zur Schlachtbank: Widerstand in den nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern, 1938–1945*, foreword by Eugen Kogon (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1980), pp. 55, 101. As cited in Fröbe, the testimony of Hausberge prisoner Rita Koopman is found in Dick Walda, *Een builbui van jaren: Episoden uit het leven van Rita Koopman* (Amsterdam, 1979). As part of its investigation of the German oil industry, the USSBS surveyed “Dachs I” in May 1945. Its detailed report, with accompanying diagrams, is USSBS, Oil Division, *Underground and Dispersal Plants in Greater Germany* (Washington, DC, 1947), pp. 56, 132–135, 152. As cited by Fröbe, CIOIS investigated the “Hammerwerke” in 1945 and produced a detailed report with schematics, which is reproduced in his article on p. 276. On the postwar trials and investigations, see Lfd. Nr. 321 in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam, 1972), 9: 743–770, for the trial of Lottchen Wilma M. As cited in Fröbe, information on the British and French trials may be found in “Vermerk der OSta. Köln zu 24 Js 61/62 (Z),” November 15, 1963, which deals with Nau and tangentially other camp staff; and PRO, WO 235/302–303, which concerns Eichler.

Joseph Robert White

## NOTES

1. “Vermerk der OSta. Köln zu 24 Js 61/62 (Z),” November 15, 1963, as cited in Rainer Fröbe, “‘Vernichtung durch Arbeit’? KZ-Häftlinge in Rüstungsbetrieben an der Porta Westfalica in den letzten Monaten des Zweiten Weltkriegs,” in *Verdrängte Geschichte: Verfolgung und Vernichtung in Ostwestfalen, 1933–1945*, ed. Joachim Meynert and Arno Kloenne (Bielefeld: AJZ, 1986), p. 287 n.98.
2. For all the population totals for the Porta Westfalica subcamps of Barkhausen, Lerbeck, and Hausberge, dated March 29, 1945, see “Bericht des SS-Standortarztes von Neuengamme, Dr. Trzebinski,” 2169-PS, reproduced in Fritz Bringmann, *KZ Neuengamme: Berichte, Erinnerungen, Dokumente* (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg-Verlag, 1982), n.p.
3. “Vermerk der OSta. Köln zu 24 Js 61/62 (Z),” November 15, 1963, as cited in Fröbe, “‘Vernichtung durch Arbeit’?” p. 287 n.98.
4. See, for example, the testimony of Gunnar Hjelholt in Benedicte Madson and Søren Willert, *Survival in the Organization: Gunnar Hjelholt Looks Back at the Concentration Camp from an Organizational Perspective*, preface by Veronika Dal-

heimer, trans. Edith Matteson (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 1996), p. 40.

5. As reported by former inmate doctor Jørgen Kieler in Helweg Larsen et al., *Famine Disease in German Concentration Camps: Consequences and Sequels, with Special Reference to Tuberculosis, Mental Disorders, and Social Consequences* (Copenhagen, 1952), p. 68, and cited in Fröbe, “‘Vernichtung durch Arbeit’?” p. 320. The Danish testimonies disagree on the precise date of the Bernadotte evacuation.

6. Hjelholt testimony in Madson and Willert, *Survival in the Organization*, p. 43.

7. Wiesław Kielar, *Anus Mundi: 1,500 Days in Auschwitz/Birkenau*, trans. Susanne Flatauer (New York: Times Books, 1980), pp. 280–281.

8. USSBS, Oil Division, *Underground and Dispersal Plants in Greater Germany* (Washington, DC, 1947), p. 132.

9. Ibid., p. 133.

10. Kieler, *Anus Mundi*, pp. 268–269.

11. BA-K, R3/1583 fol. 110, as cited in Fröbe, “‘Vernichtung durch Arbeit’?” p. 256.

12. Statement of former Kapo Hans Biederer, n.d., NHStA-(D), 130 (24) Js 61/62, 1: 93, as cited in Fröbe, “‘Vernichtung durch Arbeit’?” p. 291.

13. Rita Koopman testimony in Dick Walda, *Een builbui van jaren: Episoden uit het leven van Rita Koopman* (Amsterdam 1979), p. 96, as cited in Fröbe, “‘Vernichtung durch Arbeit’?” pp. 274–275.

14. Hermann Langbein, *Die Stärkeren: Ein Bericht aus Auschwitz und anderen Konzentrationslagern* (1949; repr., Cologne: Bund-Verlag, 1982), pp. 259–260.

15. “Vermerk der OSta. Köln zu 24 Js 61/62 (Z),” November 15, 1963, PRO, WO 235/302–303 (Eichler case), all cited in Fröbe, “‘Vernichtung durch Arbeit’?” p. 287 n.98; Lfd. Nr. 321, in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam, 1972), 9: 743–770 (Lottchen Wilma M.).

## SALZGITTER-BAD

In the late summer of 1944 a women's subcamp was established in Salzgitter-Bad and placed under the control of the Neuengamme concentration camp. There are almost no documents on the Salzgitter-Bad subcamp. The documents that did exist were destroyed in the Neuengamme concentration camp and the Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG) before the end of the war.

The new detachment was accommodated in barracks that were owned by the AG für Bergbau- und Hüttenbedarf, a subsidiary of the RWHG. This former camp, named Number 43, was located about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) to the south of Salzgitter-Bad on the edge of the Südholz Forest. It had been established in the 1940s for about 120 female civilian employees of the Bergbau AG.

The Salzgitter-Bad subcamp was not expanded. It consisted of four accommodation barracks, three operational barracks, and a number of smaller buildings.<sup>1</sup> According to survivors, the camp included punishment bunkers, guard towers, and storage facilities.<sup>2</sup> The camp was surrounded by an electrified barbed-wire fence and signs with the inscription “No Standing! We



Will Open Fire!" (*Nicht stehen bleiben, es wird geschossen!*) on the track to Liebenburg. The signs were visible for everyone to see.<sup>3</sup>

The first transport of women arrived on September 19, 1944, from the Ravensbrück concentration camp. It included mostly women who had been taken prisoner during the Warsaw Uprising of August 1944 and who had been transported to the Ravensbrück and Bergen-Belsen concentration camps. At the end of October, another group of about 250 women arrived from Ravensbrück. Altogether there were about 500 prisoners in the camp. On March 25, 1945, Standortarzt Dr. Trzebinski gave the number of women as 472.<sup>4</sup>

A few of the women came from Germany, the Soviet Union, and France. However, the great majority were from Poland, Yugoslavia, and Greece. Most of the deportees were registered by the SS in Salzgitter-Bad as political prisoners. According to survivors, there were also Jews. When the women arrived in the Salzgitter-Bad subcamp, they were given prisoner numbers that were then registered in the Neuengamme main camp.

The women worked in the armaments production of the AG für Bergbau- und Hüttenbedarf and in the Kleineisenwerk am Gittertor. Both factories were subsidiaries of the RWHG.

In both factories the prisoners worked in three shifts. They were mostly used in producing parts for grenades. The production lines, equipped with presses and lathes, were located in part of the factory buildings. They were separated from the rest of the factory. There was only limited contact with the civilian workers. Nevertheless, a few prisoners were able to make contact. A Yugoslav prisoner was able to get pencil and paper and smuggle out letters to her parents.<sup>5</sup>

The camp was about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) away from the AG für Bergbau- und Hüttenbedarf. The women had to walk to work under the guard of SS men and SS women. Their path led them by an *Ostarbeiterlager* (Eastern workers' camp) and the newly constructed settlement for German workers at the "Hermann-Göring-Werke."

The Kleineisenwerk was located on the northwestern edge of Salzgitter-Bad. The prisoners who worked there were taken to work on a company-owned truck under SS guard. Living conditions in the small camp were bad, but when compared with other subcamps in the region, they were relatively good. The barracks were divided into separate rooms in which there were double bunk beds. Each prisoner had her own bunk. The operational barracks were located close to the camp. There was an infirmary there. Medical care was initially provided from the Drütte camp, but at the end of 1944, a female prisoner doctor took over.<sup>6</sup> The deaths of four women are recorded for the Salzgitter-Bad camp. They are buried in the Jammertal Cemetery in Salzgitter-Lebenstedt.<sup>7</sup>

In 1949, Ursula Lemke was arrested on suspicion of mistreating prisoners. She arrived at the end of September 1944 in the camp as an SS overseer. She had undergone a six-day training course in Neuengamme. She remained at Salzgitter-

Bad until the camp was evacuated. When questioned, she stated that she was engaged to the Lagerführer (camp leader) of the Salzgitter-Bad camp, Longin Bladowski.<sup>8</sup> Bladowski returned to the main camp before the end of the war, where he took charge of the prisoners' kitchen.<sup>9</sup>

On April 7, 1945, four days before American troops reached the Salzgitter area, the Salzgitter-Bad subcamp was evacuated.

The dissolution of the subcamp surprised the imprisoned women. On the morning of April 7, 1945, the detachment, as usual, was taken by lorry to work the early morning shift at the Kleineisenwerk, and those working at the AG für Bergbau- und Hüttenbedarf went by foot to work. The women remaining in the camp, who worked the night shift, were not allowed to sleep. They had to clean up the camp and prepare for the evacuation.<sup>10</sup> The detachments did not return to the factories for the afternoon shift, as the final evacuation of the camp had begun. Following the final roll call, the prisoners were loaded onto trucks and driven to the Drütte subcamp, about 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) away. Roll call was taken again, and then the approximately 500 women on the camp grounds had to board a train that was waiting for them. After they boarded the train, it left the Salzgitter area. On April 8, 1945, the transport arrived at the goods railway station in Celle, where that evening it became a target of an Allied air raid. More than half of the women from the Salzgitter-Bad subcamp lost their lives during the bombardment. The survivors were taken by truck and on foot to Bergen-Belsen.

The Salzgitter-Bad subcamp was forgotten after the war. Other than the investigations into the wardress Lemke, there were no other proceedings against those responsible for the Salzgitter-Bad subcamp. Lemke was acquitted due to a lack of evidence.<sup>11</sup>

**SOURCES** There is no published work on the Salzgitter-Bad concentration camp. It is one of the least-studied subcamps. On Bladowski, see Hans Ellger, "Weibliche Häftlinge in Neuengamme: Die Geschichte der Frauenaussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der jüdischen Häftlingsgruppe" (Ph.D. diss.); on the evacuation to Bergen-Belsen, see Mijndert Bertram, *April 1945. Der Luftangriff auf Celle und das Schicksal der KZ-Häftlinge aus Drütte* (Celle, 1989); and Elke Zacharias, "Wir dachten, die Befreiung sei ganz nah . . ." *CeHe* (2005).

There is little archival material. The camp and its topography have been reconstructed from aerial photographs that are available at the TARA-KU. In the last 15 years the AG-Dr has collected worldwide more than 50 memoirs and eyewitness interviews. These sources, supplemented by former prisoners' personal belongings, are held in the AG-Dr and in the AG-NG. Some witness statements and archival material about RWHG is available in ASt-Salz, BStU, and BA-DH. The March 29, 1945, report by the Neuengamme garrison doctor is reproduced in Ulrich Bauche et al., *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945: Katalog zur*

*staendigen Ausstellung im Dokumentenhaus der KZ-Gedenkstaette Neuengamme, Aussenstelle des Museums fuer Hamburgische Geschichte* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986).

Elke Zacharias  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. TARA-KU, US 33-2780, Nr. 1047.
2. AG-Dr, Interviews: Joanna Fryczkowska, Ida Desandre, Stefka Frangez.
3. ASt-Salz, Zz (Bericht Franziska Wegener).
4. Vierteljahresbericht an das SS-Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt vom 29.3.1945, reproduced in Ulrich Bauche et al., *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945: Katalog zur staendigen Ausstellung im Dokumentenhaus der KZ-Gedenkstaette Neuengamme, Aussenstelle des Museums fuer Hamburgische Geschichte* (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986), p. 209.
5. AG-Dr, Stefka Frangez (Briefsammlung).
6. AG-Dr, Interview Joanna Fryczkowska, 1991.
7. ASt-Salz, Friedhofskartei; AG-NG, Die Toten, CD 2005.
8. Aussage von Ursula Lemke vom 08.09.1949, BStU, Best.: MfS–BV Schwerin ASt 385/49, 1:13, 29, 88.
9. Hans Ellger, *Zwangsarbeit und weibliche Überlebensstrategien: die Geschichte der Frauenaussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme 1944/45* (Berlin: Metropol, 2007), p. 224.
10. AG-Dr, Joanna Fryczkowska, Interview vom 26.11.1991.
11. BStU, MfS–BV Schwerin ASt 385/49, vol. 1; BA-DH, ZM 327, File 12.

## SALZWEDEL

The Salzwedel subcamp began operations in July or August 1944. The camp complex was based on the already existing camp for female forced laborers who were working in the largest industrial complex in the area, the Draht- und Metallwarenfabrik GmbH Salzwedel. There were 1,000 female forced laborers in the camp. In addition to this camp, there were several other barracks of varying sizes. The area of approximately 11,000 square meters (13,156 square yards) was secured with a security fence 540 meters (591 yards) in length. The prisoners in the subcamp were destined from the beginning to work in the Draht- und Metallwarenfabrik Salzwedel.

The unfavorable course of the war for Germany in 1942 resulted in an increased recruitment of males who had until this time been excluded from military service. The loss of these men from the production lines caused the National Socialist leadership to mobilize German female labor, to use more female foreign forced laborers, and at a later point in time, to use concentration camp prisoners as a means to compensate for the loss of labor.

There were roughly 1,500 to 1,550 women in Salzwedel between October 1944 and March 1945. In the camp's early period, the late summer of 1944, there were 700 to 800 female

Jewish Hungarians in the camp. These women had been transported from Auschwitz directly to Salzwedel. In the autumn of 1944, there followed a contingent of female Jewish Poles, roughly the same number. The majority of them reached the camp via Bergen-Belsen. There were women of other nationalities (Germans, Greeks, Italians, and Czechs) in the subcamp, but their numbers were smaller; most likely, they arrived at the camp toward the end of the war when other subcamps were being evacuated.

All the women in the subcamp were used at the city's largest industrial site, the Draht- und Metallwarenfabrik GmbH Salzwedel. This factory produced mostly ammunition for the infantry. The women worked primarily in the delivery of raw materials, the processing of prefabricated metal components, the production of explosives and bullets, and in storing the same. Little regard was given to the health risks and safety. The work was done in two shifts; that is, when half of the women were in the camp, the others worked for 12 hours in the factory, with a 15-minute meal break.

The women in Salzwedel worked on the production line at the Draht- und Metallwarenfabrik. The factory produced items other than munitions but had been manufacturing infantry munitions since 1928. In 1937, it employed approximately 600 workers, and in 1939, 1,000. This development continued during the war, with the labor force being strengthened with forced laborers, both male and female. The ever-increasing production demands, especially those toward the end of the war, could only be met with the ruthless exploitation of the approximately 1,500 female concentration camp prisoners. At the end of 1944, there were approximately 1,800 workers as follows: 234 German employees, 1,500 concentration camp women, and about 70 female forced laborers.

The reasons for the female inmates' imprisonment can only be guessed. Some women could have been imprisoned for their political activity.

At the end of March 1945, the camp functioned as a collecting point for transports from evacuated camps. Within a short period of time, the number of women in the camp doubled (to approximately 3,000). During the last days of the camp, there was a relatively large group of Dutch women evacuated from Ravensbrück to Salzwedel.

Some women reported murders and attempted murders of the imprisoned women by members of the guard force. Despite the brutality, this was not an everyday occurrence in the camp. More often, however, women who were about to give birth and refused to abort were sent to either Bergen-Belsen or Auschwitz, a calculated step, as it meant the death of the women.

The prisoners were forced to work in a privately owned factory. They were supervised by foremen and skilled tradesmen. In addition, female SS overseers guarded the women while they worked. The SS personnel had full power to force the women to work at maximum speed and at the slightest disturbance stepped in and meted out punishment. The prisoners stood for the 12-hour shifts and were under

constant surveillance, being watched from two sides. The civilian workers distrusted the women; some were indifferent, but they were seldom well disposed, and the presence of the female SS guards exerted enormous pressure on the prisoners.

The subcamp guards were comprised as follows: external camp security was provided by Wehrmacht soldiers no longer suited for frontline service. Internal security was provided exclusively by the SS. The 10 to 12 male SS members were in charge of the camp's senior positions, while the female guards (about 10) were mostly used for direct control of the prisoners. The camp commander is said to have been an elderly SS-Hauptsturmführer. A majority of eyewitnesses did not condemn him, but the Rapportführer was described as violent and brutal.

The prisoners, in an attempt either to forget or put aside for a few moments the horrors of everyday life, tried to foster contact with relatives or maintain friendly relations with their fellow prisoners. "[W]e were like sisters, we shared everything and looked after each other."<sup>1</sup> Friends described themselves as "camp sisters" (*Lagerschwestern*). Friendship in turn meant solidarity with their unknown fellow sufferers, helping those who were weaker.

Concrete help, support, and solidarity were one side of the coin in a brutal environment. Another side was the cultural work (*Kulturschaffen*) of a few women who, together with their camp sisters, withdrew for a short time in so-called "slots" (*Zeitnischen*) where, temporarily cut off from the outside world, they were close to one another: "I was asked to tell stories and talk about books that I had read."

A constant statement in many interviews is that not a few women were "glad" to have been in the Salzwedel subcamp, avoiding death in Auschwitz or the slow death in Bergen-Belsen. One woman, more than 50 years after the war, summed up the view of the majority of the women: "Sabotage, never. I would have been killed. I wanted to survive and tell the world."

On the other hand, some women, a minority, attempted to slow down the speed at which they worked or to sabotage the machines in order to reduce the output of ammunition. Some were successful. Their identities were never discovered.

The Salzwedel subcamp was liberated on April 14, 1945, by units of the U.S. 84th Infantry Division. The camp guards had begun to break up before liberation, but there are claims that there were attempts by individual SS members to blow up the camp and its inmates. The attempts were supposedly stopped by the camp commandant.

There were no acts of violence when the camp was liberated, although one guard was shot by U.S. soldiers while trying to escape.

The women were taken immediately to a nearby barracks. The U.S. Army looked after and registered them, and they were soon released into the care of various aid agencies. A number of women died after being liberated. They are buried in a nearby cemetery.

After May 8, 1945, a number of investigations in the British Occupation Zone questioned former SS female subcamp

guards. There were no criminal prosecutions against any of the Salzwedel subcamp guards. The investigation files of the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg provided details of the relationship between the Neuengamme concentration camp and the Salzwedel subcamp. Preliminary investigations into a number of individuals did not progress.

**SOURCES** Until 1989, the history of the Salzwedel subcamp was only available, in parts, to those in the local area who were interested in the camp. There was a model of the camp at the Daneihl Museum in Salzwedel with a short accompanying description. The SED Magdeburg District Branch had a brochure that provided a few details of the camp. It was to form the basis for an exhibition regarding the solidarity and sacrifice by a number of workers who, despite the prohibition, had made contact with a number of inmates. The focus was on members of the working class, which reflected the state ideology of the GDR. Before 1991, there was no exhaustive description of the subcamp either in the GDR or the FRG. It was only after an exhibition on "Flüchtlinge," in the neighboring district of Lüchow-Dannenberg (FRG) in 1990 that the author published a catalog on the exhibition (1991) that included a short description of the subcamp. He based his work on work done by a foreman at the Draht- und Metallwarenfabrik, who was grateful to liberated Hungarian Jewish women who saved him from being shot by American soldiers, as he was in possession of a weapon. The women stood up for him, as he had treated them humanely during their imprisonment.

The basis of this research and essay is a small collection of documents (2 folders) at the ZdL (now BA-L), which contain the investigation files into members of the guard. These guards were named but could not be located by the State Prosecutors or they lived in the GDR, thereby being out of reach of West German investigating authorities—that is, the border was not opened to allow suspects to be questioned. In this collection there are also protocols of interviews with survivors (former female prisoners): the interviews were done overseas (in the United States) in front of German embassy officials. In 1996, the city of Salzwedel invited around 20 women, former prisoners of the subcamp, to the city for a week. As part of the reconciliation process, employees of the Neuengamme Memorial and the Daneihl Museum in Salzwedel, together with the author, conducted detailed interviews with the guests. The interviews were later written down. The tapes and original protocol are held in the archives of the Daneihl Museum, with copies in AG-NG. These exhaustive interviews are the basis of this essay. They have been supplemented by a consideration of the records made by British occupying officers on interviews of guards immediately after the war. These protocols are located in the PRO, with copies in the ZLpB-H, now called the AG-BB. Research in the LHSA-Ma did not locate any documents either from the Soviet Military Administration or from the courts of the German Democratic Republic showing that there were investigations into the guards at the Salzwedel subcamp for crimes committed there. As the labor of the subcamp was made available for the Draht- und Metallwarenfabrik Salzwedel, I researched the history and development of the company

in the period 1939 to 1945. In the ASt-Slwz there are a few documents that related to construction work (barracks, fence, and so on) and show the company's hunger for labor. The company was closed after 1945 when it was disassembled by the Soviet occupation forces, with the parts most probably being transported to the Soviet Union. I could not locate any archives specifically dealing with the company. Using quarterly reports provided by the company to the Rüstungsinspektion Hannover, later Magdeburg, it is possible to draw conclusions on the company's economic development during the war. These files are held today in BA-MA. As part of the *Erinnerungsliteratur*, there was published relatively early after the war in the Netherlands a book that describes, albeit without much detail, the subcamp's last days: Atie Siegenbeek van Heukelom, *Zeven Maanden in Duitse Concentratiecampen* (n.p., 1946).

Dietrich Banse  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTE

1. All quotations in this essay refer to interviews of Salzwedel survivors with the author, Salzwedel, 1996.

## SCHANDELAH

In 1943, the war resulted in a marked deterioration in the supplies for the German Reich. As a result, German oil reserves that had proven difficult to access once again became attractive. This included the largest German shale oil reserves at Schandelah close to Braunschweig. The driving force to access these oil reserves was at first Captain von Kruedener, Generalfeldmarschall (Field Marshal) Erhard Milch's Ordnance Officer, and Walther Schieber. They were able to get the support of the Braunschweig minister president, Klagges. There then followed the establishment of Steinöl GmbH, which was to exploit the Schandelah reserves. In October 1943, the firm's name was probably changed for security reasons to the Kalk- und Zementwerke. Steinöl was owned by Deutsche Asphalt AG (German Asphalt Corporation, DASAG), which in turn was owned by the state of Braunschweig. Klagges and Steinöl GmbH turned to Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler in October 1943 for his support for their being responsible for all shale oil reserves in Germany. This request was not completely successful, as Himmler decided that the southern German reserves were to be exploited by the SS. For this purpose, he established the Deutsche Schieferöl GmbH (German Shale Oil, Ltd.). However, Hitler granted Klagges's request to use concentration camp prisoners to construct a shale oil facility at Schandelah.

Negotiations on the use of the prisoners between the SS and Steinöl GmbH began on January 20, 1944.<sup>1</sup> The first 100 prisoners arrived at the beginning of May 1944. First they had to complete the construction of the camp. At the same time, the Steinöl GmbH and the SS finalized a contract that regulated the basic questions regarding the use of the prisoners and their accommodation.<sup>2</sup> By August, three smaller prisoner transports had arrived, and the number of prisoners had

increased to 505. By October, the number had increased to about 800 prisoners. It was possible to increase the number of prisoners because in August the project had become part of the Geilenberg Program, thereby becoming a high-priority project. The composition of the prisoners in Schandelah was varied. The strongest national groups by number were prisoners from the Soviet Union, Poland, Belgium, and France. There were also Dutch, Danish, Czech, Spanish, German, Italian, Greek, and Yugoslav prisoners. The most important positions were given to the Germans.

As the prisoner numbers grew, so did the Schandelah construction site. The construction company Debag was in charge of construction. It was also part of the DASAG conglomerate. The prisoners were used primarily in construction. The labor was largely heavy physical work. For example, the Staatsbahn Work Detachment had to construct an embankment for a planned rail connection. The prisoners had to excavate and level the ground without shovels. Once the embankment had been raised and was ready, the prisoners had to lay the railway sleepers, which weighed between 20 and 25 kilograms (44 to 55 pounds).<sup>3</sup> Another detachment had the responsibility to dig shale for an experimental oven. They had to break open the hard ground with picks. There were only a few jobs for qualified men that required less physical labor. One of these was work at the experimental oven. Here it was warm and dry, even if the smell was unpleasant. (Saul Kroner was able to work in another job for qualified people at Schandelah. As a mechanic, he cleaned locomotive parts. A Soviet Jew, Kroner hid his Jewish identity and survived.)<sup>4</sup>

The first two accommodation barracks were built in May 1944 by civilian companies. The third barracks was built by the prisoners in September. There were three-tiered bunk beds in the barracks. In most of them, more than one person slept in each bed. A central reason for the deterioration in conditions was that for a long time there was no water connection. This was only put in place at the end of 1944. Until then, the prisoners had to get water from a source 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) away. The water was seldom adequate to satisfy the thirst of the prisoners, and washing could only be done on Sundays. The person in charge of the kitchen collected the food once a week from the Drütte subcamp. The rations were from the very beginning inadequate for the heavy labor, but they got even worse during the winter.

The first detachment leader in Schandelah was SS-Oberscharführer Ewald Jauch. He was replaced after two months. He was later convicted by a British military court and hanged for his role in the murder of the children at Bullenhuser Damm.<sup>5</sup> His replacement was SS-Unterscharführer Friedrich Ebsen, whose deputy was SS-Unterscharführer Karl Truschel. Under their command the SS guards turned the camp into one of the most brutal in the whole of the Neuengamme subcamp system. The prisoners lived in constant fear.

The frequent beatings, the inadequate food, and the heavy labor meant that prisoners' strength, in comparison to the



other subcamps, quickly evaporated. Until November 1944, the dead were sent to the Drütte subcamp. The exact number remains unknown. From November 1944, the prisoners cremated the corpses at the edge of the Schandelah building site on the command of the SS. A British investigating commission later exhumed 113 corpses at this site.<sup>6</sup> It is also known that following a visit by Neuengamme commandant Max Pauly, the company management was able to have 50 sick prisoners transferred back to the main camp in November 1944. They were replaced by healthy prisoners.<sup>7</sup>

The Neuengamme SS station doctor stated that in March 1945 there were 782 men at Schandelah. At the beginning of April, an evacuation transport from the camps at Porta Westfalica reached Schandelah, and the prisoner numbers increased to 1,300. On April 10, all the prisoners were evacuated. In goods wagons they were taken to a reception camp at Wöbbelin near Ludwigslust, where they arrived on April 13. Their journey took them via Magdeburg, Stendal, and Wittenberge. On arrival they had to spend two days in the wagons before they were allowed into the overfilled camp on April 15. The camp lacked everything. Many died in Wöbbelin before the camp was liberated by American troops on May 2, 1945.

Those responsible at the Schandelah subcamp were charged in January 1947. This was one of the most successful of the trials against perpetrators of a Neuengamme subcamp before a British military court. It ended with five death sentences against the firm's manager, three SS men (including Ebsen and Truschel), and a Kapo. Except for the firm's manager, all the sentences were carried out.<sup>8</sup>

**SOURCES** The main events, statistical information, and facts on the Schandelah subcamp are detailed in the two essays by Heike Petry, who has inspected all the primary sources and thoroughly examined them. See Heike Petry, "Der DASAG-Konzern unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des KZ Schandelah," in *Zwangsarbeit für Industrie und Rüstung im Hils 1943–1945*, ed. Detlef Creydt (Holzminden, 2001), 4:31–56; Petry, "‘Betr.: Einsatz von KZ-Häftlingen in Schandelah’—Zwangsarbeit für das Schieferöl-Projekt der Steinöl GmbH," in *Zwangsarbeit und Kriegswirtschaft im Lande Braunschweig 1939–1945*, ed. Gudrun Fiedler and Hans-Ulrich Ludewig (Braunschweig, 2003), pp. 237–256. On the evacuation of Schandelah, see also Katja Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt. Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung. Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen, 2000), 2: 111. For additional information on the shale oil program, see Jan-Erik Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung: Das Wirtschaftsministerium der SS: Oswald Pohl und das Wirtschaftsverwaltungs-hauptamt 1933–1945* (Paderborn, 2001); and Hermann Kaienburg, *Die Wirtschaft der SS* (Berlin, 2003).

Compared to other Neuengamme subcamps, the sources for the Schandelah subcamp are excellent. The firm's files regarding the use of the prisoners remains intact and were used by the British investigators. They can be inspected in the Investigation and Trial Files at PRO. There are also written statements by former prisoners that were made for the

British military trial. They are exhaustive and detailed. There is also some early correspondence with the Reichsführer-SS relating to the construction, which is held by the BA-B, Best. NS 19.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Letter of the SS-WVHA to the Steinöl GmbH, March 16, 1944, in PRO, WO 309/399.
2. Agreement May 16, 1944, in PRO, WO 311/468, printed in Heike Petry, "Der DASAG-Konzern unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des KZ Schandelah," in *Zwangsarbeit für Industrie und Rüstung im Hils 1943–1945*, ed. Detlef Creydt (Holzminden, 2001), 4:46.
3. Interview with Pierre Verhaegen, in AG-NG, Ng.2.8/1622; Interview with Victor Malbecq, in AG-NG, Ng.2.8/1552-3.
4. Interview with Saul Kroner, in AG-NG, Ng.2.8./1538.
5. Neuengamme Camp Case No. 3, in PRO, WO 235/189.
6. PRO, WO 309/399.
7. Visitor's Report at the Kalk- und Zementwerke, November 11, 1944, in PRO, WO 309/399.
8. PRO, WO 235/283-289.

## UELZEN

A U.S. bomber squadron destroyed the Uelzen Goods Railway Yard (Güterbahnhof) on February 22, 1945. Cleanup work began almost immediately. In addition to Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways) task groups (*Bau-Geräte-und Bergungszüge*, construction and salvage trains), Wehrmacht soldiers, units of the Organisation Todt (OT), the Volkssturm, prisoners of war (POWs), and around 500 prisoners from the Neuengamme concentration camp were used in this effort. In the first days of the cleanup, around 5,000 people worked day and night to restore the important rail junction to the north (Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein).

Details on the date that the Neuengamme Uelzen subcamp was established vary by more than six months. Some prisoners speak of a subcamp that existed from October 1944, while others put the date as much later (March 1945).

From the very beginning, the Uelzen subcamp was administered by the Neuengamme concentration camp. It was probably established around October–November as a work detachment, being expanded by the end of February or the beginning of March 1945 to hold 500 men.

Witnesses, including former German prisoners who ended up in the Uelzen subcamp, have stated that it "wasn't a bad camp." According to Neuengamme camp clerk Herbert Schemmel, the camp held a prisoner who, because of his political past and activities in the main camp, was under the threat of death. At the end of March 1945, a larger number of Dutch prisoners were relocated from the Neuengamme camp to Uelzen. To what extent this relocation had to do with *Aktion Bernadotte* remains uncertain.

The prisoners at the Uelzen subcamp, all males, belonged to different European nations that had been conquered by the German Reich during the war. They came from the Soviet Union, Poland, Holland, Belgium, and France. There were only a few Germans who belonged to the various categories of prisoners. According to witnesses, there were no Jewish prisoners. This was later confirmed by investigations of the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsbürg.

The prisoners were held on land owned by the Zuckerfabrik Uelzen AG, in a storehouse for raw sugar. The building's windows were covered with barbed wire. There was only external security. There was no permanent security inside the building. The prisoners were fed from the sugar factory's canteen.

Dutch prisoners who arrived later in the camp report that some of the Kapos were brutal. They tell of mistreatment by the guards that often ended in death. These claims were substantiated by preliminary investigations of the ZdL. However, the substantiation suggested manslaughter rather than murder.

The Uelzen subcamp had its own commandant and guards, roughly 20 to 25 persons. Exact numbers could not be confirmed by either the sugar factory's employees or the prisoners.

The camp commandant was an SS officer, someone whom neither the sugar factory employees nor the prisoners could forget. SS-Untersturmführer Otto "Tull" Harder took command of the Neuengamme subcamp Hannover-Ahlem at the end of February or the beginning of March. According to the prisoners, his style of command did not worsen the situation. Harder scarcely made himself visible. His quarters were close to the canteen. According to former prisoners, shortly before the camp was evacuated, he helped around six to seven German prisoners escape.

This rather positive description does not correspond with the course of proceedings and the judgment of the court in the Curio-Haus Trial, April 16, 1947, to May 6, 1947, where he was accused by the British occupying authority. He was charged with crimes against humanity strictly in relation to events at the Hannover-Ahlem subcamp and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. He served only 4 years in the Werl prison and died in 1956.

Witnesses have been unable to clearly identify the guards or whether they were military or paramilitary units. Some witnesses have claimed that at least in the initial stages the guards were SS members. Others said the guards were Landeschütze (territorial guardsmen) or members of the Volkssturm. They reached this conclusion because of the age of the guards and how they behaved: "They were much more relaxed, you could move around more freely, they gave you tobacco."

Some prisoners, however, have stated that they, together with three to four German prisoners, were allowed by the camp commandant to leave the camp a few days before it was evacuated. They fled in a northerly direction (Lüneburg),

constantly in fear of the Feldpolizei (military police) or marauding bands of disintegrated SS units. They reached the area of Bienenbüttels (District Uelzen), where they hid. A few days later, on April 18–19, 1945, they were liberated by British troops moving through the area.

At the beginning of April, the subcamp's prisoners were still working at the Uelzen railway goods yards. However, as the front got closer, the guards and the camp commandant became visibly unsettled and nervous. Their behavior, especially toward German prisoners, changed. They were prepared to exchange information or chat.

Witnesses have reported that they observed a few SS men with explosives threatening the violent death of the prisoners before Uelzen was captured. These threats turned out to be hollow, but on April 17, 1945, a day before Uelzen was captured by British troops, the prisoners were squeezed into cattle trucks by the Volkssturm to be taken back to Neuengamme. Many prisoners died during the transport. According to Dutch witnesses, about 400 prisoners reached the main camp on April 19, 1945, where they were locked in bunkers overnight. On the morning of April 20, 1945, around 150 prisoners left the bunker; their comrades were dead.

The surviving prisoners, together with other prisoners from the main camp, were taken by the SS on April 20, 1945, to Lübeck. Here many of them were put on the freighters *Athen* and *Thielback* and later on the *Cap Arcona*, where they vegetated in inhuman conditions. On May 3, 1945, British fighter bombers attacked the overloaded ships *Cap Arcona* and *Thielback*, fires broke out on the ships, and they sank or capsized. Among the 7,000 who drowned in the Baltic were many prisoners from the Uelzen subcamp. The third ship, *Athen*, which at the time of the attack was in the Neustadt in Holstein harbor and which was not attacked, contained a group of Dutch prisoners from the subcamp. They survived the war and later reported on their experiences in Uelzen.

**SOURCES** Before Dietrich Banse's book *Das Aussenlager Uelzen des KZ Neuengamme*, (Suhlendorf, 1991), there were no works on the events that relate to the Uelzen subcamp. The camp was only mentioned in regional or local histories.

The basis of this work is a small collection of files in ZdL (now BA-L), which contains the preliminary investigation files into members of the guard (Vermerk der Zentralen Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen vom 2. Februar 1972, Betr.: Das Lager Uelzen, Signatur: IV 404 AR 96/69). The author has also conducted interviews with a number of witnesses: Herr Eichstädt, Herr Mettbach, Herr Schulze, Herr Steinke, Herr Tabor, Herr Wedel, Frau Winke, and Herr Schmidt. These witnesses (former prisoners) were located by the author, three of them were visited in different parts of the FRG in 1989 and interviewed where they lived. After the war, former Dutch prisoners, at the request of state authorities, made official reports on their experiences at the Uelzen subcamp, and some of those reports were obtained from NIOD. These reports expand the information about the camp, particularly

in that during the last days of the war prisoners from other camps were temporarily held in Uelzen. From NIOD: Report of former prisoners from Groningen/Nederlande, June 19, 1946; Report of the former prisoner Tuinema from Groningen, November 21, 1946; Report of former prisoner from Den Helder, June 16, 1946: Signatur: C (16.05) 315.2 In addition, there are numerous details in the documents.

The Deutsche Bundesbahn, legal successor to DR, no longer holds files that could provide details. There is only one report (Zwernemann) that gives details about the material damage to the Uelzen railway goods yards, but it does not refer to the use of concentration camp prisoners. It is held in BA-K.

Dietrich Banse  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## VECHELDE

In the summer of 1944, two representatives of the Büssing Nationale-Automobil-Gesellschaft (National Automobile Company, NAG), headquartered in Braunschweig, traveled to the Auschwitz concentration camp in order to examine between 1,000 and 1,200 prisoners for their qualifications, as they were supposed to work at Büssing. Not only did the prisoners have to be skilled laborers, but the physical appearance of the prisoners was important in the selection. The prisoners arrived at Braunschweig between September and November 1944 in three transports. The first transport of 350 prisoners left Auschwitz in the middle of September 1944. As the camp in Braunschweig, at the Büssing-Werke (Schillstrasse) was not yet ready, 100 prisoners were housed in the nearby forced labor camp in order to construct the Büssing camp. The remaining 250 prisoners were transferred to the completed camp at Vechelde. The prisoners here were also supposed to work for Büssing. The second transport arrived in October with about 500 prisoners, of which 150 were sent on to Vechelde. As a result, around 400 prisoners were stationed at Vechelde, about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Braunschweig. They were housed in a former jute mill on a field between the Spiegelbergallee and Spinnerstrasse. The Braunschweigische Aktiengesellschaft für Jute- und Flachs-Industrie (Braunschweig Company for Jute and Flax Industry) ceased operating the facility in 1926. It remained the owner of the site and permitted other companies to use it as a storage facility and for other purposes. In 1944, the Büssing Company was given the right to use the factory grounds. Büssing was relocating its production facilities to the edge of the town to avoid the increasing number of bombing raids on Braunschweig. This was also the reason why the site was regarded as particularly suitable for the establishment of a prison camp.

The prisoners were mostly Polish Jews who were survivors of the Łódź ghetto. Only the prisoner-functionaries were of German background. The prisoners had to work for Büssing manufacturing replacement parts for trucks, with an emphasis on the manufacture of rear axles for heavy vehicles. The

majority of the prisoners worked in the assembly building, which was equipped with lathes, drills, and milling machines. They were taught by the German skilled tradesmen at Büssing NAG and supervised by them. Former prisoner Adolf Diamant worked together with other prisoners on a lathe, making tank brake drums: "Working on the brake drums was naturally very, very difficult for we prisoners who had been weakened for years. It was a Sisyphus labor to lift the brake drums from the floor, drag them to the lathe, and then to fasten them down; after a while at the lathe, they were removed and when ten brake drums were ready, they had to be taken to the drilling machines, where the appropriate holes were drilled into them."<sup>1</sup>

The work was done in two shifts each of 12 hours. The day shift was from 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. and the night shift from 7:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. Production went without a hitch. Sabotage was almost impossible.<sup>2</sup> The prisoners have described the German tradesmen as friendly and not violent.

The prisoners were probably housed close to their work in two buildings. They slept on wooden plank beds. Two men had to share a double plank bed. However, unlike the situation in other subcamps, each prisoner had his own blanket. Of great benefit, especially in winter, was that Vechelde prisoners were able to have hot showers. However, food supplies even at the beginning were inadequate. The prisoners were able to draw the attention of Büssing management to this problem, who in turn complained to the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) about the inadequate food. According to former prisoners, the rations were then in fact increased. The midday soup ration was doubled, and there was an additional supply of bread.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, unhygienic conditions and inadequate clothing prevailed in the camp. The biggest problem for the prisoners was the constant attack by lice, which during the entire time at Vechelde could not be avoided.

The commandant of the Braunschweig subcamp (Büssing/Schillstr.) was probably SS-Hauptscharführer Max Kirstein, who was also the base commander of all Braunschweig subcamps. Kirstein's deputy, an SS man called Sebrandke, was in charge of the work detachment in Vechelde.<sup>4</sup> Otherwise, according to prisoner testimony, the majority of the guards in Vechelde were men between 50 and 60 years old. It is likely that they were discharged Wehrmacht soldiers or came from the Volkssturm.

Compared to other camps, the death rate in Vechelde was low, as there was only a short distance to work, rations were increased, there were warm showers, and there was a low level of violence. Diamant recalls three to four dead.<sup>5</sup> There are no prisoner graves in Vechelde, and it is likely that the corpses, as in other Braunschweig camps, were taken, until January 1945, to Watenstedt and then to the Braunschweig crematorium.

The SS evacuated the camp at the end of March 1945 before the advancing fronts. The prisoners were first returned to the camp at Schilldenkmal in Braunschweig, where the prisoners also had to work for Büssing NAG. On March 26,



1945, they were taken from there to the Watenstedt/Leinde subcamp near the Braunschweig steel mill. They left this camp on April 7 and were taken via Berlin to the Ravensbrück concentration camp, where they arrived on April 14; 10 days later, they were taken by the SS to the camp at Wöb-  
belin near Ludwigslust, which was liberated by American troops on May 2.

Both the British and German Federal Republic investigated those responsible for the Büssing NAG and the camp at Vechelde, but these investigations resulted in no prosecutions.<sup>6</sup> Vechelde played an important role in early attempts by forced laborers and concentration camp prisoners to obtain compensation for their forced labor. In 1965 Diamant commenced proceedings against Büssing NAG and on June 20, 1965, was given the right by the Braunschweig District Court (Braunschweiger Landgericht) to claim compensation. While the 177.80 deutschemark (DM) awarded was small, it is one of the few cases in which a German court has awarded former forced laborers compensation.<sup>7</sup>

**SOURCES** The most detailed study on the Vechelde subcamp is and remains a brochure by Axel Richter. It is based largely on statements by former prisoners, as well as German witnesses. See Axel Richter, *Das Unterkommando Vechelde des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme: Zum Einsatz von KZ-Häftlingen in der Rüstungsproduktion*, ed. Gemeinde Vechelde (Vechelde, 1985). The study has been supplemented by an essay by Karl Liedke, who interviewed former prisoners and examined the files of the Deutsche Sta. in the NStA-Wf. See Karl Liedke, "Destruction Through Work: Lodz Jews in the Büssing Truck Factory in Braunschweig, 1944–1945," *YVS* 30 (2002): 153–179, esp. 157, 162, 165, 174. On the transports, see Katja Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt. Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung: Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen, 2000), 2: 15. On the restitution case of Adolf Diamant, see Benjamin B. Ferencz, *Lohn des Grauens: Die Entschädigung jüdischer Zwangsarbeiter—Ein offenes Kapitel deutscher Nachkriegsgeschichte* (1981; Frankfurt, 1986), p. 214. Ferencz represented Diamant at the court case.

The Deutsche Sta. investigation files are held in the PRO and the BA-L (ZdL), but the information reveals little more than is in the NStA-Wf.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Report by Adolf Diamant, September 17, 1984, printed in Richter, Axel *Das Unterkommando Vechelde des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme: Zum Einsatz von KZ-Häftlingen in der Rüstungsproduktion*, ed. Gemeinde Vechelde (Vechelde, 1985), p. 98.

2. Ibid., p. 99.

3. Ibid.

4. See the report by Policeman Knigge, in NStA-Wf, 62 Nds Fb 2, no. 445; and the British Investigation Files on the Braunschweig subcamps in PRO, WO 309/1241.

5. Diamant in Richter, *Unterkommando*, p. 57.

6. PRO, WO 309/1241; Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv in Wolfenbüttel, 62 Nds Fb 2, no. 445; and BA-L, ZdL, IV 404 AR 111/67.

7. Benjamin B. Ferencz, *Lohn des Grauens: Die Entschädigung jüdischer Zwangsarbeiter—Ein offenes Kapitel deutscher Nachkriegsgeschichte* (1981; Frankfurt, 1986), p. 214.

## VERDEN

A satellite camp attached to Neuengamme was created in Verden on January 8, 1945. Inmates deported to the Neuengamme subcamp system were used as laborers in construction, repairs, and various other economic and rearmaments efforts. The creation of satellite camps at work sites diminished transportation time for inmates between the main camp and the outlying sites. At least eight male inmates were transferred from Warberg to Verden to construct the SS training site (*Schulungstätte*) Sachsenhain.<sup>1</sup> They were employed by the Verden Construction Administration of the SS (SS-Bauleitung Verden).

Few other details on the Verden subcamp could be found. According to an attachment to a translated copy of the report filed by SS garrison physician Trzebinski, which lists the SS doctors in charge of overseeing medical care within the Neuengamme camps, Dr. Hintzelmann and his assistant SS-Rottenführer Joerss supervised the health of the Verden inmates.<sup>2</sup> The archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum contain a photograph of one Frau Horn, the military secretary of SS-Sturmbannführer Blintzek, the commandant of the Verden subcamp. No other information about Blintzek or Horn could be found; further research at the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) holdings of the Berlin Document Center (BDC), SS Officer Personnel files (SSO series), may yield additional information.

The camp was evacuated in April 1945 to an unknown destination, and the fate of the prisoners is unknown.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Verden camp. Brief information on the existence of the camp in secondary literature is found in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps and includes a reproduction of the quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski. This information is duplicated (except for the opening date of the camp) in the Verden entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen, 1979). For similar brief information (opening, closing dates, type of work, and so on), see Ulrich Bauche, *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945* (Hamburg, 1986).

Primary documentation that provides information on the Verden camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information. The original quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski, which lists SS-Bauleitung Verden and is published in various secondary



sources, can be found at the FZH. The photograph of Frau Horn, the military secretary of Major Blintzek, is located at USHMMPA, WS # 46600.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Quarterly report filed by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski (March 29, 1945), FGNS-H, Nachlass Hans Schwarz (original report). USHMMA (RG-59.016M, Reel 5) also contains a translated copy from the PRO, WO 235/167 (BAOR trial of Max Pauly and 13 others), with attached information about medical treatment in the various subcamps and attached commandos. The report is also published in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), pp. 123–126.

2. Ibid.

## WARBERG

A satellite camp attached to Neuengamme was established in Warberg on June 5, 1944. Inmates deported to the Neuengamme subcamp system were used as laborers in construction, repairs, and various other economic and rearmaments efforts. The creation of satellite camps at work sites diminished transportation time for inmates between the main camp and the outlying sites. Between 8 and 10 male inmates were transferred from the Braunschweig Truppenwirtschaftslager subcamp to Warberg to continue construction work for the SS. The satellite operated until January 8, 1945, when the inmates were transferred to another satellite camp in Verden, northwest of Hannover.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the satellite camp in Warberg. Brief information on the existence of the camp in secondary literature is found in Hermann Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), which covers a broader analysis of the Neuengamme subcamps. This information is duplicated in Ulrich Bauche, *Arbeit und Vernichtung: Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme, 1938–1945* (Hamburg, 1986).

Primary documentation that provides information on the Warberg camp is equally scarce. Further research at the AG-NG may yield additional information.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## WATENSTEDT

In August 1939 the Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG) and the Army High Command (OKH) formed the “Stahlwerke Braunschweig GmbH” in order to process steel produced from rolling mills. The factory was located to the southwest of Salzgitter-Watenstedt, close to the “Hütte Braunschweig.” The steelworks in Braunschweig produced tank tracks, equipment for torpedoes, barrels for guns, bombs, and grenades. By 1943 most of the production facilities were complete.

Directly opposite the village of Leinde was a camp complex of five individual camps, in which between 1941 and the early summer of 1944 Eastern workers (Ostarbeiter), both male and female, as well as civilian workers from Belgium, Italy, and Hungary were held. From the middle of May 1944 the camps were converted into the Watenstedt subcamp. A small part was retained as a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp.

Prisoners from the Drütte subcamp were used to do the conversion. They did carpentry work and constructed the electric fence.<sup>1</sup>

The first transport of prisoners arrived from Neuengamme in the Watenstedt subcamp on May 27, 1944.<sup>2</sup> Additional transports in the middle of June and August increased the number of prisoners in the men’s camp to around 2,000.<sup>3</sup> The SS guards were accommodated in the middle part of the camp. At the beginning of July 1944, the prisoners moved into the large area of the camp that consisted of stone barracks.

The first female transport arrived in Salzgitter from the Ravensbrück concentration camp on July 7, 1944.<sup>4</sup> Altogether, there were around 300 women.<sup>5</sup> There were additional transports on August 28<sup>6</sup> and October 19, 1944.<sup>7</sup> At the end of March 1945, there were 729 women in the Watenstedt subcamp.<sup>8</sup>

Male prisoners who could no longer work were returned to the Neuengamme main camp, and the women were returned to Ravensbrück.<sup>9</sup> There were also transfers direct to other Neuengamme subcamps. In December 1944, a group of French women was transferred to Hannover. The number of the prisoners who went through the Watenstedt subcamp is much higher than the recorded number of prisoners, 2,000 men and 1,000 women.

The largest groups of prisoners were French, Soviet, and Polish political prisoners. At the beginning of 1945, the prisoner composition changed because, with the dissolution of the Braunschweig subcamps, a large number of Jewish prisoners were brought to the Watenstedt camp.

The prisoners worked in the Braunschweig steelworks, about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the camp. The prisoners walked to work. They worked in factory buildings 16 and 17. Here were the production lines for grenade and shell casings of different calibers and weight. The large presses that produced from steel blocks the hollow casings for shells and grenades were in factory building 16. In factory building 17, the mechanical work on the shell casings was done. Men and women from the Watenstedt subcamp worked in both factory buildings. Only a few prisoners were able to obtain work as toolmakers, avoiding the otherwise heavy labor. In the late summer and autumn of 1944, around 80 to 100 concentration camp prisoners were put to work in extracting iron ore from the Haverlahwiese mine in Gebhardtshagen. Accompanied by SS guards, they walked to and from the mine, 6 kilometers away (3.7 miles).<sup>10</sup>

The living conditions in the Watenstedt subcamp were similar to those in other subcamps. Clothing, hygienic conditions, and food were completely inadequate. The clothing for

women was totally unsuitable. Due to the lack of prisoner clothing, the women were given civilian clothes that were marked with paint.<sup>11</sup> The discrepancy between the food supply and the demands of the heavy physical work led to many accidents and illnesses. The two infirmaries were constantly overcrowded, and there was almost a complete lack of medicine and bandages. Medical care was practically nonexistent.<sup>12</sup>

Factory building 16 was heavily damaged on January 14, 1945, during an air raid, and the production of munitions was disrupted. The prisoners then had to work in the open air, cleaning up and undertaking repair work. If the machines were still working, they had to operate the machines.

At the beginning of 1945, the Watenstedt subcamp became a sort of holding camp for prisoners in the Braunschweig region who could no longer work. From the end of January, transports arrived with sick prisoners who could no longer work from the subcamps at Schillstrasse and SS-Reitschule (Riding School) in Braunschweig. The increasing number of such transports can be seen as the preliminary step to the final evacuation of subcamps in the region. The poor living conditions and the use of sick prisoners on the production lines are reflected in the increasing death rate from February in the Watenstedt camp.<sup>13</sup> There are 526 recorded deaths.<sup>14</sup> Most of the dead are buried in Jammertal Cemetery in Salzgitter-Lebenstedt.

At the beginning of April, the SS took the last prisoners in the Schillstrasse camp to the Watenstedt subcamp. The numbers in the camp increased dramatically. In addition to the original 2,000 men and 1,000 women in the Watenstedt subcamp, there were now 800 men from the Schillstrasse camp and, according to survivors' estimates, around 200 women from the SS-Reitschule subcamp. The conditions were catastrophic because the camp had not been built to hold so many prisoners. Many of the prisoners were no longer put to work and remained in the barracks. In the spring of 1945, the vice president of the Swedish Red Cross, Graf Folke Bernadotte, and Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler agreed on measures to rescue Danish and Norwegian prisoners. This agreement had unintended consequences on the Watenstedt subcamp. It was agreed that a collection camp would be established for 5,000 Scandinavian prisoners in the Neuengamme concentration camp. To create the space, sick and weak prisoners of different nationalities were taken to the subcamps in Hannover and the Watenstedt subcamp.

The SS began the dissolution of the Watenstedt subcamp on April 7, 1945. The evacuation consisted of at least two trains, but it is not impossible that there was a third transport. All the trains stopped at the provisional platform close to the camp. The survivors state that, as with other subcamps, the prisoners were still working on the day the camp was evacuated. The sick and weakened prisoners were taken from the infirmary and the protective block and put onto one train. The others were put on another transport. There must have been roll calls before the trains departed. A list of prisoners, probably compiled after one such roll call, has survived.<sup>15</sup> It has surnames, first names,

prisoner numbers, birthdates, grounds for imprisonment, nationality, birthplace, and date of arrival in the camp. The lists hold around 2,000 names. An examination of the names reveals that neither women, prisoners from the infirmary, nor those who were in the protective block were on the list. The medical orderly, French prisoner Jean Bizien, stated that these prisoners were loaded during the night of April 8, 1945, into a special train. Around 80 dead were left on the platform.<sup>16</sup>

It would seem from the various reports that there were around 3,000 prisoners on a train. The reference to the numbers for the two transports also indicates another transport because at the time of the evacuation there were more than 5,000 prisoners in the camp. If one compares the composition of the transports, there is a unified picture. However, the trains' destinations remain conjecture. On April 15, 1945, one transport was in the vicinity of Berlin.<sup>17</sup> This transport probably arrived the following day at Ravensbrück. Survivors later stated that around April 24–25, they were in Ravensbrück. Those who could march were driven in a westerly direction and reached the Wöbbelin subcamp at the beginning of May, which became a collecting camp for thousands of prisoners in the evacuation transports. The women left the camp and marched in a north-westerly direction. Another group was liberated in the Malchow camp while heading in a westerly direction.

The Watenstedt subcamp is referred to in the sources by a number of different names. The name "Stahlwerke Braunschweig" often results in the camp being seen as part of the Braunschweig region. It was only with the erection of a memorial stone and plaque at the camp's location in May 1991 that the camp has been known in research work as Watenstedt/Leinde.

**SOURCES** There are sporadic references on the Watenstedt subcamp in a number of publications, often one chapter focusing on a particular theme. There is no one work that focuses on the camp. Gudrun Pischke in her book *"Europa arbeitet bei den Reichswerken . . .": Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem in Salzgitter* (Salzgitter, 1995) describes the camp and its development. Gerd Wysocki in his book *"Arbeit für den Krieg"—Herrschaftsmechanismen in der Rüstungsindustrie des Dritten Reiches* (Braunschweig, 1992) focuses on the use of concentration camp labor in the armaments industry. The evacuation of the camp is focused on in Elke Zacharias's essay "Die Räumung der KZ Aussenlager in der Region Salzgitter/Braunschweig," in *"Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung": Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, ed. Detlef Garbe and Carmen Lange (Hamburg, 2005). See also Michael Grill, "Neuengamme war die erste Etappe auf dem Weg in die Heimat"—Das Skandinavienlager in Neuengamme und die Rückführung der skandinavischen Häftlinge mit den 'Weissen Bussen,'" in the same volume. In the author's book *Ein Ort mit Geschichte: Der "Ausländerfriedhof" Jammertal in Salzgitter-Lebenstedt* (Salzgitter, 2006), there is published for the first time the names of all prisoners who are known to have died in the Watenstedt subcamp.

There are only scattered archival records on Watenstedt. The archive of the Stahlwerke Braunschweig GmbH, a sub-

sidary of RWHG, has not survived. There are a number of sources in BA-K. The IPN holds the transport lists, which give details on the number of prisoners. The AG-R holds the arrival and discharge books, with a particular focus on the female camp at Watenstedt. Also worthy of mention are numerous memoirs and interviews in the AG-Dr, AG-NG, AG-W, AG-R, YVA, and VHF. A published testimony on this camp is Jean Bizien, *Sous l'habit rayé: À chacun son destin* (Brest, 1987).

Elke Zacharias  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Hans Wolder Interview, 1993, AG-Dr.
2. Erinnerungsbericht Walter Riga, 1992; Interview Paul De Bievre, 1992, both in AG-Dr.
3. Jean Bizien, *Sous l'habit rayé: À chacun son destin* (Brest, 1987), p. 73.
4. Françoise Robin Interview, 1991, AG-Dr.
5. Madame Masson Bericht, AG-R, RA Bd. 30/547.
6. "Überstellung von Russinnen und Ukrainerinnen," in *ibid.*, RA Bd. 47.
7. Überstellungsliste von KL Ravensbrück nach KL Neuengamme. Arbeitslager: Watenstedt-Braunschweig, in IPN, KL Ravensbrück, Sygn. 17.
8. "Vierteljährlicher Bericht des SS-Standortarztes des KL Hamburg-Neuengamme vom 29.3.1945," in StA-N, KV-Anlage, 2169-PS.
9. Rücküberstellung Nr. 30 am 19. Oktober 1944 KL Neuengamme, Arbeitslager. Watenstedt, in IPN, KL Ravensbrück, Sygn. 73.
10. SS-Wachmann Hugo Behnke, letter to his wife, September 19, 1944, AG-Dr.
11. Robin Interview, 1991; and Therese Boudier Interview, 1992, in AG-Dr.
12. Walter Riga Interview, 1992; Erinnerungsbericht Jean Bizien, n.d., in AG-Dr.
13. Friedhofskartei, in ASt-Salz.
14. AG-NG, Die Toten, CD 2005.
15. Transportliste, in IPN, KL Ravensbrück, Sygn. 52.
16. Erinnerungsbericht Jean Bizien, n.d., in AG-Dr.
17. SS-Wachmann Hugo Behnke, letter to his wife, April 16, 1945, in AG-Dr.

## WEDEL

The Wedel subcamp, which existed between September and November 1944, was located in the small town of Wedel, Holstein, on a street later known as Rissener Strasse. During its existence it was occupied by both female and male prisoners. The camp lay outside the town in a rural environment of fields and forests. It was on an unimproved road, between Wedel and the Hamburg city border. It was built on part of an area created in 1943 called "Marinesonderanlage Wenzel" in Wedel. By the spring of 1943, Grossadmiral Erich Raeder, Oberbefehlshaber of the German Navy, had already planned the construction of submarine bunkers as new bombproof wharves on

the Elbe River at Wedel. The bunkers were to hold 12 submarines. The navy planned to build a supply depot and naval base for 1,000 people. These camp barracks were located in the area between what was later to become Vossnagel and Industriestrasse, as well as Feldstrasse and Rissener Strasse. Construction of the submarine bunker was often stopped due to labor and material shortages that occurred during 1943 and 1944. The supply camp, however, was ready at the beginning of 1944 and included 50 wooden barracks. Since the construction of the submarine bunker facility continued to be delayed, the supply barracks were used at first to house prisoners of war (POWs). In the late summer of 1944, the northeastern section of the POW camp was separated from the rest of the camp, to house prisoners from the Neuengamme concentration camp. The Wedel camp consisted of 12 barracks for the prisoners, a kitchen, a medical barrack, and a headquarters for the guards.

In all probability, the Wedel subcamp was first occupied on September 13, 1944, by 500 Czech and Hungarian Jewish women. They came from the Neuengamme concentration camp's Hamburg-Geilenberg (Dessauer Ufer) subcamps. They had been sent there from Auschwitz in the middle of June 1944. According to some survivors, the female prisoners were primarily used to remove rubble caused by the bombing. The women were taken each day, either by foot or by truck, to the Elbe River, where they were taken by boat to Hamburg-Teufelsbrück. There, they removed rubble, loaded and unloaded trucks with bricks, and were engaged in heavy manual labor to help fortify the city. According to the survivors, a few women were put to work in Wedel. They had to help farmers with the harvest in the autumn of 1944.

Lagerkommandant Walter Kümmel commanded the Wedel subcamp. At the end of 1933, as a 28-year-old, Kümmel applied to join the Allgemeine-SS. He was accepted at the beginning of 1934. He joined the National Socialist Party in 1937. He volunteered for the Waffen-SS in April 1941 and was given basic military training. However, because of health problems, he was assigned to a Wachbattalion at Sachsenhausen. After a few months, he was transferred as a telephone operator to the battalion's operation room at the Neuengamme concentration camp. Kümmel took part in two noncommissioned officers' courses during his service at Neuengamme, where he received intensive military training. His training was completed with his promotion to Unterscharführer on December 1, 1943. He was appointed Blockführer in the "protective custody" camp of the Neuengamme main camp. After his promotion from Blockführer to second Rapportführer of Neuengamme in February 1944, he was transferred to Kiel as the commander of a bomb disposal squad, which also was made up of prisoners from Neuengamme. Following the dissolution of the squad in the late summer of 1944, Kümmel received the order to take over the command of the Wedel subcamp, which was composed of a group of about 500 female prisoners. The female prisoners were under Kümmel's command, at first in the camp at Wedel and subsequently in the Hamburg-Eidelstedt subcamp for women.



The British held Kümmel as a POW following the capitulation. In 1946, he and 13 others from the Neuengamme concentration camp were accused of manslaughter and the mistreatment of Allied nationals. They were sentenced by the Supreme British Military Court to 10 years in prison. He was convicted because of his role as the second Rapportführer in the Neuengamme main camp and not for his actions as commander of the Wedel camp or the Eidelstedt camp. Kümmel was released early from prison in 1952. Kümmel, who was suspected of murdering two babies in Eidelstedt, was investigated for this crime only in 1970 by the Hamburg State Prosecutor. On August 30, 1982, the Hamburger Landgericht (Regional Court) convicted Kümmel as an accessory to murder. However, as the statute of limitations for such crimes committed during the Nazi period applied, Kümmel was acquitted on all charges.

SS female wardens guarded the female prisoners in the Wedel camp, and retired customs officials provided external security. There are survivors' reports that unanimously testify to the brutality of these women. The surviving files of the customs officials reveal that 20 men, in rotating shifts, were responsible for the security of the camp.

According to the unanimous reports of the survivors, the Jewish women left the Wedel camp on the evening of September 27, 1944, in the direction of Hamburg-Eidelstedt. The prisoners are able to remember the date because that evening was the end of the Jewish holiday, Yom Kippur, because most were orthodox Jews and they had fasted. Consequently, the women were weak and ravenous and had expected to receive their evening soup. Before the soup was distributed, however, the women were evacuated. Because of the enormous physical effort required to transfer the camp, the evening has remained etched in the women's memory.

Sometime in the middle of October 1944, probably on October 17, 1944, about 500 male prisoners were housed for approximately five weeks in the Wedel subcamp. These prisoners were primarily from Russia, Poland, Austria, and the Netherlands. Some of them came from the small Dutch village of Putten in Geldern. The prisoners had to dig tank ditches for a planned line of fortification around the city of Hamburg and had to do heavy manual labor in fortification work in the Sülldorf district of Hamburg. The Wedel camp for men existed for a little more than one month. According to surviving documents, 27 prisoners died. Their deaths were the result of the work conditions, particularly as the prisoners often had to stand for hours in cold water, digging tank ditches, and because of the lack of adequate food and warm clothing. Some of them were buried at the Wedel cemetery. The Wedel subcamp was most likely dissolved on November 20, 1944. The male prisoners were transported to Meppen-Versen, also a subcamp of Neuengamme. From there the men were also put to work digging tank ditches.

**SOURCES** This article on the Wedel subcamp is based on the following works: Christus Kirchengemeinde Schulau Wedel, *KZ Wedel: Das vergessene Lager* (Wedel, 1983); Oliver Wlekin-

ski, "Marinesonderanlage Wenzel: Ein Bauprojekt des III. Reiches in Wedel (Holstein) 1943–1945," in *Heimatverband für den Kreis Pinneberg von 1961* (Pinneberg, 1990), pp. 137–144; Hans Ellger, "Die Häftlingsgruppe der Jüdinnen am Beispiel des Frauenaussenlagers Hamburg-Eidelstedt," in *Häftlinge in KZ Neuengamme: Verfolgungsverfahren, Häftlingssolidarität und nationale Bindung*, ed. KZ Gedenkstätte Neuengamme (Hamburg, 1999), pp. 144–157; and Ellger, "Ein Barackenlager am Friedrichshulder Weg—ein Frauenaussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme," in *Fischkistendorf Lurup: Siedlungsprojekte, Schrebergärten, Bauwagen und Lager von 1920 bis 1950*, ed. Anke Schulz (Hamburg, 2002), pp. 104–115.

The AG-NG has records of a few interviews and memoirs of both female and male prisoners that relate to the Wedel camp. The author conducted a number of interviews with female prisoners. However, the female prisoners' recollections of their time at Wedel are not particularly strong, not least because they were only at Wedel for about two weeks. The court documents relating to Krümmel's trial are in AStALG-H. They provide information about his career and that of the customs' officials. Records relating to the deceased male prisoners are kept at the Friedhofsverwaltung der Stadt Wedel and the Christuskirchengemeinde in Schulau, Wedel.

Hans Ellger  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## WILHELMSHAVEN-BANTER WEG [AKA KRIEGSMARINEWERFT]

The Wilhelmshaven subcamp existed from September 1944 to the beginning of April 1945. The camp was located on a site on Banter Weg, which was owned by the Kriegsmarinewerft (Naval Shipyards). It was located close to the shipyards. The barracks camp had existed for a long time. It could accommodate 500 men. The commandant of the Neuengamme concentration camp, Max Pauly, demanded that those in charge at the shipyards ensure that 1,000 prisoners could be held in the camp. The concentration camp prisoners were to replace 600 workers who in the summer of 1944 were being relocated to Hamburg. It remains unclear whether this initiative originated from the shipyard management or Otto Merker, head of the Hauptausschuss Schiffbau (Main Shipbuilding Committee).

At the beginning of September, a transport from the Neuengamme concentration camp with 999 prisoners reached the Wilhelmshaven subcamp. The first transport consisted of around 600 French and 200 Soviet prisoners. There were other prisoners from a number of European countries and around 20 German prisoners who held the most important prisoner-functionary positions. The prisoner composition changed with the arrival of further transports. Between October 1944 and January 1945, there are thought to have been another five transports, each with between 60 and 200 prisoners. At least two transports are thought to have returned to the main camp with sick prisoners. The largest group of new prisoners was 250 to 300 Hungarian Jews.



The camp was in a relatively good condition when the prisoners arrived. The prisoners were accommodated in four barracks, each with 13 rooms. There were around 1,000 beds, so that in the beginning each prisoner had his own bed. Later the prisoners had to share beds, rotating in day and night shifts. In theory, the barracks could be heated via a central heating system fired with coke, but the camp administration forbade its use. The camp was secured with a double electrical fence and five guard towers.

Members of the French SS were responsible for security in the first two months. They were soon replaced by a company of around 200 men from the naval artillery. (Around 20 naval soldiers were later questioned by a German state prosecutor. None of them could recall brutality or mistreatment.)<sup>1</sup> Following the withdrawal of the French SS, there remained five SS men in the camp. The commandant of the Wilhelmshaven camp was periodically replaced: within eight months there were four different commanders. From September to November 1944, Otto Thümmel was in command. He was a Wehrmacht officer, who had probably ended up in the concentration camp following a war injury. Survivors have described Thümmel as the best of the commandants because he stopped the SS and the prisoner elite from taking bribes and stealing and allowed the “simple” prisoners relatively generous rations. In addition, Thümmel did not beat the prisoners. A French prisoner claimed in the Curio Haus Trial that Thümmel was replaced on the insistence of Pauly because he thought the Wilhelmshaven camp was too humane.<sup>2</sup> His successor, Rudolf Günther, was an SS man who had been stationed in Neuengamme since 1940. He was commandant for only a few days because the navy insisted that the commandant be a naval officer. The last two commanders were Büscher and SS-Hauptsturmführer Schwanke. Because the navy persisted with its demand, it is likely that the two were injured officers. Of the other SS personnel in the camp, the Rapportführer SS-Unterscharführer Gustav Jepsen should be mentioned. Jepsen served as the commandant’s deputy. A Dane, with a German background, he had taken part in the Russian campaign as a member of the SS and was noted in Wilhelmshaven for his particular brutality. He was sentenced to death in a postwar British military trial and executed in 1947 in Hameln.<sup>3</sup>

Several, mostly German prisoners in functionary positions are thought to have mistreated the prisoners. The camp elder, Alfred Wagner, was shot by the SS. His successor, Walter Besch, is accused by several survivors of mistreating and killing prisoners: “He [a French prisoner] was accused of stealing cigarettes from Besch. I saw how Besch ordered him to squat. . . . Then Besch said to me: ‘You can fill out his death certificate.’”<sup>4</sup> Another German Kapo, Heinrich Sürig (a political prisoner and German Social Democratic Party [SPD] member), was charged in a postwar British trial and sentenced to 18 months’ imprisonment.<sup>5</sup>

The majority of the prisoners worked in the naval shipyard in its workshops. They were separated from the rest of the yard by barbed wire. Around 80 shipyard employees were required to train and supervise the prisoners. They could enter

the prisoner area on presentation to the SS of a special identity card. The prisoners worked on technically challenging work and had to be trained. Instead of the usual two months, the foremen had only two weeks to train the prisoners. The prisoners worked in the following areas: the machine construction shop, lathes, mechanics, tinsmiths, carpentry, and rope walk (*Tampenmacherei*). The day shift was from 7:00 A.M. (sometimes from 6:15 A.M.) to 6:00 P.M., and the night shift was from 6:15 P.M. to 6:00 A.M.<sup>6</sup> A smaller detachment was used to clean up bomb rubble from the shipyard and in the city of Wilhelmshaven.

Despite the relatively good working conditions for a subcamp, as the detachment worked in a covered area, the death rate in Wilhelmshaven was relatively high. One reason for the high death rate was that some in the shipyard management were fanatical National Socialists and slave drivers. For that reason, two of the men were charged after the war before a British military trial and sentenced to long periods of imprisonment. The manager of the shipyard, director and engineer (with the rank of an admiral) Hans Horstmann, and the manager of the prisoners’ work area, director and engineer Gottfried Drossen, were sentenced by a British military court to 15 years in jail but were released in 1952.<sup>7</sup> Both were observed by wharf employees beating prisoners. In response to a comment by an employee on the weak state of the prisoners, Horstmann had replied that “if they fall over we can always get fresh prisoners from Neuengamme.”<sup>8</sup> Drossen went even further: “The prisoners are going to disappear in any case. . . . They must be killed, liquidated! When there is nothing else left we will kill them with a hammer!”<sup>9</sup>

According to the Neuengamme SS-Standortarzt report on March 25, 1945, there were 1,129 men in the Wilhelmshaven subcamp. A few days later, between April 3 and 5, 1945, the camp was dissolved and the prisoners evacuated. Around 400 sick prisoners were loaded onto a train. The rail cars were struck by an Allied air raid on April 7 in Lüneburg, killing around 250 prisoners. Of the survivors, half were transported the next day to Bergen-Belsen. The remaining prisoners were murdered by the SS on April 11 in Lüneburg. On April 5, around 700 prisoners began one of the longest death marches of all Neuengamme subcamps. The column arrived on April 16 in Hamburg, after going through Bremen and Horneburg. As preparations were already under way in Neuengamme to evacuate the camp, the SS decided that the Wilhelmshaven prisoners should march to Sandbostel, where they arrived on April 18.<sup>10</sup> Some of the prisoners from Western European countries, including a few prisoners from the Wilhelmshaven subcamp, were evacuated from the Sandbostel camp because of the catastrophic conditions there. They arrived in Kiel on April 25. There they were loaded onto ships. On board, they learned of the cessation of hostilities on May 8, 1945.<sup>11</sup>

It is thought that at least 234 prisoners died in the Wilhelmshaven subcamp. A list shows the numbers as 125 Frenchmen, 32 Soviets, 25 Jews, 16 Poles, 15 Italians, 8 Belgians, 7 Yugoslavs, 2 Germans, 1 Czech, and 3 of unidentified nationality.<sup>12</sup> A large number of prisoners in the two transports of

the sick to the main camp also died. At least 300 prisoners died during the evacuation of the camp.

**SOURCES** Secondary sources useful for this subcamp are Hartmut Büsing and Klaus Zegenhagen, “Einmal werden froh wir sagen: Heimat, Du bist wieder mein!” in *KZ in Wilhelmsbaven—Rüstringer und Wilhelmsbavener im KZ* (Wilhelmsbaven, 1987); Katharina Hertz-Eichenrode, ed., *Ein KZ wird geräumt: Häftlinge zwischen Vernichtung und Befreiung; Die Auflösung des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager durch die SS im Frühjahr 1945*, 2 vols. (Bremen, 2000), 2: 115.

The basic source for the history of the subcamp is the extensive investigation and trial files in the postwar British military trial against the guards and work personnel at the subcamp and the naval shipyard. A few statements of former prisoners are held in AG-NG. As cited in Büsing and Zegenhagen, the relevant files are held in PRO, WO 235/296 and 297. The proceedings are recorded as JAG 222. It took place between February 4 to March 6, 1946, in the Hamburg Curio Haus. Present research indicates that Gottfried and Drossen were the only employers convicted in one of the British Neuengamme trials.

Marc Buggeln  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-L (formerly ZdL), IV 404 AR-Z 159/73.
2. Statement by Henry le Druillenec in AG-NG, Aussenlager Wilhelmsbaven, April 6, 1984.
3. BA-L, ZdL IV 404 AR-Z 159/73.
4. Cited in Hartmut Büsing and Klaus Zegenhagen, “Einmal werden froh wir sagen: Heimat, Du bist wieder mein!” in *KZ in Wilhelmsbaven—Rüstringer und Wilhelmsbavener im KZ* (Wilhelmsbaven, 1987), p. 92.
5. AG-NG, Aussenlager Wilhelmsbaven, April 6, 1984.
6. Büsing and Zegenhagen, “Einmal werden froh wir sagen,” p. 64; and the statement of a French prisoner in AG-NG, 2.8/222.
7. AG-NG, Aussenlager Wilhelmsbaven, April 6, 1984.
8. Cited by Büsing and Zegenhagen, “Einmal werden froh wir sagen,” p. 63.
9. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 64.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
11. See the statement by the French prisoner le Pajolec, in *ibid.*, pp. 106–109.
12. As listed in *ibid.* p. 93.

## WITTENBERGE

The Wittenberge subcamp was formed in August 1942 and lasted until February 1945. It was the first Neuengamme subcamp established within an industrial facility.

The Kurmärkische Zellwolle und Zellulose AG (KZZW) in Wittenberge an der Elbe—one of five firms in the Phrix Group—was established between 1938 and 1940 with significant state support. The company was to produce a synthetic

celluloid wool to replace foreign textile imports. The product was produced in Wittenberge from straw from which cellulose was extracted as a by-product. As early as 1940, foreign civilian laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) were working in the KZZW. By the end of 1944, they comprised more than 60 percent of the labor force. Starting in February 1942, Polish Jews worked at the factory for a few months. From August 1942 on, concentration camp prisoners from Neuengamme were also working at the factory, building a new facility from which yeast could be derived as a by-product, yeast being an intermediate product from which cellulose could be extracted.

The Polish Jews were given food in such insufficient quantities that they soon lost their strength. By August 20, 1942, the factory had sent 160 of the 300 Jewish laborers to Poland because of their complete physical exhaustion—they were sent to a certain death. The first 150 concentration camp prisoners that arrived on August 28 from Neuengamme were quartered in a temporary camp and put to work the very next day. They were exclusively Soviet prisoners. On January 6, there arrived an additional 15 prisoners from Mauthausen and 150 from Neuengamme; 4 were already dead by the time they arrived. The remainder were so weak that they died in the following weeks.<sup>1</sup> When SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) chief Oswald Pohl inspected the factory on March 4, 1942, in the company of Ernährungsinspekteur der Waffen-SS Ernst Günther Schenck, he promised to send more prisoners. From then on, weak prisoners who could no longer work were replaced by new laborers. In July 1943 the subcamp held about 420 prisoners. At the end of August 1944, another 150 new prisoners arrived from Neuengamme. From that time the number of prisoners stayed constant at around 500.

There are scarcely any memoirs or other sources about the first few months of the camp. It would seem that the prisoners were mostly used to construct the new yeast factory. The poor food, clothing, and accommodation meant that the prisoners gradually lost their strength and that their output declined. The camp commandant Dreimann was infamous for his brutal mistreatment and sadistic torture. According to witnesses in the British Neuengamme Trial in 1946, he was dismissed because of his brutality in 1943; his mistreatment of the prisoners was such that they could no longer work. By the end of the year, 10 of the 150 prisoners were dead.

The health of the 165 concentration camp prisoners who arrived at the beginning of January 1943 in Wittenberge from the Neuengamme and Mauthausen concentration camps also suffered terribly. Of the 300 prisoners, 26 died in January, 16 in February, and 16 again in March. The cause of death is mostly described as “debilitation” (*Entkräftung*). Nevertheless, the death rate remained below the overall death rate for the Neuengamme concentration camp, where in January it was more than 10 percent and in February and March just under 10 percent. Sick prisoners and those who could no longer work were returned from Wittenberge to the main camp. However, those who remained were so weak that the con-

struction company Grün & Bilfinger was constantly complaining about prisoners incapable of working.

The conditions improved a little from the spring of 1943. There was less violence and mistreatment once Dreimann had been dismissed. It is true that the camp commandant Kierstein beat the prisoners, but in comparison to other concentration camps, Wittenberge remains in the memory of the prisoners as relatively bearable. The camp commandant, Major, who was in charge in the last few months, gave the camp elder Gräfe a free hand. His fellow prisoners have judged him positively.<sup>2</sup> By maintaining order and effective organization, he successfully kept the KZZW's management happy and was able to achieve bearable treatment for his fellow prisoners and sometimes even favors. The civilian foremen in Phrix mostly behaved correctly. Only a few Kapos have been characterized as "rather brutal and dumb."

From 1943 on, food was more or less adequate. Because of the heavy labor, the prisoners were allowed to have packages sent from relatives. In the canteen the prisoners could buy with bonus chits (company money) cigarettes and occasionally some pickled vegetables, fruit, broth, fish, or caramel beer.<sup>3</sup>

The accommodation was the usual, poorly heated wooden barracks. Important tradesmen were given better quarters in special rooms. The Neuengamme commandant Pauly recommended to the company representatives when he visited Wittenberge in July 1, 1944, that they only invest the bare minimum in the accommodation, as "today material should not be wasted." Each prisoner had a bed with a straw sack and a blanket. It was only in the last weeks of the winter of 1944–1945 that there were insufficient blankets for all, with the result that some prisoners had to sleep two to a bed. In 1943, the KZZW built additional barracks, a kitchen, a wash barracks with a water connection, and other facilities. However, things were very primitive. Often no water came from the taps, and underwear was only rarely changed; vermin were everywhere. Diarrhea was widespread. However, there were no epidemics, and scarcely anyone was seriously ill. Work accidents seem to have declined from 1943.

Initially there were no trained medical personnel in the infirmary. It would seem that from the middle of 1943 an imprisoned doctor, the Pole Jan Gruchalski, took over medical care in the camp. His only bandages were made of crepe paper, and he had scarcely any medicines. There was little he could do to help.

The Wittenberge prisoners were mostly used on construction sites. Later they were used to assemble machines and other production facilities. When working on the construction sites, they were under the supervision of the construction companies including Grün & Bilfinger and Philipp Holzmann. Particularly difficult was the Strohkcommando, where the prisoners had to unload, stack, and transport bales of straw. Often the prisoners were used for other transport and auxiliary work. After the bombing raids in 1944, they were used to clean up the rubble and to detonate unexploded bombs. In the winter of 1944–1945, they were used for the first time on the production lines. From January 1945 on, 50

concentration camp prisoners worked on the production of yeast and related departments. The work shifts were established according to guidelines of the WVHA. In effect there were no limits, and the prisoners worked according to the demands of the business. Officially Sundays were a rest day; however, during Sunday mornings the prisoners had to clean up the camp. In the last months of 1944–1945, the detachment was increasingly used for cleanup and transport work.

From 1943 on, a few prisoners received supplementary food bonuses (camp money) between 50 Reichspfennig (RPF) and 4 Reichsmark (RM) and later up to 8 RM per week. Hygiene improved, as did the food, with the result that the number of dead in Wittenberge declined in 1943, but this was not necessarily the case in the last years.

The Soviet prisoners formed a large group until the very end. Others included Poles, Dutch, Belgians, and Danes. The confined size of the detachment made communication and solidarity easier than in the large camps such as Neuengamme, regardless of the language barriers. It was possible for groups to help each other. Despite bans, it was not too difficult to make contact with civilian, POW, and other foreign workers in the factory. While they were working, the prisoners were almost exclusively under the control of the civilian foremen. It was forbidden to speak "more than the absolute minimum." Nevertheless, some prisoners used such contacts to get civilian clothes and to escape. Most seem to have been recaptured.

Beginning in 1944, the factory was hit several times during air raids. The concentration camp prisoners were used to fight the fires, rescue the wounded, and clean up.

In February 1945, it became obvious that the Allies would soon reach Wittenberge. The Neuengamme main camp telephoned the factory and informed it that since the firm no longer needed the prisoners, it should send them back. Neuengamme was not prepared to accept the 500 prisoners, however, because the camp was already overfilled. In the end, the WVHA ordered Neuengamme to take the prisoners.

**SOURCES** Information on this camp may be found in the *Erinnerungsberichte von J. Budkiewicz*, February 26, 1964, K. Gräfe, n.d., J. Jarocho, August 30, 1966, W. Lenz, December 10, 1961, K. Pippel, June 17, 1966, and A.J. Woitenko, n.d., which are found in FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz, Bestand Aussenlager Wittenberge. The Betriebsarchiv of KZZW is available at BLHA-(P). Some hearsay testimony by witnesses A. Lüdke, H. Schemmel, and E. Saalwächter is available in PRO, WO 235.

Hermann Kaienburg  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. PRO, WO 235, JAG 145, A. Lüdke Statement (vol. 1, Part 1, p. 29), H. Schemmel (Part 5, p. 26), and E. Saalwächter (Part 5, p. 61).

2. See Jerzy Budkiewicz, Bericht, February 26, 1964, FZH, Nachlass Hans Schwarz, AL Wittenberge.

3. Betriebsarchiv der KZZW, BLHA-(P), 62:122.



## WÖBBELIN

A satellite camp of Neuengamme was established in Wöbbelin on February 12, 1945. Unlike other subcamps in the Neuengamme system, it was not intended to house prisoners to be used as laborers. As the front neared in early 1945, several outlying satellite camps, including Wöbbelin, absorbed many prisoners from the overflowing Neuengamme camp. Wöbbelin was a receiving camp (*Auffanglager*) for inmates who had been evacuated from camps across the northwestern Reich in the last weeks of the war.

The first transport to the Wöbbelin area was sent to the “Reiherhorst” camp on February 12, 1945. Some 700 prisoners were transported from Neuengamme to this small temporary camp (most likely established in late 1944), where they were housed in unheated wooden barracks. Supervised by SS men and German civilian foremen, the prisoners were marched daily some 500 meters (547 yards) to the construction site of the larger Wöbbelin camp. In a short time, the prisoners built shells for five prisoner barracks, a kitchen, and another barracks intended for a washroom and latrine. The prisoners suffered from terrible conditions, and at least 53 died during the building phase.<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of April, the remaining 648 prisoners were moved from “Reiherhorst” to the incomplete Wöbbelin camp, as more inmates were expected to be evacuated there.

From April 1945, additional transports were directed toward the Wöbbelin camp from the Neuengamme main camp, from its satellite camps, and from other camps, such as Auschwitz, Sachsenhausen, and Ravensbrück. No register of the exact dates of the transports survives; however, between April 8 and 12, 1945, prisoners from the subcamp Porta Westfalica were sent to Wöbbelin after a brief stay in the Fallersleben camp. The satellite commando at Schandelah was also evacuated, as well as Lerbeck (April 16, 1945), Kreis Segeberg (April 17, 1945), Beendorf bei Helmstedt (April 20, 1945), Fallersle-

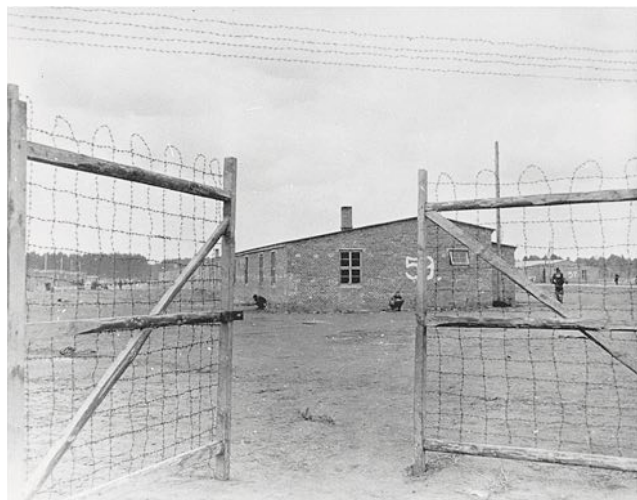
ben, and women inmates from Ravensbrück (April 23, 1945) and Sachsenhausen (early May 1945), to Wöbbelin.

The inmates transported to Wöbbelin represented prisoners of every category, including “asocials,” political prisoners, Jews, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and so on. However, most witness reports emphasize the predominance of green (professional criminals) and red (political) triangles on prisoner clothing. The prisoners were mostly men and represented 16 different nations. A hierarchy developed among the prisoners, and the few German inmates were generally given privileged positions, such as Kapo or Blockältester. A Danish and a French prisoner were appointed inmate doctors, and without medication or supplies, they tried to ameliorate conditions as best they could in the infirmary. Many inmates suffered from dysentery or typhus.

Living conditions in the camp were dreadful. Barbed wire and watchtowers surrounded the camp, and a sign posted on the gates warned passersby to remain clear of the camp on threat of being shot. The stone buildings in which the prisoners lived were rudimentary and did not have heat, floors, glass windows, or doors.<sup>2</sup> The barracks thus provided no shelter from the cold. Because there were no beds or bunks in the barracks, the prisoners slept on the insect-infested floor. The inmates arrived in Wöbbelin with only the clothing they were wearing, which had generally been worn thin by years of incarceration, labor, and forced marches. The sanitary conditions were catastrophic. There was only one water hand pump for the entire camp, and the water, contaminated by the nearby mass graves and “latrine,” was undrinkable. A former Hungarian inmate noted that “drinking from [the hand pump] meant death.”<sup>3</sup> The “latrine” was a deep pit filled with dirty water and waste. The barracks originally intended for the washroom was used instead to accumulate bodies of inmates.

Initially, the prisoners received food daily. A typical ration included 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of bread for 10 prisoners and a half liter (2 cups) of soup (made from contaminated water) each. The more prisoners transferred to the camp, the less food became available, and soon a daily ration was nonexistent. Because of the desperate situation, several witnesses reported that many prisoners resorted to cannibalism.<sup>4</sup>

Besides the initial group of prisoners brought in to construct the Wöbbelin camp, there were few organized labor groups, and no large outside armaments firms employed the inmates. As former inmate George Lucius Salton has recalled: “Life in this camp had no order or purpose. No prisoners worked, no one gave commands, and no one cared about the ill and dying. Skeletal prisoners . . . stood idly near the unfinished barracks. Others sat or lay on the muddy ground or wandered around aimlessly.”<sup>5</sup> A few prisoners were recruited for various jobs, including gathering wood, clearing trees, kitchen duty, or other work. Some prisoners were employed individually by small external businesses, which sometimes resulted in considerable aid to the prisoner. One group employed consistently in the camp was the “corpse commando,” which included about 50 or 60 men. The commando had to bring bodies from the storage barracks to be buried in mass



The main gate of the Wöbbelin subcamp of Neuengamme, May 4, 1945. USHMM WS #80050, COURTESY OF NARA



graves. Many prisoners volunteered for this work because the commando received extra food rations; however, in the final days of the camp, burial was discontinued.<sup>6</sup>

During the 10 weeks of the Wöbbelin camp's existence, more than 1,000 inmates died from the conditions and maltreatment by the guards. However, not every transport was registered, making it difficult to ascertain exact numbers. From April 1945, about 40 prisoners died daily, and in the final days of the camp's existence, about 100 prisoners died daily. Although there were a few unsuccessful individual attempts to escape Wöbbelin, there was generally little opportunity for prisoners to do so. Those caught attempting to escape were executed.

Like the prisoners of Wöbbelin, much of the guard staff was transferred from other evacuated camps. The commandant was 35-year-old SS-Obersturmbannführer Paul Werner Hoppe who, prior to his service in Wöbbelin, was the commandant of the concentration camp Stutthof (from 1942 until its evacuation in January 1945). There is little information about his service in Wöbbelin because Hoppe rarely appeared in the camp. His assistant, most likely the Lagerführer, was SS-Hauptsturmführer Meyer. The Verwaltungsführer was SS-Obersturmführer von Bonin. The SS guards that patrolled the camp were transferred from Stutthof to Wöbbelin, as well as from other evacuated camps. After the war, Hoppe was interned briefly in a British prison camp, from where he fled to Sweden. After he returned to Germany in 1952, Hoppe was arrested and, after a lengthy trial, was sentenced to a nine-year prison term in 1957 for crimes he committed in Stutthof. He was released in 1960 and died in 1974.<sup>7</sup>

There were two attempts to dissolve the Wöbbelin subcamp. On the morning of March 1, 1945, the prisoners were gathered in a roll call and divided between those who were well enough to be transported and those who were not. The transportable inmates were marched out of the camp in columns to a waiting freight train and loaded into an open car. However, by the next morning, the train had not moved. The prisoners, who had been crammed into the car, were removed and driven back into the camp, during which several were shot or beaten by the guards and Kapos.<sup>8</sup> They did not wait long for a second evacuation. The guards gathered German inmates and anyone else willing and able to march (some several hundred prisoners) and set out in the direction of Schwerin. More than 3,500 ill and weak prisoners remained behind. Divisions of the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division, under the command of General James Gavin, encountered the horrific conditions and surviving inmates at Wöbbelin on the afternoon of May 2, 1945. After forcing the residents of Wöbbelin to view the interior of the camp, the U.S. troops buried nearly 200 bodies in Ludwigslust, Hagenow, and Schwerin on May 8 and 9, 1945.<sup>9</sup>

**SOURCES** Numerous primary and secondary sources provide information about the Neuengamme subcamp Wöbbelin. The principal secondary source of information, and an essential resource for this entry, is Carina Baganz, *Zehn Wochen KZ*

*Wöbbelin: Ein Konzentrationslager in Mecklenburg 1945* (Wöbbelin, 2000). Baganz's study provides a detailed analysis of various aspects of the Wöbbelin camp, including the history of its construction, prisoner daily life, SS personnel and commanders, relationship of the camp to Wöbbelin civilians, the memorial erected on the site, and so on. Another useful secondary source is Hermann Kaienburg's *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), which provides a detailed description of the liberation of Wöbbelin, as well as a reproduction of an important quarterly report by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski detailing the number of prisoners originally in Wöbbelin. For information on commandant Paul Werner Hoppe, see Karin Orth, "Die Kommandanten der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager," in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen, 1998). See also Brigitte Hoppe, *Konzentrationslager Neuengamme: Aussenlager Wöbbelin* (Rostock, 1994); and the memoir of former inmate George Lucius Salton, *The 23rd Psalm: A Holocaust Memoir* (Madison, 2002). In his memoir *On to Berlin: Battles of an Airborne Commander, 1943–1946* (New York, 1976), James M. Gavin has described the liberation of the Wöbbelin camp. The film *Die Gräber von Ludwigslust* (Wöbbelin: Volker Osterlin and the Förderverein Mahn- und Gedenkstätte, 2002) documents the history of the Ludwigslust cemetery, where inmates from Wöbbelin are buried and which was rededicated in October 2000.

Extensive primary sources, including several witness testimonies and other materials, are located at the AG-W and the Theodor Körner Museum in Wöbbelin. (For a complete list of sources available at the AG-W, see the extensive footnotes in Baganz's study.) For witness reports, see the ZdL-L, file grouping IV 404 AR-Z 21/76. Trial proceedings against Paul Werner Hoppe by the AStLG-B can be found in the NWStA-M, 8856-9239. For Hoppe's Personalakte, see the BA-B, SSO series. The testimony of former inmate George Salton can be found at USHMMA, RG-50.030\*200 and RG-50.470\*0018. The testimony of Leonard Linton, one of the liberators of the Wöbbelin camp, is also located at USHMMA, RG 50.002\*0040. See also files RG 04.044, Acc. 1997 A 0215, RG-09.005\*37, and RG-04.002\*01, USHMMA, for materials on the liberation of the camp. A collection of 38 black-and-white original photographs of Wöbbelin can be found in the Louis Drucker file, Acc. 1997 A 0293. The USHMPA also has an extensive collection of photographs of Wöbbelin at the time of liberation; see designations 53.3359; 53.3352; 535.458; and 53.337. Finally, the MZML contains thousands of reports from surviving Hungarian Jewish deportees that were recorded in 1945 and 1946 by the DEGOB. Several protocols describe conditions in Wöbbelin; see especially protocols 3199, 3378, 3338, and 3291.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Quarterly report by SS-Standortarzt Trzebinski, March 29, 1945, Nachlass Hans Schwarz, FZH, 13-6-11. Reproduced in full in Herman Kaienburg, *Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945* (Bonn, 1997), pp. 123–126. See

also Carina Baganz, *Zehn Wochen KZ Wöbbelin: Ein Konzentrationslager in Mecklenburg 1945* (Wöbbelin, 2000), p. 17.

2. Protocol 3378 (J.E.), MZML, DEGOB Protocols. All DEGOB protocols translated from Hungarian to English by historian Gábor Kádár.

3. Protocol 3291 (L.W.), MZML, DEGOB Protocols.

4. See George Lucius Salton, *The 23rd Psalm: A Holocaust Memoir* (Madison, 2002), p. 211.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 209.

6. Interview with George Salton, USHMMA, RG-50.030\*200, transcript, p. 45.

7. See ZdL (now BA-L) file grouping IV 404 AR-Z 21/76; and Hoppe trial proceedings, NWStA-M, SL Bochum,

8856-9239. See also Karin Orth, “Die Kommandanten der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager,” in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen, 1998), pp. 763–775.

8. Protocol 3378 (J.E.) and protocol 3291 (L.S.), MZML, DEGOB Protocols.

9. United States Holocaust Memorial Council, 1981 International Liberators Conference Collection, Wöbbelin 1981 (copy of speech delivered by Henry Cain, U.S. Army Directory of Military Government in Hagenow), USHMMA, RG-09.005\*37. See also Meyer Gilden file, USHMMA, RG 04.044, for other materials on the 82nd Airborne Division.

# RAVENSBRÜCK



Panoramic view of the Ravensbrück concentration camp for an SS presentation album, 1940–1941.

USHMM WS #15010, COURTESY OF LYDIA CHAGOLL

## RAVENSBRÜCK MAIN CAMP

During its almost six years of existence, from May 1939 until late in April 1945, approximately 123,000 women of over 40 nationalities were prisoners at Ravensbrück, “the women’s hell.” Next to the women’s section at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, Ravensbrück was the largest women’s camp, and between 25,000 and 26,000 female prisoners died there.<sup>1</sup> Over the course of its existence the camp became a complex of facilities that included a small men’s camp, nearby industrial facilities (some with their own separate barracks), part of a nearby “youth protection camp,” and more than 30 subcamps.

Ravensbrück’s first commandant was SS-Standartenführer Günther Tamaschke, who was in charge until August 31, 1939. He had held a similar position in the women’s Lichtenburg early camp, which had been in operation since December 1937 and from which Ravensbrück received its initial group of prisoners. His second in command, SS-Hauptsturmführer Max Koegel, officially replaced him on January 1, 1940, having been unofficially in charge for some time. After he was transferred to the Lublin-Majdanek concentration camp on August 20, 1942, the former “protective custody” camp leader (Schutzhaftlagerführer) at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, SS-Hauptsturmführer Fritz Suhren, was appointed commandant and remained in that position until operations ceased.<sup>2</sup>

The guards in the women’s camp were exclusively women. While these women guards were not members of the SS but members of the female SS retinue (weibliches SS-Gefolge), they were, like the SS men, subject to SS jurisdiction. After early 1942, the Ravensbrück women’s concentration camp served as the central training camp for female SS guards for other camps, such as Auschwitz, Majdanek, and numerous subcamps. Suhren later testified that while he was commandant, approximately 3,500 women SS guards and 950 members of the Waffen-SS served for shorter or longer periods in Ravensbrück and in its subcamps.<sup>3</sup>

Ravensbrück opened on May 15, 1939, with the arrival of almost 1,000 female prisoners from the women’s early camp at Lichtenburg. The fragmentary lists of arrivals still available indicate the number of women prisoners sent annually to Ravensbrück:<sup>4</sup>

1939	somewhat over 1,000
1940	over 2,700
1941	approximately 3,600
1942	approximately 7,000
1943	approximately 10,000
1944	over 70,000
1945	approximately 35,000

The steady increase is mainly attributable to an ever-increasing number of foreign workers who arrived from the middle of 1942 on. These were generally Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, and French women who either had gone to Germany

“voluntarily” or were taken there by force to work and were subsequently arrested for various breaches of discipline. From 1943 on, moreover, the SS deported to Germany ever more women prisoners from jails and concentration camps in the occupied countries of Europe.

The number of new arrivals in Ravensbrück increased drastically in 1944, to over 70,000, due mainly to the deportation of approximately 12,000 women from Warsaw after the failed uprising there and the arrival of transports of Jewish women from Hungary, Slovakia, and other concentration camps, above all from Auschwitz.

The prisoner population varied by both category and nationality. Jehovah’s Witnesses represented the great majority to the end of 1939. Subsequently, the fastest-growing group of prisoners was the “asocials.” It was only from the late summer of 1941 that “political” prisoners outnumbered the asocials, as increasing numbers of women arrived from occupied countries. Since foreign prisoners were generally labeled “political,” the prisoner community began to differ less by category than by nationality. A preliminary evaluation of most of the available lists of arrivals (listing 55,549 individuals) offers an approximate breakdown by nationality over the six years the camp existed:<sup>5</sup> 36 percent from Poland; 21 percent from the Soviet Union; 18 percent from Germany and Austria; 8 percent from Hungary; 6 percent from France; 3 percent from the former Czechoslovakia; and 2 percent each from the Benelux countries and Yugoslavia.

The proportional share of “racially” categorized female prisoners was recorded according to their country of origin. The actual numbers and percentages fluctuated widely, but the figures available—13 percent Jewish, 3 percent Sinti and Roma—are certainly too low. The number of Jewish prisoners shrank considerably due to the murder of 800 inmates during the 14f13 killing project in the spring of 1942 and also because 522 Jewish women were deported to Auschwitz on October 6, 1942.<sup>6</sup> Only in the second half of 1944 did large numbers of Jewish women again arrive in Ravensbrück.

In addition to adults, 881 children aged 2 to 16, from 18 countries, show up on the women’s camp’s arrival lists. The existing birth register (for the period September 19, 1944, to April 22, 1945) shows another 522 births. In 48 cases, women had miscarriages or stillbirths, and half the newborns (260) died within days or weeks of birth. Eighty-four mothers and their babies were transferred to Bergen-Belsen during March 1945; many of these babies died in transit. In general, very few of the children in Ravensbrück lived to be liberated.

In 1940, the construction of the so-called Industrial Park began; the constantly growing compound housed the SS-owned Gesellschaft für Textil & Lederverwertung mbH (Texled), a textile company. By September 1942, about 60 percent of all the female prisoners—between 4,000 and



5,000—were working for Texled.<sup>7</sup> Female prisoners also worked in an SS agricultural enterprise called the Deutsche Versuchsanstalt für Ernährung und Verpflegung GmbH (German Experimental Institute for Nutrition and Provisions Ltd., DVA). They were also “hired out” to private agricultural enterprises nearby.

From the middle of 1942 on, the prisoners also had to work in the armaments industry. From August 1942, female prisoners worked in the production plants of the electronics company Siemens & Halske (S&H), which was located nearby. In December 1944, when about 2,200 prisoners were already working in its 20 workshops, additional barracks were built next to the workshops; this was the so-called Siemens camp.

Starting in 1943, a significant change took place with the establishment of subcamps near armament factories; this made Ravensbrück into a main camp and transit station. Originally almost all the women’s subcamps in Germany proper were under the supervision of Ravensbrück. This changed with the restructuring of the subcamp system in the fall of 1944, when 50 percent of the subcamps for female prisoners were assigned to the main camps nearest to them, mainly Buchenwald, Flossenbürg, and Sachsenhausen, but Ravensbrück retained some nearby camps.

With the increasing numbers of prisoners after 1943, the conditions in the women’s camp deteriorated. From 1944, the number of prisoners in many of the barracks was triple and sometimes even quadruple the number originally intended. After that number finally exceeded the barracks’ capacity, a tent was erected to accommodate the many new arrivals of the late summer and fall of 1944. There were no blankets for the 3,000 women who occupied the tent, and only a thin layer of straw covered the floor, so the death rate was higher than average. Meanwhile, both the quantity and quality of the food fell steadily, adding to the death toll.

The infirmary buildings at Ravensbrück increasingly developed into “dying zones” since many of the women, who suffered from typhus, diphtheria, and other diseases, died there without receiving even minimal medical treatment.

Apart from this, the infirmary became a center for pseudomedical experiments between August 1, 1942, and August 16, 1943. SS physicians, under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Karl Gebhardt, carried out experiments on 74 Polish prisoners and 12 prisoners of other nationalities. These included the removal of bones, muscles, and nerves as well as operations that were intended to cause infections (gangrene) in order to disprove the possible effectiveness of sulfonamide treatment. In the camp vernacular, the women who had been subjected to these operations were called “guinea pigs”; 5 of the Polish prisoners and all 12 of the others died immediately following the operations, while 6 more were shot dead a short time later, with their surgical wounds not yet healed. Additionally, in early 1945, 120 to 140 Sinti and Roma women and girls—the youngest age eight—were subjected to sterilization experiments, as a result of which many died. At the same time, a number of Sinti and Roma were sterilized in the men’s camp, the youngest also being mere children.



Clandestine photograph of Polish political prisoners detained at Ravensbrück following the August 1944 Warsaw Uprising, October 1944. USHMM WS #69338, COURTESY OF ANNA HASSA JAROSKY AND PETER HASSA

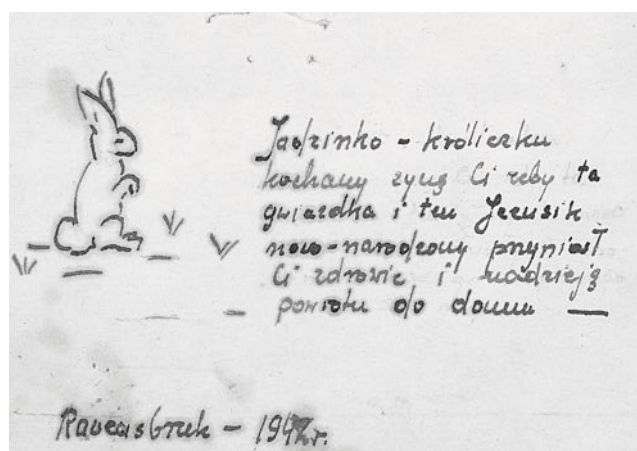
From the middle of 1941, the SS began establishing brothels in several of the men’s camps. The women prisoners who had to work there came mostly from Ravensbrück; they were either forced to work there or persuaded to “volunteer” by false promises of subsequent release.

Between May 6, 1944, and March 11, 1945, 65 Russian women were executed in Ravensbrück on suspicion of sabotage. In addition, more than 160 Polish women and several British and French female parachutists, as well as several women of other nationalities, were shot. They had been actively involved in the fight against the German occupiers and had been sent to Ravensbrück after having been sentenced to death by special courts (Sondergerichte).

The men’s camp, which existed since April 1941, remained under the authority of the women’s camp commandant. It



Clandestine photograph of the disfigured leg of Maria Kusmierczuk, a Polish political prisoner and victim of medical experimentation, October 1944. USHMM WS #69339, COURTESY OF ANNA HASSA JAROSKY AND PETER HASSA



A Christmas card presented to Jadwiga Dzido Hassa by a fellow prisoner at Ravensbrück concentration camp, December 25, 1942. The rabbit is a reference to the women's use in medical experimentation. In English, the greeting reads: "Jadzińko, dear bunny I wish [for you] that this Christmas and the new-born baby Jesus will bring you health and that you will get back home."

USHMM WS #63555, COURTESY OF ANNA HASSA JAROSKY AND PETER HASSA

served mainly to supply craftsmen and helpers to work on the constantly expanding camp complex. Up to the end of 1944, the men's camp did not accept new prisoners but, with a few exceptions, only those who were transferred from other camps to replace the sick and dead. The number of prisoners remained relatively constant until the end of 1944, between 1,500 and 2,000.<sup>8</sup> The sick were sent to Dachau at first, then after 1944 to Bergen-Belsen; the majority died within days or weeks of arrival or, in the case of Dachau, were selected for extermination.

Until the end of 1942, the men's camp could be characterized as a penal camp. All work there had to be performed on the double, and many prisoners were worked to death. Beginning in the spring of 1943, the men's camp gradually became the headquarters for the subcamps in the northeastern part of Germany, which primarily served the aircraft industry. Most prisoners of these camps were taken directly there, where they received their Ravensbrück prisoner number.

The registers of the men's camp, which survived intact, indicate that of the slightly more than 20,000 registered prisoners, 30 percent were Poles, 20 percent came from the Soviet Union (including some prisoners of war [POWs]), 19 percent were Germans or Austrians, 12 percent were French, 4 percent were Czechs and Slovaks, somewhat over 2 percent were Hungarians, and 1.5 percent each were Italians, Belgians, and Dutch. Independent of these numbers, there were about 8 percent labeled Jews and 1.5 percent Gypsies. About 86 percent of the prisoners wore the red triangle of the political prisoner, even if not all of them were "politicals" in the strictest sense of the word. An additional 7 percent were marked as "criminals," 4 percent as "asocials," and 1 percent each as Jehovah's Witnesses and homosexuals. In addition, 136 POWs,

mainly Russians, and 35 imprisoned members of the Wehrmacht passed through the men's camp. A total of 1,742 deaths are recorded. To this number must be added the 300 victims of 14f13 in the spring of 1942 and at least 104 male prisoners who were killed in Ravensbrück's gas chamber at the end of March and in early April 1945.<sup>9</sup>

There were some targeted extermination programs, the first of which was 14f13, under which the Germans extended their "euthanasia" program to the concentration camps. Under this program, 1,600 female prisoners and 300 male prisoners of Ravensbrück—half of them Jewish—were killed in the spring of 1942, most probably in the gas chambers of the Sanatorium (Heil-und Pflegeanstalt) Bernburg. After the completion of these killings, "undesirable" female prisoners were killed with injections of phenol and morphine, murdered in the gas chambers of the distant sanatorium at Hartheim/Linz, or transported to Auschwitz or Majdanek. Between 1942 and the end of 1944, approximately 60 of these "black transports" left Ravensbrück with between 60 and 1,000 prisoners each.<sup>10</sup>

In January 1945, the camp administration began to make preparations for on-site mass killings. For this purpose, it partially cleared out the so-called youth protection camp (*Jugendschutzlager*) in Uckermark, about 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) from Ravensbrück. This site, where in January 1945 the older, weaker, and sick prisoners were taken from the main camp, quickly developed into a "death zone" because conditions there were even worse than in the main camp. The women were insufficiently clothed, got only half their previous rations, and received neither blankets nor medical attention. During the roll calls alone, which lasted five to six hours, 50 prisoners died daily during the cold winter months, of hunger, exposure, exhaustion, and the prevailing epidemics. A greater number were killed by Luminal—a barbiturate, called "white powder" by the prisoners—or by being given poisonous injections, or by being selected for mass shootings or death in the gas chambers. Up to mid-April 1945, over 8,000 women had been transferred to the Uckermark camp, of whom only between 1,300 and 1,500 returned to the main camp.<sup>11</sup>

At the various Ravensbrück trials none of the accused SS members denied the existence of a gas chamber, which had been installed in early 1945. This was a wooden structure, in the immediate vicinity of the crematorium, which had served as a storage facility before it was transformed into a temporary gas chamber. Between 150 and 180 people could be killed there at once. The gassing, which began in late January or early February, was most probably stopped only one week before liberation. Altogether 5,000 to 6,000 prisoners died there.<sup>12</sup> A second, more advanced dual gas chamber is supposed to have been built at the end of March 1945 on the other side of the camp fence and behind the infirmary, but, in any case, it was never used. Also, in a number of reports by ex-prisoners there is mention of mobile gas chambers, but their use cannot be proven.

In early 1945, Ravensbrück held the greatest number of prisoners in its history. A letter to the SS-Business Administration

Main Office (WVHA) of January 15, 1945, reported the presence of 46,070 female prisoners and 7,848 male prisoners in Ravensbrück and its subcamps.<sup>13</sup> The utterly unbearable overcrowding in the barracks as well as the increasingly catastrophic hygienic conditions led to an outbreak of a typhus epidemic in the women's camp. The greatest threats that the female prisoners faced, however, were the constant selections of the older, weaker, and sick prisoners for death at Uckermark or in the gas chamber. In addition, the camp administration relieved itself of a greater number of female prisoners (totaling about 5,600) in March 1945 by sending them on transports to Mauthausen and Bergen-Belsen.<sup>14</sup> Meanwhile, in April the Swedish Red Cross evacuated approximately 7,500 female prisoners, most of them from Scandinavia, the Benelux countries, France, and Poland.

Of the male prisoners, 2,100 had been "evacuated" in early March to Sachsenhausen, but in mid-April transports with more than 6,000 male prisoners from the Mittelbau main camp Dora and the Neuengamme subcamp of Watenstedt arrived. These new arrivals were in bad shape to begin with and received no care, so many of them did not survive the short stopover in Ravensbrück. On April 24 and 26, the male prisoners were force-marched in several columns in a northwesterly direction. On April 27 and 28, about 20,000 female prisoners were made to march in the same direction. About 2,000 sick men, women, and children were left behind. On April 29, the last of the SS men left the camp. One day later, the vanguard of the Red Army arrived. On May 1, its regular units appeared and liberated the last of the Ravensbrück prisoners.<sup>15</sup>

**SOURCES** This essay is based on the author's book *Das KZ Ravensbrück: Geschichte eines Lagerkomplexes*, introduction by Germaine Tillion (Paderborn, 2003). The following research works should be mentioned: the book by Polish historian Wanda Kiedrzyńska, *Ravensbrück: Kobiety obóz koncentracyjny* (Warsaw, 1961); and the book by French ethnologist Germaine Tillion, *Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Lüneburg, 1998). Both authors were prisoners in the Ravensbrück concentration camp. Tillion's book includes an essay by Anise Postel-Vinay, "Die Massentötungen durch Gas in Ravensbrück," on pp. 357–395. A comprehensive collection of essays that contains several essays on central aspects of the camp's history is by Claus Füllberg-Stolberg et al., *Frauen in Konzentrationslagern: Bergen-Belsen; Ravensbrück* (Bremen, 1994). Jack G. Morrison's *Ravensbrück: Everyday Life in a Women's Concentration Camp 1939–1945* (Princeton, NJ, 2000) provides a good overview in the English language. These works stand out among the large number of publications in recent years: Christa Schikorra, *Kontinuitäten der Ausgrenzung. "Asoziale" Häftlinge im Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Berlin, 2001); Linde Apel, *Jüdische Frauen im Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück 1939–1945* (Berlin, 2003); and Simone Erpel, *Zwischen Vernichtung und*

*Befreiung. Das Frauen-Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück in der letzten Kriegsphase* (Berlin, 2005).

The essential archival sources on the Ravensbrück concentration camp are literally scattered throughout the world. The two most comprehensive collections of documents are located at the AG-R and in the DÖW. The most comprehensive collection of postwar judicial documents is held by ZdL at BA-L. There were seven Ravensbrück trials. The files of these trials, held before a British military court in Hamburg (1946–1948) can be viewed at PRO. The admissions lists for the female camp and the Numbers Books (*Nummernbüchern*) for the male camp are held by the IPN (copies at USHMMA). Other important documents are found in BA-B, BStU, YVA, NARA, SÚA, CChIdK, as well as the archives of other concentration camp memorials. In addition, there is a rich source of material written by former prisoners in just about every European language. The number of works has increased dramatically in recent years.

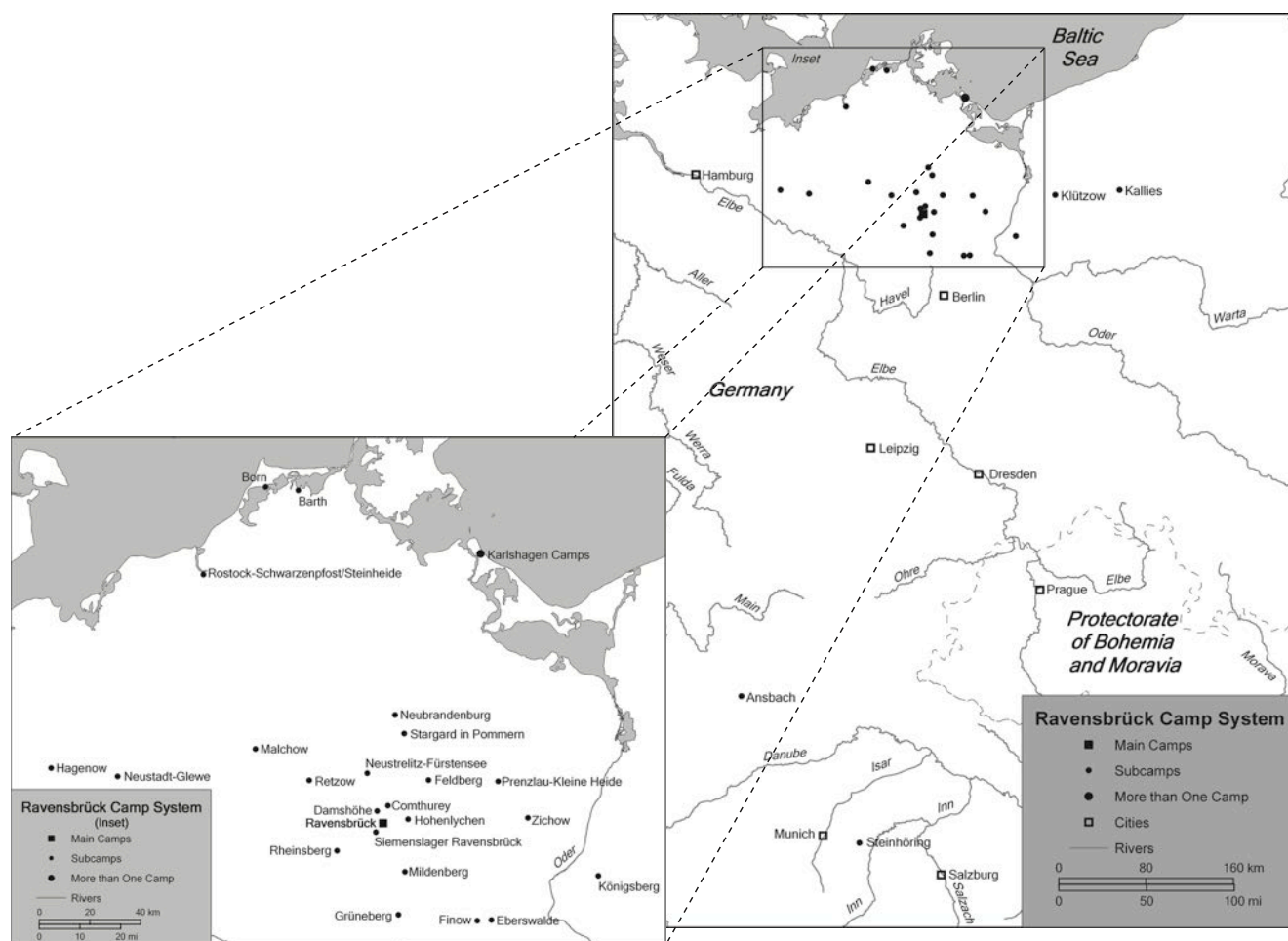
Bernhard Strebel  
trans. Alfred Gutmann and Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Bernhard Strebel, *Das KZ Ravensbrück, Geschichte eines Lagerkomplexes*, introduction by Germaine Tillion (Paderborn, 2003), pp. 179, 505–509.
2. SSO Tamaschke, Koegel und Suhren, BA-BL, Bestand ehem. BDC.
3. Aussage Suhren, March 19, 1946, Nuremberg Document D-746b.
4. Information according to received Zugangslisten in IPN, copied in USHMMA.
5. Information according to an evaluation in Kristine Schlaefer and Frank Schröder, "Jüdische Häftlinge im Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück (1937/39–1942)" (Ph.D. diss., Berlin, 1987), appendix 3.
6. Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939–1945* (Reinbek, 1989), p. 315.
7. Texled, Personalübersichten für das Jahr 1942, BA-B, NS 3/1443.
8. Strebel, *Das KZ Ravensbrück*, p. 293.
9. Ibid., pp. 332, 486.
10. Ibid., pp. 320–339.
11. Wanda Kiedrzyńska, *Ravensbrück: Kobiety obóz koncentracyjny* (Warsaw, 1961), pp. 238, 251.
12. Anise Postel-Vinay, "Die Massentötungen durch Gas in Ravensbrück," in *Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück*, by Germaine Tillion (Lüneburg, 1998), p. 367.
13. "Letzte erhalten Übersicht über die Zahl der Wachmannschaften und der KZ-Häftlinge aus der Amtsgruppe D des WVHA vom 1. und 15.1.1945," BA-B, NS 3/439, p. 1.
14. Strebel, *Das KZ Ravensbrück*, pp. 488–492.
15. Ibid., pp. 501–504.



## RAVENSBRÜCK SUBCAMP SYSTEM



There are only a few consolidated studies on the history of the Ravensbrück concentration camp system. As historian Bernhard Strebel shows, there are considerable differences in research, for instance, in the number and extent of the complex of subcamps. This is due largely to the comprehensive reconstruction of the Ravensbrück subcamp system that occurred in the summer of 1944.

The Ravensbrück subcamp system exhibits several peculiarities that distinguish it from the subcamp systems of other Nazi concentration camps. The first is that the Ravensbrück subcamp system, which began with the first subcamp at the end of 1942–beginning of 1943, was not, as was usually the case, restricted to a particular area but encompassed just about all the subcamps with female prisoners—with locations in the Prussian provinces of Brandenburg, Pommern, and Sachsen; in the states of Mecklenburg, Bayern, Thüringen, and Sachsen (that is, within the area of the later German Democratic Republic); and also in the Reichsgau Sudetenland and in all areas of the so-called Ostmark (Austria). It was only

with a reorganization in the summer of 1944 that this principle was abandoned in favor of a system based more on location, during which many Ravensbrück subcamps were handed over to main camps that were geographically closer. The result was that the Ravensbrück complex, unlike those associated with other concentration camps, had already reached its maximum extent in the summer of 1944, with approximately 40 subcamps. Of these, one-quarter (about 10) were large subcamps, with more than 1,000 prisoners, and one-half (around 20 camps) were medium-sized, with between 250 and 1,000 prisoners. At the end of 1944, however, when there were around 334 subcamps for women existing within the concentration camp system in total, only 20 were under the control of Ravensbrück—considerably fewer, for example, than the number of women's subcamps under the control of Neuengamme or Gross-Rosen. Despite this, and this is the second peculiarity, Ravensbrück remained administratively responsible for several of these camps not under its jurisdiction, in that it trained and/or paid the camp personnel. Third,



many Ravensbrück subcamps were directly connected with leading personalities, institutions, or interests of the SS, be it that they were established on estates operated by leading SS men or that they supported the operation of SS overflow institutions.

Within the Ravensbrück concentration camp, experience had been gained since August 1942 with the first use of concentration camp prisoners in industry, when the so-called *Fertigungsstelle* (Production Point) Siemens was erected. At that time, the shortage of labor was becoming more and more serious, and the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) therefore had intensified its cooperation with industry, especially with Albert Speer's ministry. The SS insisted, however, that the use of prisoners could only take place inside the concentration camps. The result was that the Siemens & Halske camp, the *Fertigungsstelle*, was established on the camp's grounds in Ravensbrück. It was only in September 1942, on Speer's insistence, that the use of prisoners outside the concentration camps in industrial subcamps was considered. At this time, the first Ravensbrück subcamps were established. Comthurey and Born were two of these camps, but they were rather small and held only very few inmates. The first noteworthy subcamps were established only at the end of 1942—Grüneberg to the north of Berlin, where the prisoners produced munitions, and Neurohlau in the Sudetenland, where the prisoners manufactured porcelain. While Neurohlau, due to its distance from the main camp, had to be run as a real subcamp, one can only assume that Grüneberg was a true subcamp where the prisoners were kept permanently and not returned to the main camp at day's end.

There were, in essence, three groups of subcamps if one considers who operated and profited from them: in the first group, the prisoners, both male and female, were used from 1942 on by Higher SS leaders and their entourage (Heinrich Himmler, Oswald Pohl, and Felix Kersten, for example), to work mostly in gardens and houses of private estates as well as in construction and repairs. This group of camps also included the deployment of prisoners working in SS institutions such as the Reichsführer-SS Personal Staff, the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA), WVHA branches or relocated offices, the German Research Institute for Nutrition and Provisions, Ltd. (DVA), "Lebensborn" homes, and SS research institutes. A second group of camps was operated by the Wehrmacht, which mostly cooperated with private armaments manufacturers. At least four subcamps—Karlshagen I and II, Retzow, and Königsberg—were directly operated by the Wehrmacht. Finally, there was a third group of subcamps operated by private firms. These included large companies in the armaments industry: the Luftfahrtgerätewerk Hakenfelde GmbH (LGW), a subsidiary of Siemens, which had assembly plants in Graslitz and Zwoda; the Ernst-Heinkel-AG; and the Hugo-Schneider AG (HASAG); as well as a number of smaller companies.

As in other subcamp systems, it often happened in Ravensbrück that concentration camp prisoners were substitutes for forced laborers and were accommodated in former forced

labor camps. The establishment of subcamps often also arose due to the relocation of institutions and production sites as the result of the intensifying Allied bombing campaign. However, the Ravensbrück prisoners were rarely used in underground facilities (such as in the former Ravensbrück women's subcamp Beendorf, which was taken over by the Neuen-gamme concentration camp). That so few Ravensbrück prisoners were used underground had more to do with the geographical conditions around the Ravensbrück concentration camp and its subcamps than with any regard for the overwhelming majority of prisoners in its subcamps, women. Although the working and living conditions varied in individual subcamps, it is clear that no consideration was given to the gender of the prisoners when it came to their deployment. Historian Linde Apel shows that Jewish women in the late phase of the subcamps' existence were not necessarily used in the most dangerous and unhealthful deployments but were mostly used in mixed subcamps, which held prisoners of various categories. Surviving women, predominantly from the armaments industry, report that they worked with no protective clothing and were exposed to working with dangerous chemicals. The Malchow subcamp, for instance, where there were repeated accidents due to the handling of explosives, must be regarded as one of the most dangerous camps with regard to work and living conditions. For male prisoners, the Ravensbrück subcamps at Karlshagen I and Barth were the worst—the number of deaths among inmates in these two camps accounted for 60 percent of the deaths among all male Ravensbrück inmates. That other subcamps, especially those with female inmates, had a lower death rate does not prove that the work and living conditions in these camps were less fatal: prisoners who could no longer work were usually selected in these camps and taken back to Ravensbrück or, depending on the circumstances, to Auschwitz or Bergen-Belsen, where they were killed. Strebel also states that, at least in 69 cases, pregnancy was the reason for the return of prisoners from the subcamps.

From 1944 on, the use of female labor in the Ravensbrück camp complex intensified. At this time, at least every second prisoner who was taken to the Ravensbrück camp was taken to one of its subcamps. Ravensbrück became a gigantic transit point for the deployment of labor in the subcamps. As historians Erika Schwarz and Simone Steppan show, prisoners from Ravensbrück were assigned to more than 200 locations. In the summer of 1944, the prisoners comprised three large groups: female Poles, who were victims of the crushing of the August 1944 Warsaw Uprising; women who were being evacuated from Auschwitz; and Hungarian Jewish women who escaped the gas chambers because they were useful for the armaments industry.

One special problem arising from the constantly increasing number of prisoners in the subcamps was the lack of guards. This was initially compensated for by an increased recruitment of ethnic Germans (*Volkdeutsche*), often as part of the SS, and the deployment of members of the Wehrmacht. From July 1944, female employees of industries that planned

to use the concentration camp prisoners were trained as supervisors. What had happened earlier on an individual basis now had become a systematic policy.

At the same time, in the summer of 1944, the Ravensbrück subcamp system was reorganized. Until this time, all subcamps that held women were the responsibility of Ravensbrück, regardless of their location. The only exceptions were the women's subcamps established in Silesia, which were under the control of Gross-Rosen. With a decree of the WVHA Office Group D, the scattered Ravensbrück subcamps were now reorganized along geographical lines. From the surviving sources, it is known that on September 1, 1944, Buchenwald and Flossenbürg took over Ravensbrück subcamps in their areas and that Mauthausen did the same on September 15. For other camps, the change occurred no later than October 1944. According to Strebel, Ravensbrück surrendered approximately one-half of its women's subcamps and at least a quarter of its female prisoners to other main camps that were geographically closer to those subcamps. The women in the camp brothels in Buchenwald, Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, and Sachsenhausen, previously under the administration of Ravensbrück, now also came under the control of the camps in which the brothels were located. It can be assumed that the reasons for this reorganization were rooted in organizational and administrative purposes: since other concentration camp subcamps increasingly held women, and the strict separation between men's and women's sections in individual subcamps was being relaxed, there was no longer any reason for the main camps' responsibility to be based strictly on the sex of the prisoners. With the redistribution of territorial responsibilities, the extent of Ravensbrück subcamp was mainly limited to the area north of Berlin.

Research does not completely reveal the extent to which Ravensbrück remained connected with guarding the female prisoners. Strebel states that Ravensbrück remained largely responsible for paying the female guards deployed at Gross-Rosen, Neuengamme, Flossenbürg, Auschwitz, Dachau, Stutthof, Sachsenhausen, and Ravensbrück itself. While Ravensbrück remained responsible for training the female guards based in Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen, Flossenbürg, Gross-Rosen, Neuengamme, and Stutthof trained their own female guards. However, male guards in the subcamps were often recruited from the command office personnel and the guards in the respective main camp.

Due to the lack of source material, it is difficult to reconstruct the final phase of the Ravensbrück subcamp system. What is clear is that from the summer of 1944, there were more and more prisoners in the camps. In August and September 1944, there were 27,600 women sent to Ravensbrück from camps located farther to the east that had been dissolved. Historian Simone Erpel estimates that between January and April 1945 there were 38,000 prisoners in the main camp and as many again in the subcamps of Ravensbrück. At

the beginning of 1945, with the evacuation of Auschwitz, the number of prisoners would dramatically escalate again. After a short stay in the main camp, the prisoners were often sent on to the subcamps, which also were hopelessly overcrowded. For example, in the Neustadt-Glewe subcamp, established for 900 inmates, there were 4,200 prisoners on April 10, 1945. In Malchow, which held an average of 1,200 prisoners, there were at the beginning of April 1945 more than 4,200 women. The same can also be proven for the Barth men's camp, which in the last months of the war was the destination for evacuations from the Ravensbrück subcamps and other subcamps. The overcrowding not only led to a dramatic decline in living conditions, but the number of deaths increased correspondingly. To deal with this, the SS at the end of the war conducted selections in the subcamps, for example, in Retzow, Malchow, Neustadt-Glewe, and Neubrandenburg. Sick prisoners and those no longer capable of working were returned to Ravensbrück and murdered, mostly in its death zone, the Uckermark. Around 7,500 women, mostly of Scandinavian nationality, were liberated as part of "Operation Bernadotte," just days or weeks before the end of the war.

Countless women from the subcamps died on death marches in the last days of the war. From the end of the war into the 1990s, there were investigations into SS personnel from at least four Ravensbrück subcamps—Barth, Retzow, Malchow, and Neubrandenburg—for the deaths of female prisoners on evacuation marches.

**SOURCES** The Ravensbrück subcamp system has only been partially analyzed in its complexity. Most articles deal with temporary and contextual aspects of this theme and are therefore not listed here. A comprehensive study of the Ravensbrück subcamp system is by Bernhard Strebel, *Das KZ Ravensbrück: Geschichte eines Lagerkomplexes* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2003), pp. 419–459. Linde Apel, in *Jüdische Frauen im Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück, 1939–1945* (Berlin: Metropol-Verlag, 2003), deals with the specific situation of Jewish women in the subcamps and labor detachments. As part of a larger research project, Erika Schwarz and Simone Steppan investigated the Ravensbrück subcamps in "Die Aussenlager Königsberg/Neumark, Zichow und Mildenberg des Frauenkonzentrationslagers Ravensbrück." Their results were published in *BFW* 20 (2003). The same authors and Angelika Meyer published "Vorstellung des Projektes Aussenlager—eine Bilanz," *Rabl* 109 (2001): 10–13. Details on the numbers and information on the situation inside the subcamps toward the end of the war can be found in the essay by Simone Erpel, "Kriegsende und Befreiung," in *Forschungsschwerpunkt Ravensbrück: Beiträge zur Geschichte des Frauen-Konzentrationslagers*, ed. Sigrid Jacobeit and Grit Philipp (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1997), pp. 47–59.

Detailed information, both source material and legal investigations, on individual subcamps is detailed in the individual subcamp essays.

Evelyn Zegenhagen  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## ANSBACH

The International Tracing Service (ITS) refers to a Ravensbrück subcamp in the Bavarian city of Ansbach. According to a prisoner, the camp came into existence no later than December 11, 1944. The prisoners had to work at the SS-Lebensbornheim. The SS-Lebensbornheim was established in 1935 with the racial and population policy goals of reducing the number of abortions and increasing the birthrate in order to strengthen the armed forces. There were only female prisoners at Ansbach. Although the women originated from Dachau, Ansbach was under the control of the Ravensbrück concentration camp. Just before the end of the war, the Lebensbornheim seemingly required additional labor. On April 4, 1945, a female prisoner was transferred from the Dachau concentration camp to the Ravensbrück Ansbach subcamp. Six days later, on April 10, 1945, the camp was evacuated, and the prisoners were taken over by the Ravensbrück outside detail at Steinhöring. The employer for this subcamp, about 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) to the east of Munich, was also a Lebensbornheim.

**SOURCES** As the Ansbach subcamp was a small camp, it is only briefly mentioned in secondary sources: Diana Fitz, *Ansbach unterm Hakenkreuz* (Ansbach, 1994), p. 176; and Ino Arndt, “Das Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück,” *DaHe* 3 (1987): 146. The Ansbach camp is also listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 233; and *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 553.

Sources on the Ravensbrück subcamp in the Bavarian city of Ansbach can possibly be found in AG-D and AG-R.

Irene Mayer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## BARTH

Located on the Baltic Sea between Rostock and Stralsund, the Barth subcamp was part of the Ravensbrück concentration camp and consisted of one section for men and one for women. It was a project of Ernst Heinkel AG, Rostock, which transferred a part of its aircraft production from its main Rostock factory to Barth in order to protect it from Allied air raids. At the end of April 1942, Rostock had become the target of massive air raids by the Royal Air Force. A quarter of the air raids had been aimed at the Heinkel factory, located on the edge of the city.<sup>1</sup> In addition, Heinkel was one of the first private companies to enter into arrangements with the SS, and as early as the end of 1941 to rely on male prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in a nearby factory at Oranienburg.

The history of the Barth subcamp begins with the arrival of the first 200 male prisoners from Buchenwald. Their first task was to fence in the camp and to convert the buildings on the Barth air base into factory buildings. About a month later,

the first 200 female prisoners arrived from Ravensbrück. In February 1944, there were already 1,721 male and female prisoners in Barth.<sup>2</sup> In the period that followed, the numbers increased to 4,000 prisoners. Altogether 6,000 male and female prisoners were deported to Barth, making it one of the largest Ravensbrück subcamps.

Internal security was provided by a handful of SS men and a number of SS female overseers. External security was provided in large part by SS members of German origin from Croatia, Hungary, and Romania.<sup>3</sup>

A little less than one-half of the female prisoners were Russian and Ukrainian. Approximately one-third were Poles. There were smaller numbers of Yugoslav, French, Hungarian Jews, and a few Germans, as well as a number of very young “Gypsies” (Roma) in Barth. The Roma—some 15 and 16 years old—from the Burgenland, were deported to Ravensbrück in June 1939.

In February 1944, a group of 56 female Russian prisoners, led by 12 Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), refused to act as forced laborers for the German war effort. The SS unsuccessfully sought to break the resistance, on the one hand, by brutally mistreating the prisoners, and on the other, by promising additional rations. It was only when a few of them could no longer stand the torture, and the SS threatened to randomly kill selected prisoners, that the female Russian prisoners relented and attempted to continue their resistance by sabotage.

The Russians, followed by the Poles, were the largest group among the 2,900 male prisoners. Italians, Yugoslavs, French, Croats, Germans, and other nationalities were nowhere near as strongly represented. It was common in the male camp for weak and exhausted male prisoners to be placed in the outside detail of the infamous SS-Kommandoführer Zay. Survivors report that this detachment regularly returned to the camp with dead prisoners, who had been mistreated by Zay, beaten to death, or shot. Noteworthy is that the female camp at Barth was also marked by numerous examples of maltreatment of prisoners, resulting, though, in noticeably fewer deaths, which leads to the assumption that a more violent atmosphere prevailed in the male camp than in the female one.

In addition, from the middle of February 1945 on, the male camp at Barth was the goal of evacuation transports from Karlshagen I and the Stutthof subcamp of Pölitz. Many of these prisoners were at the end of their strength, emaciated and ill, further weakened by the privations of the evacuation transports. Many died in Barth just a few weeks and days before liberation. On April 30, 1945, the SS forced those prisoners capable to march in several columns in a westerly direction. There remained behind around 300 seriously ill and completely exhausted male prisoners who were liberated by the Red Army on May 1.

Altogether 438 prisoners died in the male camp at Barth. Thus, the male camp at Barth, together with the Karlshagen I subcamp, counted as one of the worst Ravensbrück subcamps for male prisoners. On the other hand, it is scarcely possible to estimate the number of dead in the women’s camp, as sick and exhausted prisoners were returned to the main camp at Ravensbrück. It is certain there were more than the 12 female prisoners known to have been cremated in the Barth crematorium.<sup>4</sup>

**SOURCES** There are two very different types of documents on Barth: Alfred Weber, *Stärker als der Tod: Die verbrecherische Rolle des Heinkel-Konzerns im KZ Aussenlager Barth* (Rostock, 1970); and the *und der, Widerstand der Häftlinge vieler Nationen* (Rostock: Kommission zur Erforschung der Geschichte der örtlichen Arbeiterbewegung, n.d.). The latter work adopts a narrow ideological view. The first comprehensive review is by Helga Radau, *Nicht ist vergessen und niemand: Aus der Geschichte des KZ Barth* (Kückenshagen, 1994); but see also Ines Birth, "Das KZ Aussenlager Barth 1943–1945" (Ph.D. diss., Universität Rostock, 1988); Bernhard Strebel, "'Verdammt sind meine Hände': Zwangsarbeit für die deutsche Rüstungsindustrie in den Aussenlagern des KZ Ravensbrück," *ZR-MM-V* 1:4 (2000): 4–8.

The most extensive collection of documents (camp documents and prisoner reports) is located in the ASt-Ba.

Bernhard Strebel  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Olaf Gröhler, *Bombenkrieg gegen Deutschland* (Berlin, 1990), pp. 48–52.

2. List by the WVHA chief Pohl, February 21, 1944 (Annex to a letter from Himmler to Göring, March 9, 1944), Nuremberg Document PS-1584.

3. Statement by the Company Commander of the Guards, Arnold Zöllner, 1964, cited in Helga Radau, *Nichts ist vergessen und niemand: Aus der Geschichte des KZ Barth* (Kückenshagen, 1994), p. 36.

4. Details from "Aufstellung über Feuerbestattung der Häftlinge vom KZ Aussenstelle Barth," ASt-Ba; "Liste der auf dem Friedhof in Barth beerdigten Häftlinge," *ibid.*; Włodzimierz Kuliński, comp., "Kalendarium der Todesfälle im Männerlager des KZ Ravensbrück" (unpub. MSS, Warsaw, 1991; expanded by Bernhard Strebel, Hannover, 1997).

## BORN

The village of Born, located in the southern part of the Baltic peninsula of Darss (during World War II, part of the province of Pommern, Landkreis Franzburg-Barth), is part of the present-day Federal German State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. In a list of the Ravensbrück concentration camp detailing private companies, the subcamp is listed under the number "14Kl DII-16/14c- SS-Standartenführer Müller, Born b. Wiek auf Darss."<sup>1</sup>

Before the Ravensbrück camps were established, there was a temporary Neuengamme subcamp on Darss. A group of 50 male prisoners (Jehovah's Witnesses) were used to cut reeds in the winter of 1940–1941 and 1941–1942. The reeds were required as raw material for weaving mats in Ravensbrück. The reeds were to be used to produce camouflage mats.<sup>2</sup> The prisoners were held in Wiek and later in Zingst.<sup>3</sup>

Unlike the Neuengamme subcamp, which only existed during the winter months for the purpose of cutting the reeds, an independent subcamp was established in Born, probably in 1943, for male and female prisoners from the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

Reeds were not of much value to the Ravensbrück camp. The attempt to use reeds as an extraordinary material, to cultivate in large quantities and to process the reeds into a fiber, cellulous or starch,<sup>4</sup> failed in 1942 due to Oswald Pohl, head of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). Reeds were to be used in the Ravensbrück concentration camp for women solely for the production of mats.<sup>5</sup> For large-scale production, there was a shortage of civilian labor, with the result that prisoners had to be used. For the industrial processing, there was a lack of specialists, and in any case there were plans to use the prisoners for more important work. It was probably for this reason that the cutting of reeds at Darss was stopped. The weaving mill for the raw material in the main camp at Ravensbrück ceased production at the end of September 1943 due to a lack of raw material. The Ravensbrück prisoners in the Born subcamp were given other tasks.

Four Jehovah's Witnesses were held in the Born Forestry Office between May 1943 and April 1945. They were accommodated in the Master Forester Franz Müller's laundry on the forestry grounds.<sup>6</sup> In this building the women had to produce, among other things, feed for pigs. At night they slept in double bunk beds. The women were rarely given a proper meal. They ate potatoes while preparing the feed for the pigs.<sup>7</sup> The women, dressed in prisoner clothing and wearing wooden clogs, were easily recognized by the villagers in Born. They were mistreated by private individuals while doing farmwork. On the whole, they worked without supervision, as escape from the peninsula was impossible and had no purpose. Shortly before the end of the war, the women were released.

In the summer of 1943, the windows of the Borner Hof, an inn, were equipped with iron bars. In the autumn of 1943, approximately 120 prisoners accompanied by approximately 20 SS guards arrived at the subcamp. This contingent of prisoners would be the first. The guards occupied the first floor of the inn. The office of the detachment leader, Willi P., was located here.<sup>8</sup> The prisoners were held in the large room below. They slept on three-tiered bunk beds. At this time there were also Polish forced laborers in the Born Hof. There was no contact between the prisoner groups.

The prisoners worked at the SS-Meilereie, or charcoal works, about 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) away from the Borner Hof, to the north of the Postweg. The SS-Meilereie was intended to convert wood to a fuel by coking it. In 1943, the SS bought part of a private farm from the state Forestry Office. Equipment to process hard wood was established in the buildings on the farm. During the winter, reeds were cut on the Saaler Bodden but only for the purpose of renovating Born dwellings. Müller was in charge of all the work.<sup>9</sup>

It is likely that a group of five fleeing prisoners were shot in the Darss Forest and buried on the edge of the cemetery. The Schwerin Criminal Police recorded on October 20, 1944, that during the night of October 12, 1944, three Eastern European men escaped from a labor detachment of the Ravensbrück concentration camp in Born on the Darss. The search



order emphasized that the escapees, once recaptured, were to be transferred back to the Ravensbrück concentration camp.<sup>10</sup>

The SS began to dissolve the camp in April 1945. Astonishingly, a group of 35 prisoners were deported to the Barth subcamp, which was located further east. This was unusual, given that the Red Army was advancing. The remaining prisoners were driven in the direction of Ribnitz. They were liberated by the Red Army near Wustrow. Camp commander Wilhelm P. and Master Forester Müller most likely fled in the direction of Hamburg.

There are no known trials against the SS members in the camp.

**SOURCES** Details on the subcamp are from a research project by the Mahn und Gedenkstätte Ravensbrück/ Stiftung Brandenburgische Gedenkstätten (January 2000–January 2002; A. Meyer, E. Schwarz, S. Steppan). Some additional material is available in Hermann Kaienburg, *Vernichtung durch Arbeit: Der Fall Neuengamme: Die Wirtschaftsbestrebungen der SS und ihre Auswirkungen auf die Existenzbedingungen der KZ-Gefangenen* (Bonn: J.H.W. Dietz, 1991); and in Reinhard Plewe and Jan Thomas Köhler, *Baugeschichte Frauen-Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 2001). See also Bernhard Strebel, “Verdammt sind meine Hände,” *ZR-MM-V*, 1 (July 2000).

Archival materials are held in both the AG-R and AG-NG, as well as in the BA-B, BA-L, and VLA-G.

Angelika Meyer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, Film 1575 unp. Aufstellung des Häftlingseinsatzes in Privatbetrieben, o.D. See also “Das Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und ihrer Aussenkommandos gemäss § 42 Abs. 2 BEG,” *BGBI.* (1977), Teil 1, p. 1793. Here the opening date is put as December 1, 1942.

2. BA-L, AR 1476/66, Bl. 53.

3. Schriftwechsel A. Meyer Oktober 2000 mit D. Garbe Gedenkstätte Neuengamme. Vgl. Dokumentenhaus Neuengamme, Ng.2.8./380, Erinnerungsprotokoll Karl H.

4. BA-B, NS 19/ 412, Bl. 3-4. Abhandlung “Schilf als Rohstoff” von Oberführer Ludwig.

5. AG-R, SBG RA Bd. 11, Ber. I. Bl. 3. Rohrmattenweberei für die Gesellschaft für Textil und Lederverwertung GmbH. Ausrüstungs- und Bedarfsgegenstände militärischer und ziviler Art.

6. AG-R, SBG Projekt Aussenlager, Ordner Born. Brief von Gerda L.

7. VLA-G, Rep. V 6/17/24, Bl. 49.

8. The following details are taken from the written record of an interview between A. Meyer and Harald H. in June 2000 (in possession of the author).

9. VLA-G, Rep. V 6/17/24, Bl. 49 (Bericht der “Jungen Historiker,” Born 1965/66); VLA-G, Rep. 66a Fr-Ba/ 17, Bl.109. Zuständigkeiten des Forstmeiser Mueller über den Jagdbezirk Born, September 22, 1940.

10. AST-RDG n.p.

## COMTHUREY [AKA DABELOW]

The Comthurey subcamp was located at the Comthurey Manor in Mecklenburg, about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) to the northeast of the Ravensbrück concentration camp (on the road from Dabelow to Wokuhl). The manor house was used by SS-Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl, the head of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), and his family as a country residence. The manor comprised about 338 hectares (835 acres) and had been bought in December 1940 or January 1941 by the German Research Institute for Nutrition and Provisions, Ltd. (DVA) (Amtsgruppe W, Amt W V/1 of the WVHA [Stand 1942]), an SS firm. Farming the manor was organized by the DVA.

The SS-Experimental Farm (Versuchsgut) Comthurey is connected to the first experimental Ravensbrück farm that began operation shortly after the opening of the Ravensbrück main camp in 1939. Female prisoners were to be used for the expansion of the farm for economic reasons. The DVA aimed to make the SS-Versuchsgut Comthurey an “exemplary example of a farm in bio farming”<sup>1</sup> and invested heavily in the expansion of the farm. By 1943 the Comthurey Manor was farming 570 hectares (1,408 acres).<sup>2</sup> The expansion of the Comthurey Manor occurred largely in accordance with the personal wishes of Pohl. In part, Pohl personally took over its administration even though he did not have the slightest understanding of agricultural matters. So-called enthusiasts’ buildings (*Liebhäuserbauten*) were put in place to strengthen the representative character of the manor. The DVA goal was “to achieve outstanding agricultural production, as much as possible.” The farming interests included the nearby manors of Brückenthin and Dabelow. Pohl’s decision to establish a home within the DVA area and his personal influence on the economic expansion underline the significance of the Comthurey subcamp in the Ravensbrück subcamp system.

The *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS*, published by the International Tracing Service (1979), lists the Comthurey subcamp as the Dabelow Labor Detachment. The subcamp’s buildings were not located in Dabelow but on Comthurey Manor grounds. The camp was in fact two camps—one for male and a second for female prisoners. The exact location of the camp is unknown.

At the beginning of 1942, male prisoners from Ravensbrück were sent to the manor to build and expand its facilities.<sup>3</sup> The camp was located close to the Pohl’s family house, on a field close to the Grosse Gadow See.

SS-Scharführer Wilhelm R. was initially in charge of the prisoners.<sup>4</sup> They were guarded by eight SS men.

Unlike other subcamps, the prisoners’ barracks were not the normal barracks but 8 to 10 “caravans” or circus vans. As security, the wagons were fenced in with barbed wire. The wagons were equipped with three-tiered bunk beds. There were sanitary facilities, and washing and drinking water had to be brought from the nearby lake by the prisoners.<sup>5</sup> The small windows were locked during the night. Due to the lack

of space, there was nowhere for the prisoners to sit. They could hardly move in the caravans.

The first group of prisoners were political prisoners, the “limited preventive custody” prisoners (*befristete Vorbeugehäftlingen BVers*).<sup>6</sup> Initially between 80 and 100 prisoners (Czechs, Germans, Poles, French, and Russians)<sup>7</sup> were busy pulling down part of the old manor and rebuilding the Pohl home. They also worked up until the middle of 1943 on the nearby garden, expanded the stables, and built a lodge in the forest.<sup>8</sup> The pressure that was put on the prisoners to build Oswald and Eleonore Pohl a luxurious residence has been described by eyewitnesses as unbelievably inhuman. At times the prisoners worked day and night; skilled prisoner artisans worked up to 36 hours. Work was done on the run, and the SS personnel drove the prisoners on without a break. According to witnesses, the prisoners, who were mostly stigmatized as criminals, received little food; their labor was exploited to the maximum, and they were not allowed basic hygiene. Sick prisoners were returned to the Ravensbrück main camp.

After the initial expansion construction, the SS largely exchanged the prisoners in the summer of 1943. A second group of prisoners were deployed, the majority of whom were Jehovah’s Witnesses. Their task, according to Alois M., was to build in 1943–1944 Germany’s most modern piggery.

In the middle of 1944, the camp’s commander Wilhelm R. was transferred to the Natzweiler concentration camp. The name of his successor at the Comthurey subcamp is not known.<sup>9</sup> The guards were replaced by Croatian SS men.

The prisoners built barracks in addition to the caravans. They were allowed to place tables in the barracks, and there was room to move—unlike the previous conditions. According to survivors, the Jehovah’s Witnesses were subject to special rules by the camp leadership. They were allowed to pick berries in the nearby forest. This guaranteed the prisoners’ survival. As with the previous group of prisoners, they had to care for all the agricultural requirements of the manor, focusing on the construction of farm buildings.<sup>10</sup>

Survivors recall three deaths in the subcamp. The prisoner Reinhold S. was witness in 1943 to the murder of two prisoners. Their escape over the lake did not succeed, and they were hung by the SS at the manor.<sup>11</sup>

As the Comthurey subcamp was geographically close to the main camp, the SS had quick access to its prisoners and chose men with skilled qualifications so that they could exploit their skills in other subcamps.<sup>12</sup>

Little is known about the prison conditions and the history of the women’s persecution due to the lack of documentation.<sup>13</sup> The camp probably existed from the spring of 1942 to April 1945. It consisted at first of one barracks and later of two wooden barracks. It was close to the Comthurey farm laborers’ settlement (Comthurey Oberstadt). The barracks were divided into a commercial barrack, which held the kitchen and sanitary facilities. The second functioned as a dormitory and canteen. In the spring of 1942, 80 Polish women were deported to the subcamp to expand the drainage ditches at Comthurey. This group of women worked on

the manor until they were transported back to Ravensbrück in the autumn of 1942. Many of the women suffered from kidney inflammations due to the heavy labor and the cold. Sick women were sent back to the main camp and were replaced by other prisoners.<sup>14</sup> The female prisoners were mostly used in agriculture.

This camp is not to be confused with the female labor detachment “Gut Dabelow.” This manor lay only a few kilometers from the Comthurey camp. The labor detachment consisted of between 10 and 30 prisoners from the Ravensbrück concentration camp. They worked each day on the Boldt Manor (a grain mill) in Dabelow, returning in the evening, under the supervision of a wardress, to the Ravensbrück main camp.<sup>15</sup>

On March 23, 1943, on the order of camp commander Fritz Suhren, 10 women were transferred to the Auschwitz concentration camp as punishment. They were accused of sending uncensored letters with the help of a wardress to the outside world while they were working in the labor detachment at the Comthurey Experimental Farm. It remains unclear whether this was a day labor detachment or prisoners who were permanently based in the subcamp.

Later there were approximately 100 women in the Comthurey subcamp. They were of different nationalities.<sup>16</sup> According to the wardress Frieda L., the women mostly did agricultural work and worked as servants in the Pohl’s residence. The women also worked in private homes and the bakery and did forestry work.<sup>17</sup> The prisoner Alois M., from the male camp, was responsible for giving the women tools from the storeroom for work on the farm and the forest.<sup>18</sup>

According to the former wardress Frieda L., shortly before the end of the war, in February 1945, Jewish prisoners were brought to the camp. The health of these women was very poor. Their fate is not known. At the end of March 1945 the subcamp is thought to have been dissolved, with the prisoners being taken to the main camp, from where they were sent on a death march.

As the demand for prisoners depended on the decisions of the DVA, the number of prisoners varied considerably, particularly as the subcamp was close to the main Ravensbrück camp.

According to the provisional final report on the DVA from June 30, 1944, there were at this point 93 prisoners held in Comthurey (without distinction as to gender), nine SS members, two civilian employees, and 17 farm laborers. The use of prisoners was relatively high compared to other manors.<sup>19</sup>

According to a Comthurey local, just before the end of the war the main building in Comthurey was detonated by the SS. The stables remained, as did the terrace, which had been built by the prisoners, a sauna, a wooden pavilion, and an ornamental fountain close to Pohl’s house. The farm laborers’ settlement on the road to Wokuhl also survived. After the war, Comthurey was to hold approximately 30 German refugees.<sup>20</sup>

Only parts of the foundations remain of what is thought to be the female prisoners’ accommodation. There is nothing to recall the history of the camp, and neither the perpetrators’ structures or the SS power structure in the area is docu-

mented. There were references to the killed prisoners. Both German states disregarded camp survivors until the 1990s.

Notwithstanding that, in 1969 the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) and the Federal Republic of Germany investigated former wardens and wardresses, although there were no court proceedings against them.

The German Democratic Republic's (GDR) criminal proceedings against the wardress Frieda L. have not been researched.

**SOURCES** The details on the Comthurey subcamp originate from the author's research as part of a project by the AG-R/SBG (January 2000–January 2002; A. Meyer, Dr. E. Schwarz, S. Steppan). See also Reinhard Plewe and Jan Thomas Köhler, *Baugeschichte Frauen-Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 2001); and Grit Philipp, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Frauen-Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück 1939–1945* (Berlin, 1999).

Comthurey is listed in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)* (Arolsen: Suchdienst, 1979), 235.

Archival records are available in the BA-B and the AG-R.  
Angelika Meyer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, NS 3/ 722, p. 22, Jahresabschlussbericht Chef W im SS-WVHA from April 12, 1944, für die DVA GmbH.

2. Ibid., p. 9.

3. BA-B, Film 11143, pp. 235–236, Schreiben vom January 9, 1942. Betr. der Zusammenstellung zu erstattender Ausgaben für Comthurey und Brückenthin.

4. BA-B, Film 1575, n.p.

5. Bericht Eduard. W, MGR/SBG, RA. Bd. 43, Ber. 940/27.

6. Alfred Ludwig Hillinger, *Kraft, die über das Normale hinausgeht: Zeugnisse unerschütterlichen Glaubens* (Linz: Oberwang, 1999), p. 31.

7. Sammlungen MGR/SBG, RA Bd. 43 Ber. 940/18.

8. Cf. Various reports: Sammlungen MGR/SBG, RA Bd. 36, Ber. 716 (Karl G), RA Bd. 43 Ber. 940/19, RA Bd. 43 Ber. 940/6 (Emil S.), RA Bd. 43 Ber. 940/15, RA Bd. 43 Ber. 940/18 (Fritz S.), RA Bd. 43 Ber. 940/33 (Horst S.).

9. BA-L, AR- 1439/66, p. 14.

10. BA-L, AR-Z 78/72, Bd. X, Bl. 2432, Vernehmung Horst. S, Ludwigsburg 1968.

11. BA-L, AR-1439/66, Vernehmungsprotokoll von Reinhold S., Landeskriminalamt NRW, 1969.

12. BA-L, AR-1439/66, Bl.68ff, Vernehmungsprotokoll Joseph S., Kommando Hohenlychen, Gut Harzwalde. Other prisoners were deported to Damshöhe or Prenzlau.

13. John M. Steiner, "Es war ja nicht so . . .," in *Jahrbuch 2000*, ed. Döw (Vienna, 2000). Interview with Alosia Hoisl.

14. Biblioteka Narodowa w Warszawie, Handschriftenabteilung, Wanda Kiedrzyńska, AG-R/SBG, Erinnerung Irena B.

15. AG-R/SBG, RA Bd. 14/1 Arbeitseinteilungen im Juni 1942. Gespräch A. Meyer 12.07.2001 mit Zeitzeugin aus Dablow.

16. Sammlungen MGR/SBG, Bd.39 Ber. 866.

17. See Sammlungen MGR/SBG, HA J.S. vom 14.6.1996; and Sammlungen MGR/SBG, HA J. Sa. Vom 30.03.1992.

18. Erinnerungsbericht, Alois. M.: 6 jährige Erfahrungen aus—7 KZ.- Lagern und von verschiedene "Aufbau" Nebenlagern, AG-N.

19. BA-B, NS 3, Nr. 722, unp.

20. AST-NZ, Org. 155, unp.

## DAHMSHÖHE

The Dahmshöhe subcamp was located in what was then the Prussian district of Brandenburg. It was located on land belonging to the Dahmshöhe Manor in the area known as Althymen. The distance from Dahmshöhe to the city of Fürstenberg/Havel, Mecklenburg, and the Ravensbrück concentration camp was about 4 kilometers (2.5 miles). The manor, used primarily for agriculture, dated from 1865.<sup>1</sup> There are written records that show that female prisoners from Ravensbrück were sent to work at the Dahmshöhe Manor in May, July, September, and October 1942. The women left the camp in the morning and returned after completing their work.<sup>2</sup>

In the middle of 1943, the SS began to use part of the manor for military purposes. An SS-Cavalry Training Squadron (Lehrschwadron) was stationed there to train noncommissioned officers.<sup>3</sup> The unit was accommodated in several barracks distributed on the manor grounds. An industrial barracks, in the form of a T, served as kitchen, dining hall, and cafeteria. Noncommissioned officers in Dahmshöhe received their cavalry training as squadron leaders for several months before they were sent to the front. They received instructions on the use of light and heavy weapons, explosives, and armored fighting vehicles, among other training programs. The instructors were mostly officers, graduates of the SS-Junker School at Bad Tölz in Bavaria. At first, the SS noncommissioned officer training squadron was divided into four platoons. Later, the first squadron with four platoons, armed with light infantry weapons, and the second squadron with three platoons, equipped with heavy machine guns and grenade throwers, belonged to the so-called SS-Cavalry Training Squadron. The Dahmshöhe subcamp was established in preparation for the stationing and expansion of the training squadron. Only male concentration camp prisoners were located at Dahmshöhe. The camp's occupants revealed details about the work and the appearance of the subcamp during a trial of SS-Obersturmführer Rudolf Beer, the former camp commandant, which took place in 1949 and 1950 before the Stuttgart District Court.

The first consignment of male prisoners from Ravensbrück to Dahmshöhe appears to have occurred in the spring of 1943. It is claimed that at first 30 and later up to 100 prisoners from Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Soviet Union, and Austria worked there. Most of the prisoners were skilled tradesmen. A few of them either had been or would be later deployed in other camps, such as Prenzlau, Comthurey, or Feldberg. The main work of the prisoners was the construction of housing for the soldiers and stables for the horses.



They had to fell trees, level roads, construct barracks and garages, lay out a riding ring, and do other manual work. They were housed in a wooden barrack that was encircled by a barbed-wire fence. There was at least one watchtower (possibly several). A cordon of SS guards, transferred from Ravensbrück, was responsible for external security. One of the prisoners functioned as Kapo and another as cook. There are reports of two attempts by prisoners to escape in July 1943. Mischko Houbin, a Soviet prisoner, was unsuccessful and was murdered in Dahmshöhe on July 14, 1943. This crime resulted in the above-mentioned proceedings against Beer, who was acquitted on July 17, 1950, by a jury for lack of evidence.<sup>4</sup>

As the Eastern Front approached at the beginning of April 1945, the SS-Noncommissioned Officers Training Squadron was transferred to Bohemia to the military training ground at Beneschau (Benesov), about 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) south of Prague. Investigations by the State Prosecutor at Stade, Niedersachsen, between 1975 and 1979 could not substantiate claims that members of the squadron shot, on April 7 and 8, 1945, 36 inhabitants at the Czech village Velké Popovic (Gross-Popowitz) and at Stranice.<sup>5</sup>

**SOURCES** There is no written history of the Dahmshöhe camp. Details on the Dahmshöhe subcamp are the result of a research project conducted by the AG-R and SBG between January 2000 and January 2002 by A. Meyer, E. Schwarz, and S. Steppan. To date, the only and most important sources on the Dahmshöhe subcamp are the investigations by ZdL (held at BA-L), as well as documents from the court proceedings at the Stuttgart District Court against the former camp commandant of the male camp at Ravensbrück. The investigation is also found in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen: Sammlungen Deutscher Strafurteile wegen Nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1966*, ed. A.L. Rüter Ehlermann, H.H. Fuchs, and C.F. Rüter (Amsterdam, 1971), 6: 726. The NLStA-S has a collection of documents relating to the SS-Kavallerieschwadron.

Erika Schwarz  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. See Landkreis Havel, Landkreis Oberhavel, der Landrat, Kataster- und Vermessungsamt Oranienburg, Alt-Thymen, Steuermutterrolle, Bd. IV, Nr. 74; as well as Alt-Thymen, Gebäudebuch; *Reinkarte Regierungsbezirk Potsdam*, Gemarkung, Alt-Thymen.

2. AG-R, SBG, vol. 14.

3. BA, Film 1567, “Verzeichnis der zuständigen Ersatztruppenteile der Waffen-SS vom 1.8.1944.” In this document, as in others, Dahmshöhe is written as Damshöhe.

4. BA-L, 985/94. See also *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen: Sammlungen Deutscher Strafurteile wegen Nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1966*, ed. A.L. Rüter-Ehlermann, H.H. Fuchs, and C.F. Rüter (Amsterdam, 1971), 6: 726.

5. See NLStA-S, Rep. 171a Stade acc. 43/87, Nr. 193–201.

## EBERSWALDE

The town of Eberswalde is a county seat located some 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) to the northeast of Berlin. Two barracks

have remained standing near the former Eisenspalterei railway station and serve as reminders of a subcamp operated by the Ravensbrück concentration camp on these and the adjoining grounds in 1944–1945. The two buildings—authentic testimonies to the National Socialist tyranny—were placed under monument protection in 1998.

Under National Socialism, Eberswalde and what was then still the independent town of Finow came to play a central role in armaments production. This first “industrial” center of the Mark Brandenburg region had already begun to emerge on the Finow Canal in the early seventeenth century. In the early days of its history, metalworking plants such as iron, copper, and brass works shaped its economy.

One of the largest enterprises in the Finow Valley was the Ardel Works, founded in 1902 by Robert Ardel and moved to Heegermühler Strasse in 1912. In the period before 1933, the company distinguished itself worldwide with the construction of cranes; during the Third Reich it developed into a leading armaments manufacturer. The Ardel family enjoyed the best of connections to the heads of the Reich departments and ministries and realized enormous profits in the execution of public orders. Antitank guns became among its most well known products. The expansion of the plant culminated in 1940 with the completion of a huge steelworking hall; construction of the “Nordwerk” facility on the Hohenzollern Canal (the present-day Oder-Havel Canal) had gotten under way in 1935. There, the Märkisches Stahlformwerk GmbH, a subsidiary of the Ardel Works, manufactured hand grenades and bombs.

During World War II, the company’s workforce was reduced by conscriptions to military service; at the same time, however, the demands on production were growing. The Ardel Works came to terms with these circumstances by employing an increasing number of “foreign workers” and concentration camp prisoners, who accounted for 3,000 of the 11,000 members of the company’s manpower (including the workforces of the Eberswalde Steel-Molding Works and the Breslau Works) after 1939.

Several barrack camps were established in the vicinity of the plant. In 1943, on an area of land owned by the Ardel Works, the Rüstungskommission III des Reichsministerium für Bewaffnung und Munition (Armaments Commission III of the RMfBM) ordered the construction of the camp known as the Camp Cooperative West (Gemeinschaftslager West). On September 13, 1943, the ministry officially responsible for construction projects informed the president of the administrative district of Potsdam of plans for a camp to be built according to “the stationary solid construction system for the accommodation of one thousand workers . . . of which the first subsection for 650 foreign workers and 200 German workers will be executed immediately.”<sup>1</sup>

The Berlin architects Eckart Muthesius and Hellmut Remmelmann were responsible for the plans. The district president—in his capacity as senior building inspector—approved the project on September 23, 1941, “for the duration of the war” and granted his approval for two additional barracks on November 15.<sup>2</sup> The camp ultimately consisted of eight ac-



commodation barracks, two washroom and toilet barracks, one service barrack (including a kitchen, dining hall, shower room, etc.), a first-aid station, and a guard and camp command barrack. The Eberswalde-Finowfurt railway separated the factory grounds from the camp, whose entrance was located only a few meters from the Eisenspalterei railway station.

The first “residents” of the Gemeinschaftslager West were some 100 to 150 Belgian workers. When they arrived in early March 1944, the barracks had not yet been completed. As early as the beginning of May, all inmates were moved to the nearby Drehnitzlager. The Gemeinschaftslager West, now completely evacuated, was assigned a new function: it was to serve the Ravensbrück concentration camp as a subcamp. On September 5, 1944, the first Ravensbrück inmates arrived in Eberswalde from the main camp. Two weeks later (on September 21) the subcamp’s population already numbered approximately 730 prisoners.<sup>3</sup>

The utilization of the existing barracks was now adapted to the new requirements. The prisoner area was enclosed by two fences, of which the inner one was electrically charged. This arrangement, along with the guards posted in watchtowers, made escape attempts practically impossible. Like the original first-aid station, the four lodging barracks in the northeastern section of the grounds were located outside the enclosure. The infirmary (*Revier*) was housed in the service barrack. A former guard testified that approximately 18 women were employed as guards, along with 8 to 12 men for the “external control of the camp.”<sup>4</sup>

SS-Unterscharführer Friedrich (Fritz) Giese served as camp commander. A trained roofer, he had joined the SS in 1933 and served on the front in 1939, at the beginning of the war. No longer “conditionally fit for combat duty” due to a severe injury, Giese had been on the staff of Ravensbrück concentration camp since March 1942. He took command of the Eberswalde and Finow subcamps in September 1944.

The majority of the prisoners in Eberswalde were young women under the age of 21. Most of them came from Italy, Poland, and the Soviet Union. Other known countries of origin were Denmark, France, Greece, Yugoslavia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, and Hungary. Only a small number of German women were committed to the Eberswalde subcamp. All of the prisoners wore the red triangle identifying them as political prisoners.

The day began with wake-up at 4:00 A.M. The prisoners had to form up for roll call an hour later. Armed SS women with dogs accompanied the work gangs to the Ardelts Works. The working hours were Monday to Saturday from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. The workers usually had Sundays off and stayed in the camp. Some of the women were employed in the production of machine guns in an arms factory located in the former Eberswalde municipal theater about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) from the camp. In addition to forced labor in the factories, prisoners were employed in the construction of temporary housing as well as in the excavation of trenches and antitank ditches.

Violations of the camp regulations were disciplined with draconian punishments. A prisoner recalls: “The Russian and

Polish women were often caught looking for potatoes and turnips in the cellar or informed on. . . . They had to stand at the camp fence in the severe cold with little on in the way of clothing, received 15–20 blows and nothing to eat until the following day. We Germans were often ordered by the SS to pick fights with the foreign women. We refused and were called ‘sissies’ from then on.”<sup>5</sup> The prisoners also dreaded detention in the “Bunker,” a cellar partially filled with water.

Malnutrition led to a brief dysentery epidemic and tuberculosis. Due to the poor hygiene conditions, many of the women suffered from infections of the skin. The number of dead is not known, for the bodies were usually sent to the Ravensbrück main camp for cremation.

The history of the Eberswalde subcamp ended in April 1945. One record testifies to a population of 821 prisoners as late as April 10.<sup>6</sup> In view of the advancing Red Army, the camp was evacuated a short time later. The prisoners were transported back to Ravensbrück on trucks, approximately 25 ill prisoners already having been taken back by rail.

After the war, the legal authorities called several members of the SS staff to account. The French military tribunal in Rastatt, for example, condemned the guard Lena Barth to a two-year prison term for her activities in the Eberswalde and Neubrandenburg subcamps. Three further Eberswalde subcamp guards had to answer for their actions before the Halle (Saale) District Court on October 13, 1949. Frieda Krüger, Hildegard Mannig, and Hilda Trocha, however, were cleared of all charges of crimes against humanity. The fourth defendant, Helene Rösch, evaded trial by fleeing to Western Germany. In the 1960s, the Public Attorney’s Office in Cologne instituted proceedings against the former camp commander Giese. By the time of Giese’s death in 1969, however, it had not proved possible to shed light on the homicides with which he was charged.

**SOURCES** A detailed overview on the history of the Eberswalde subcamp can be found in Carsten Seifert, “Das Aus-senlager Eberswalde des KZ Ravensbrück,” *EJfHKNg* (1999–2000): 49–62. Eyewitness testimony is contained in Karin Berger, Elisabeth Holzinger, Lotte Podgornik, and Lisbeth N. Trallori, eds., *Ich geb Dir einen Mantel, dass Du ihn noch in Freiheit tragen kannst: Widerstehen im KZ: Österreichische Frauen erzählen* (Vienna: Promedia, 1987), pp. 44–48, 277, 318; as well as in Stadt- und Kreismuseum Eberswalde, ed., *Eberswalde 1945: Eine Zusammenfassung von Ereignissen mit Dokumenten und Erinnerungen (Heimatkundliche Beiträge. Heft 3)* (Eberswalde: Stadt- und Kreismuseum, 1995), pp. 13, 17–18. Additional information can be found in Ilona Rohowski, *Landkreis Barnim. Teil 1: Stadt Eberswalde (Denkmaltopographie Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Denkmale in Brandenburg. Band 5.1)* (Worms am Rhein: Wernersche Verlagsanstalt, 1997), pp. 31, 206–208, 218; Karin Schmidt (MSS)/Leitung der Grundorganisation der SED des VEB Kranbau Eberswalde, ed., *Geschichte des Volkseigenen Betriebes Kranbau Eberswalde. Teil 1. 1902 bis 1945* (Neubrandenburg: Bezirksdruckerei “Erich Weinert,” 1985), pp. 57–59; Karlheinz Scholze, “Die Ardelts. Die Geschichte vom Aufstieg und Untergang der Ardeltswerke GmbH in Eberswalde von 1901 bis 1945,” *EJfHKNg* (1998–1999): 71–88 and (1999–2000): 21–47; Carsten

Seifert, Harald Bodenschatz, and Werner Lorenz, *Das Finowtal im Barnim: Wiege der brandenburgisch-preussischen Industrie*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Transit, 2000), pp. 45–46, 85–90.

The buildings of the Eberswalde subcamp and the history of their construction are outstandingly well documented, particularly by the construction files (town of Eberswalde), which have survived in their entirety, as well as by aerial photographs of the years 1944 and 1945 (LAVM-Br). Eyewitness reports are to be found in the AG-R. Files of the BA-DH, BA-L, and the BStU provide information on the legal proceedings against former SS guards and camp commander Friedrich Giese after 1945.

The following archival collections contain information on the Eberswalde subcamp: BLHA (Potsdam), Rep. 2A, Regierung Potsdam, I Hb, Nr. 1679; BA-B, RS/Giese, Friedrich/19.05.10; BA-DH, R 154/8999, VgM 10041/17; BA-L, AR 1492/66, AR 2485/66; BStU-H(S), BV Halle, ASt 6072/49; LAVM-Br, Landesluftbildsammelstelle (Potsdam) Aerial photographs dated May 30, 1944 (Film-Nr. K 074–44, Bild-Nr. 3034), April 15, 1945 (Film-Nr. K 178–45, Bild-Nr. 4107); SVG (Brussels) Ministère de la Reconstruction, Direction Générale des Dommages aux Personnes, 1ère Direction: Recherches, Documentation et Décès, Service “Camps,” *Rapport Définitif No 55. Eberswalde* [typescript, March 10, 1952, unpub.]; NARA, RG 339-000-50-II, Ravensbrück, vol. 2, Folder 3, Statement Danuta Tulmacka, May 13, 1945; Stadt Eberswalde, Untere Bauaufsichtsbehörde, Verwaltungsarchiv Bauakte Kranbau Eberswalde, File III; and SBG, MGR, RA Bd. 20, Bericht-Nr. 188; RA Bd. 22, Bericht-Nr. 211; RA Bd. 22, Bericht-Nr. 234; RA Bd. 36, Bericht-Nr. 721; RA Bd. 40, Bericht-Nr. 917; RA Bd. 40, Bericht-Nr. 918; RA Bd. 40, Bericht-Nr. 925.

Carsten Seifert  
trans. Judith Rosenthal

## NOTES

1. Der Baubevollmächtigte des Reichsministeriums Speer im Bezirk der Rüstungsinspektion III (Brdbg.), II B Rü 220-4555-III, September 13, 1943, BLHA, Rep. 2A, Regierung Potsdam, I Hb, Nr. 1679; copy in Stadt Eberswalde, Untere Bauaufsichtsbehörde, Verwaltungsarchiv, Bauakte Kranbau Eberswalde, File III.

2. Regierungspräsident des Regierungsbezirks Potsdam I Hba. 3422, September 23, 1943, and I Hba. 4111, November 15, 1943, in Stadt Eberswalde, Untere Bauaufsichtsbehörde, Verwaltungsarchiv, Bauakte Kranbau Eberswalde, File III; drafts in BLHA, Rep. 2A, Regierung Potsdam, I Hb, Nr. 1679.

3. Reichsanstalt für Wasser- und Luftgüte, November 8, 1944, in BA-DH, R 154/8999.

4. Vernehmung der Marie, Emma, Ella La Fauche vor dem A.K. Dezernat 5, n.d., in SBG, MGR, RA Bd. 36, Bericht-Nr. 721, 3.

5. Aus dem Fragebogen von Erna Olga Hientsch, geb. Huth aus Grossweinböhla, n.d., in SBG, MGR, RA Bd. 40, Bericht-Nr. 925.

6. Gefangenen-Stärkemeldung, April 10, 1945, in NARA, RG 339-000-50-II, Ravensbrück, vol. 2, Folder 3, Statement Danuta Tulmacka, May 13, 1945.

## FELDBERG

The village of Feldberg lies about 45 kilometers (28 miles) to the northeast of the Ravensbrück concentration camp and is located in the Mecklenburg lake district. In December 1943, the central administration of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Amt W V (W-5), responsible for agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, was created in Feldberg/Mecklenburg as a part of the relocation of the key SS offices from Berlin. The central administration offices of the German Research Institute for Nutrition and Provisions (DVA) (SS-WVHA Amt W V/1) were also established there. The office was not located in existing dwellings. A temporary barracks was used as the place of business.<sup>1</sup> It was headed by SS-Obersturmbannführer Heinrich Vogel, who represented the economic interests of the DVA, and from 1944, by Dr. Max Horn, an accountant.<sup>2</sup>

The Feldberg subcamp was probably located close to the building complex of the former hydropathic sanatorium (*Wasserheilanstalt am Haussee*). Locals recall the time around 1943 when, as part of the program of evacuating children from the cities, children and teenagers were quartered in the facilities of the sanatorium. Survivors clearly remember that the camp was located close to the children's home.

The subcamp for male prisoners was located in a sort of inn or a boiler house.<sup>3</sup> Male prisoners from Ravensbrück were probably accommodated there in the middle of 1943, with 20 to 30 prisoners in the cellars of the brick building. The prisoners were political prisoners, Jehovah's Witnesses, and so-called criminals.<sup>4</sup>

The guards were in another part of the same building. The forecourt of the building was enclosed with a high fence, about 2 meters (6.6 feet) high. Food in the camp was supplied from a cellar outside the fence that was kept under lock and key, as were the toilets.<sup>5</sup> The prisoners were guarded by ethnic Germans (*Völkische*) from Yugoslavia, Romania, and Czechoslovakia who were members of the SS-Wachmannschaft at the Ravensbrück concentration camp. There were six guards.

The prisoners worked for the SS doing carpentry work in the SS quarters and building and expanding the so-called overflow (*Ausweichlager*) of Amt W V. Skilled prisoners also built the SS accommodation, offices, and barracks for the Reich Labor Service (Reichsarbeitsdienst, RAD). Little is known about the camp conditions for this small group of prisoners. A female eyewitness recalls that often the men spent time in the forecourt after they returned to the camp, thereby making contact with the outside world. The prisoners, either to go to the toilet or to organize their evening meals, had to report to the guards, who then accompanied the prisoners when they left the building. Albert Franz was able to leave the camp grounds in September 1943 without a guard. He was shot by SS-Wachmann Anton M. for supposedly leaving the camp without permission. It is not known if there were other deaths. The guard Anton M. was transferred in November 1943 to the Ravensbrück Barth subcamp.

The exact date of the camp's dissolution is not known. The prisoners were transferred in 1943 to the Prenzlau subcamp,

where they were used, for example, as electricians, on SS construction projects.<sup>6</sup> Whether some of those held in Feldberg remained there until war's end is not documented.

Little is known about the restructuring of the SS buildings in Feldberg. Former areas of the Amt W V, two SS barracks on the Kuhdamm, were handed over in 1946 as part of the sequestration of the Feldberg property. They were in turn leased to the Landwirtschaftliche Hauptgenossenschaft-Reifeissen GmbH for grain storage.<sup>7</sup>

Proceedings against the alleged murderer and former SS guard Anton M., who was said to have murdered the prisoner Albert Franz on September 15, 1943, ceased in 1974.<sup>8</sup> The Koblenz State Prosecutor determined that the SS member should not be charged on the basis that he shot for base motives but on the basis that he shot a prisoner trying to escape. As a result, the killing was not considered murder. The accused acted according to SS regulations in shooting escaping prisoners. The accused could not be charged with manslaughter, as the Federal German statute of limitations applied.

There were no proceedings in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) for crimes committed in the Feldberg subcamp. The State Security, in the summer of 1981, researched whether the Feldberg subcamp was connected with the production of secret weapons at the time.<sup>9</sup>

**SOURCES** There are no published sources specifically on this camp.

Archival records are held in the BA-BL, the BA-L, and other archives as indicated in the notes.

Angelika Meyer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-BL, NS 3, Nr. 751, Bericht des Chefs des Amts W, Baier bei der DVA in Feldberg/Meckl, vom December 4–5, 1943 (Baier Chef des Stabes W und stellvertretender Chef der Amtsgruppe W).

2. BA-BL, NS 3/1428, p. 26.

3. BA-L, Ar 1491/66, p. 16.

4. Zeitzeugengespräch Angelika Meyer, Feldberg 23.07.01 mit Karin K.; Protokoll in possession of the author.

5. BA-L, AR 1491/66, p. 148, Beschuldigtenvernehmung Anton M., Staatsanwaltschaft Konstanz, May 1974.

6. BA-L, AR- Z 94/70, Vermerk zu Heinrich Q. vom January 25, 1968, p. 14.

7. MLHSN, Ministerium des Innern (1946–1952), Nr. 2935, unpub.

8. BA-L, AR 1491/66, p. 141, Verfahrenseinstellungsbeurteilung Staatsanwaltschaft Koblenz vom July 9, 1974.

9. BStU, SV 25/81, Akte 13, pp. 3, 15–18.

## FINOW

A subcamp of Ravensbrück existed in 1944–1945 only about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the Eberswalde subcamp, in the town of Finow (the present-day district of Eberswalde). Fol-

lowing the National Socialist assumption of power, the brass works located there had developed—like the Ardel Works—into a major munitions supplier.

The plant, in operation since 1700, is one of the oldest industrial sites in the Finow Valley. The Prussian state privatized what had long been the Königliche Messingwerk (Royal Brass Works) in 1863. The new owner, the Halberstadt trading firm Aron Hirsch & Sohn, ran the firm as a public limited company (Hirsch, Kupfer- und Messingwerke AG) beginning in 1906. The *Neuwerk* (new plant) constructed in 1917–1920 produced for a worldwide clientele. In 1935, the enterprise had some 3,300 employees. The memory of the Jewish business family Hirsch, which because of economic difficulties had retired from the firm in 1932, was erased from the company name for good in 1941. Called the Finow Kupfer- und Messingwerke AG (FKM), the undertaking was incorporated into the Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) the following year.

A subsidiary founded especially for wartime production, the Finower Industrie GmbH was already established on the Hohenzollern Canal (the present-day Oder-Havel Canal)—approximately 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) from the parent company—as early as 1934–1935. The plant manufactured rifle cartridges and antiaircraft munitions. In addition to the production halls, there were a magazine and a shooting gallery. Because of its concealed location in the forest, the local population referred to the site speciously as *Waldeslust* (forest delight).

In view of the large number of employees enlisted for military service, the FKM and its subsidiary made increasing use of foreign workers to satisfy the rising demand for munitions. At the end of May 1944, of the company's 6,260 workers, 1,000 were on war duty. A full 2,482—that is, 47 percent of the 5,260 workers remaining in Finow—were foreigners (including 306 Italian prisoners of war [POWs]).

A lodging camp for the Finower Industrie GmbH had already been set up in 1942–1943 between the factory grounds and the works railway to the south. In addition to an already existing air-raid shelter, initially four workers' barracks and one service barrack were built. A few months later, they were supplemented by an additional five lodging barracks, two toilet facilities, and a washroom with bath facilities.

It was at this site that the Ravensbrück concentration camp established the Finow subcamp in 1944. The FKM had applied for the assignment of 200 prisoners to meet its workforce demands in munitions production. The first transport from Ravensbrück to Finow took place in the summer of 1944. Initially, approximately 100 to 200 women shared two blocks. The first barrack (the Russian block) was divided into two sections, one accommodating Ukrainian women, the other primarily Polish. In the second barrack (the Polish block), all four sections were occupied by Polish women. The campgrounds were enclosed by two fences, with the inner one being electrically charged.

In the winter of 1944, in view of an expected—and later executed—transport of prisoners from the Auschwitz concentration camp, the Finow subcamp was expanded by the addition



of three barracks located nearby, which had previously provided living quarters for “free” Russian women. From this time on, one section of the Polish block served as an infirmary, which, however, had only very few medications and primitive medical supplies (for example, toilet paper for bandaging wounds and a kitchen knife for opening abscesses) at its disposal. The factory first-aid station had previously been responsible for the prisoners’ medical care. Frequently, though, the SS staff had refused sick prisoners access to that facility.

The prisoners performed forced labor for Finower Industrie GmbH 12 hours a day, from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. “The work considered heaviest was that at the shell and bullet sorting machines, since the workers had to stand the entire time, and the prisoners charged with operating those machines also had to put in night shifts,” a former prisoner recalls. “Two shifts were also worked in the so-called ‘paint shop,’ where . . . as a result of the vapors brought about by the heating of the lacquered shells, the work was particularly unpleasant and hazardous to the health. The night work was uncommonly arduous because of the fact that, even though you could theoretically sleep during the day, the noise in the barracks and the frequent roll calls, from which the night-shift workers were not exempt, prevented you from sleeping.”<sup>1</sup> The quality control of the bullets was among the easier tasks.

On November 20, 1944, 416 of the 2,012 workers at Finower Industrie GmbH were concentration camp prisoners. The number of camp prisoners rose to 564 by December 11, 1944, and to 674 by January 8, 1945, as compared to the overall workforce of 1,999 and 2,245, respectively. In addition to citizens of Poland and the Soviet Union, the prisoners included Belgian, German, French, Yugoslavian, Dutch, and Hungarian women. German civilian workers were also employed in the factory.

Like the Eberswalde subcamp, the Finow subcamp was under the command of SS-Unterscharführer Friedrich (Fritz) Giese. The SS staff reacted to disobedience and escape attempts with blows, detention in darkened cells, deprivation of food, and other brutal punishments. Some of the prisoners were taken back to the Ravensbrück main camp. Nothing is known of their later fate. “Quite suddenly the conduct of the SS changed,” a prisoner who worked in the infirmary recalled. “We were no longer beaten indiscriminately in the courtyard but were taken into the so-called roll call hall individually and beaten there. The reason for the change soon became clear to us. Free workers from the East, Poles and German civilians gathered around the fence and complained audibly when the SS went about celebrating their sadistic orgies on us.”<sup>2</sup> Prisoners no longer able to work to full capacity were transported to Ravensbrück and exchanged there for “fresh” workers. “It is therefore easily conceivable that no one dared to say she was sick, since the return to Ravensbrück meant: crematorium. So among the women in the infirmary there were always a few who were as good as dead.”<sup>3</sup>

In view of the daily cruelties, every sign of solidarity aided survival in the camp. Evidence exists, for example, of contact

between a prisoner and a Czech factory worker (both women); the latter supplied current news from the front and mailed and received correspondence to and from the prisoner’s children under her own name. Furthermore, two members of the camp personnel enlisted for service with the SS, Johannes Gebhardt and Elfriede Reimer, are known to have helped the prisoners and thus endangered their own safety. They never doled out blows; they shared their rations, provided information on the course of the war, and occasionally conveyed news to family members.

A characteristic example of the misanthropic mentality of the SS is the order, issued shortly before the end of the war, “that in the case of an enemy tank breakthrough or airborne landing, all prisoners, regardless of their nationalities, are to be taken into the magazine . . . and the magazine is to be blown up.”<sup>4</sup> This horrendous deed was never committed, however. In early March 1945, Finower Industrie GmbH discontinued production due to a shortage of raw materials, and approximately 300 prisoners were returned to Ravensbrück in trucks. There were still 306 prisoners in the camp on April 10, 1945, according to a camp population report drawn up on that day.<sup>5</sup> That same month, the Finow subcamp—like the Eberswalde subcamp—was completely evacuated. The remaining inmates were likewise transported back to Ravensbrück by truck.

**SOURCES** See Carsten Seifert, Harald Bodenschatz, and Werner Lorenz, *Das Finowtal im Barnim. Wiege der brandenburgisch-preussischen Industrie*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Transit, 2000), pp. 45–46; Stadt- und Kreismuseum Eberswalde, ed., *Eberswalde 1945: Eine Zusammenfassung von Ereignissen mit Dokumenten und Erinnerungen (Heimatkundliche Beiträge. Heft 3)* (Eberswalde: Stadt- und Kreismuseum, 1995), pp. 16–18.

Several construction files (Barnim District, Town of Eberswalde) as well as aerial photographs of 1944 and 1945 (LAVM-Br) provide information on the construction history of the munitions factory Finower Industrie GmbH and the Finow subcamp. Firsthand reports of former prisoners (AG-R) provide insight into everyday life in the camp. Files of the BA-L and the BStU-H(S) supply information on the legal investigations into actions of the camp personnel.

The particular archival collections are as follows: BA-B, R 8119 F/P-1172 - P-1188 and RS/Giese, Friedrich/19.05.10; BA-L, AR 1492/66 and AR 2485/66; BStU-H(S), Zentralarchiv (Berlin) AP 3783/79; LAVM-Br, Landesluftbildsammelstelle (Potsdam) Aerial photographs dated May 30, 1944 (Film-Nr. K 006-44, Bild-Nr. 4036), and April 15, 1945 (Film-Nr. K 178-45, Bild-Nr. 4106); AKr-EW, Bauakten Finower Industrie GmbH; NARA, RG 339-000-50-II, Ravensbrück, vol. 2, Folder 3, Statement Danuta Tulmacka, May 13, 1945; Stadt Eberswalde, Untere Bauaufsichtsbehörde, Verwaltungsarchiv Bauakten Finower Industrie GmbH; and SBG, MGR (Fürstenberg/Havel) RA Bd. 22, Bericht-Nr. 211; RA Bd. 31, Bericht-Nr. 576; and RA Bd. 40, Bericht-Nr. 932.

Carsten Seifert  
trans. Judith Rosenthal



## NOTES

1. Teresa Werner, "Das Lager in Finow," n.d., in SBG, MGR, RA Bd. 31, Bericht-Nr. 576, p. 2.
2. Helene Freudenberg, "Meine Erlebnisse im Gestapo-Gefängnis Fehrbellin und im Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück," n.d., in SBG, MGR, RA Bd. 40, Bericht-Nr. 932, p. 10.
3. Ibid., p. 9.
4. Ibid., p. 10.
5. Gefangenen-Stärkemeldung, April 10, 1945, in NARA, RG 339-000-50-II, Ravensbrück, vol. 2, Folder 3, Statement Danuta Tulmacka, May 13, 1945.

## GRÜNEBERG

The village of Grüneberg is situated about 55 kilometers (34 miles) north of Berlin and close to a railroad track connecting the German capital and the town of Fuerstenberg an der Havel. The local Grüneberger Metallgesellschaft mbH was a subsidiary of the Magdeburg-based Polte company. The factory building—located in a copse close to the Grüneberg station—was founded in 1931. Workers there had produced 2 cm ammunition as well as ammunition for the infantry since September 1933.

The management of the Grüneberger Metallgesellschaft mbH counted 217 employees and 4,121 laborers who worked at the factory in the summer of 1944. Most of them were Germans (1,868), but there were also 124 workers from Italy, 205 workers from France, 894 workers from Eastern Europe, and 1,030 women and girls from the Ravensbrück concentration camp.<sup>1</sup>

Grüneberg was the third of approximately 39 subcamps of the Ravensbrück concentration camp, following Comthurey in Brandenburg and Born at the Baltic Sea. The first 350 female prisoners—who were deported from the Soviet Union to Ravensbrück—reached Grüneberg on March 6, 1943. The number of prisoners increased continuously and reached a maximum figure with 1,703 in April 1945. Most of them were women and girls from the Soviet Union (Russians, Ukrainians). About 300 prisoners were deported from Poland; others were from Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia (most of them were Slovenes); there were also Latvians, Estonians, and a few prisoners of Dutch, French, German, and Greek origin.

The Grüneberg subcamp was located about 150 meters (492 feet) from the station. It was separated from the nearby factory building by the railway line. The subcamp—150 meters (492 feet) long and 118 meters (387 feet) wide—was surrounded by a fence under voltage and had two guarded gates used as an entrance.

The prisoners lived in eight huts of the make 501/34. These huts were 50 meters (164 feet) long and 10 meters (33 feet) wide. Every hut had space for 214 prisoners, who had to sleep in bunk beds without mattresses and pillows but with sheets and thin blankets. Every hut had a toilet room and a separate space with six washbowls. In three cases the toilet rooms were outside the hut, and during winter, all huts were bitterly cold.

In addition, there was a hut used as an infirmary, a kitchen, and a pantry and another hut used as a dining hall. The so-

called "Bunker" was a special place where prisoners were tortured. The Bunker was simply a deep, unlined hole.

The prisoners who worked in the factory building—only a few prisoners were forced to do housework in the subcamp instead of working in the factory—worked in 12-hour shifts with a break of about 15 minutes.

The labor time changed every week between a day shift (as a general rule from 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.) and a night shift (from 7:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M.).

Although there was no Allied air strike, air-raid warnings were frequent, and prisoners were sent to the factory's basement or to an underground area next to the subcamp during the alarm. The female SS guards controlled the prisoners in the subcamp, on their 15-minute walk to and from the factory building, and inside the factory. The leading female SS guard was Betty Herzinger. Her substitute, a woman called Hesse, was moved to the Auer Oranienburg subcamp in 1945.

The unhygienic living conditions and the hard work led to numerous diseases. In July 1944, hundreds of prisoners came down with food poisoning. A Russian and a Czech doctor were on duty in the subcamp's infirmary, but they were overtaxed because of an absence of medications. A huge number of prisoners died in the subcamp as well as after their deportation back to Ravensbrück, but it is not possible to give exact numbers.

The authorities evacuated Grüneberg between April 22, 1945, and April 26, 1945. At first, all prisoners from Poland were deported by trucks to Ravensbrück. The Swedish Red Cross liberated most of them in the so-called *Aktion Bernadotte* on April 24, 1945, when the SS allowed their release.

Most Grüneberg prisoners were deported by train or forced to walk to Ravensbrück, which was about 40 kilometers (25 miles) away. The authorities in Ravensbrück evacuated the concentration camp and forced the Grüneberg prisoners to be part of a second march. A huge number of weakened women and girls died; other prisoners reached the Mecklenburg town of Luebz—east of Parchim—where they were liberated by Soviet soldiers on May 1, 1945.

**SOURCES** Primary documentation on the Grüneberg subcamp is located at the AG-R, as well as at the AG-S, especially "Sammlung Thomas Irmer Recherche Aussenlager des KZ Sachsenhausen Ordner No. 8. Inhalt: Diverse Aussenlager 1/2 A-K."

For a comprehensive history on Grüneberg, see Susanne Neumayer, "Das Aussenlager des KZ Ravensbrück in Grüneberg und die Grüneberger Metallgesellschaft mbH. Ein Rüstungsstandort in der Spätphase des Zweiten Weltkrieges," Magister Artium an der Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, November 2002.

For an updated overview of the status of research on the subcamps of the Ravensbrück concentration camp, see Angelika Meyer, Erika Schwarz, and Simone Steppan, "Die Aussenlager des Frauenkonzentrationslagers Ravensbrück—eine Bestandsaufnahme," in *Zwangsarbeit und Gesellschaft: Beiträge zur Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Verfolgung in Norddeutschland*, vol. 8 (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2004).

Alexander Jossifidis

## NOTE

1. AG-S, Gewerbeaufsichtsamt Neuruppin (April 11, 1944), in "Sammlung Thomas Irmer: Recherche Aussenlager des KZ Sachsenhausen Ordner Nr. 8, Inhalt: Diverse Aussenlager 1/2 A-K."

**HAGENOW**

Hagenow lies about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) to the west of Neustadt-Glewe and was part of the former state of Mecklenburg. In 1945, the People's School and Wehrmacht Senior Hospital Training School (Volksschule und Oberschule Wehrmachtslazarette) was established there.<sup>1</sup>

In February 1945, 150 female prisoners from the Ravensbrück concentration camp were deported to Schwerin. There, the prisoners worked at a number of different places.<sup>2</sup> A group worked in a market garden and on farms; the others, in a clothing factory; 5 of the women from the transport arrived at Hagenow. There they had to work in a laundry, which formed part of the Wehrmacht hospital. The women were accommodated in the garden house of a private dwelling, which was surrounded with a 2-meter-high (6.6-foot-high) barbed-wire fence. Each morning the women were collected by Wehrmacht soldiers and taken to the laundry. The soldiers guarded and supervised the women. In May 1945, the women were liberated by American soldiers when they were on their way to the laundry. The women continued to help in the laundry until they returned home.

**SOURCES** There are no secondary sources specifically on this camp.

Archival records may be found in the BA-L.

Angelika Meyer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Karls, Kuno: Kiek'n hatt schräb'n ut Hagenow . . . Erinnerungen an "44 Jahre Nachkriegszeit," Hagenow, 1995.

2. BA-L, AR-1585/69, p. 21

**HOHENLYCHEN**

Hohenlychen, part of the spa town of Lychen, lies 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) to the northeast of the Ravensbrück concentration camp. During the National Socialist era, Hohenlychen was the location for a well-known clinic for sport and work injuries headed by Professor Dr. Karl Gebhardt, a specialist in reconstructive surgery and a confidant of Heinrich Himmler. From 1936 onward, Gebhardt was a member of the SS-Medical Corps and then the Waffen-SS, where, by the end of World War II, he had reached the rank of SS-Gruppenführer and Generalleutnant. Even before the war, he established a special clinic for SS members in his sanatorium. During the war, members of the Wehrmacht were treated in a separate department, and a smaller section remained available for

civilian use. From 1936, Gebhardt maintained another ward where he had a private practice. Among his patients were members of various European royal families, diplomats, politicians, sports people, industrialists from various countries, as well as high-ranking members of the National Socialist political and military leadership.

The sanatorium was officially known as the Red Cross Sanatorium Hohenlychen. Its history is closely connected with the Ravensbrück concentration camp in two ways: first, through the human medical experiments conducted in 1942 and 1943 on Polish female resistance fighters by Gebhardt and at least two of his assistants. Second, prisoners from the Sachsenhausen and Ravensbrück concentration camps were used as forced laborers in Hohenlychen. There is also a statement by a witness according to which Gebhardt conducted medical experiments at Hohenlychen in 1943 and 1944 on four male prisoners from Ravensbrück and a Jewish woman from the Uckermark youth camp. The victims were killed by means of an injection, once the experiments were complete.<sup>1</sup> As with the medical experiments, hardly any documents on the use of prisoners in the sanatorium have survived from the National Socialist era. The little information that is available on prisoners' labor is based mostly on witness statements or personal experiences of former prisoners and by a former female employee of the sanatorium. Whether the prisoners were used throughout the sanatorium or worked only in certain areas and the extent to which they were used as forced laborers remain unclear. Details about how the clinic organized the work details and the guards can only be gleaned from the prisoners' reports. It is not even possible to clarify whether Hohenlychen should be seen as a subcamp of Ravensbrück, because many work details were covered by the Ravensbrück main camp. Finally, the period during which prisoners worked at Hohenlychen is uncertain. All that can be ascertained with certainty, from statements by former prisoners and a few documents, is that the period is from 1941 to 1945.

The fragmentary clues, which point to prisoners' labor in the sanatorium, at least give an indication of the type of forced labor in Hohenlychen: there is evidence that a work detail comprising 29 prisoners from Sachsenhausen was put to work in the Hohenlychen Sanatorium on August 1, 1941.<sup>2</sup> Neither the type of work nor the prisoners' nationalities or group to which they belonged is known. All the remaining information relates to prisoners from the Ravensbrück camp. According to a statement by former prisoner Alois Moser, the sanatorium employed, from time to time, 30 to 50 Jehovah's Witnesses, that is, "serious Bible researchers."<sup>3</sup> Moser, as a Jehovah's Witness, himself imprisoned in Ravensbrück, stated that between December 1944 and April 1945 he worked in the canteen and the SS clothing store. He described Hohenlychen as a subcamp of the Ravensbrück camp.<sup>4</sup> A former sanatorium employee tells of a Jehovah's Witnesses' work detail that was put to work cleaning the streets in Hohenlychen.<sup>5</sup> Worthy of note is the statement by Moser that the Jehovah's Witnesses working in Hohenlychen were treated in an

unusual way—they were dressed in civilian clothing, and their hair was not shorn.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to this group of prisoners, mostly the names of Polish prisoners, who worked as forced laborers in Hohenlychen, have been verified. Zofia Rys, a Polish woman, stated in an interview that she worked in the sanatorium's garden.<sup>7</sup> She was held in Ravensbrück from September 1941. She does not state in her interview when she became a member of the Hohenlychen work detail. In the summer, the garden detail comprised 30 people and, in the winter, 15. The prisoners traveled each day by train from Ravensbrück to Hohenlychen. They wore prisoners' garb. According to Ryś, working in Hohenlychen was a privilege. She describes the peace in the well-cared-for sanatorium garden as a blessing, compared to the conditions in the Ravensbrück camp. The female wardens in the sanatorium were less strict and not as brutal. She and her coprisons were able to smuggle fresh fruit from there into the Ravensbrück camp. According to her report, mostly civilian sanatorium employees supervised the prisoners' work. The employees, particularly the "director" and the gardener, chose the prisoners strictly according to their job performance. Ryś, in her report, states that because of her musical abilities she had a special function within the work detail: she had to sing for the head of the Hohenlychen kitchen and for this reason was chosen in the winter for the reduced work detail.<sup>8</sup>

The woman in charge of the Ravensbrück gardening work detail in the sanatorium was probably the Pole Teresa Taczkowa. Another eyewitness account states that during the years 1943 and 1944 she was successful in making contact in Hohenlychen with French prisoners of war (POWs), who were also working there. As a result of this contact, it was possible to forward to the resistance current details of the conditions and events in Ravensbrück. Ryś states in her report that the French POWs had hidden a radio in a pigsty. By this means, information flowed back to Ravensbrück. The work detail in Hohenlychen, with the help of Polish agricultural laborers, was able, for more than a year, to send and receive letters to and from families of the prisoners in Poland. According to the eyewitness report, victims of the medical experiments were able to work, despite a ban, outside the camp in the Hohenlychen loading work detail and in the garden work detail.<sup>9</sup> As a result of these channels of information, the sanatorium played a special role also for the resistance of the "guinea pigs" in Ravensbrück.

In addition to the outside details, individual prisoners from Ravensbrück appear to have been assigned to the sanatorium for special technical work. The engineer Walter Jahn from Ravensbrück was technical supervisor of the x-ray equipment in Hohenlychen at various times between October 1941 and April 1945. He reported on the human experiments in Hohenlychen. He also claims that there was a prisoners' barracks in Hohenlychen.<sup>10</sup> His report does not indicate whether he himself lived there. According to the prisoners' card index, another prisoner, Jaroslav Chmelar, also worked in Hohenlychen from April 1941. The nature of the work he did is not known.<sup>11</sup> Another example

proves that prisoners must have lived in Hohenlychen. In connection with the medical experiments in Ravensbrück, Gebhardt obtained a Polish doctor, Halena Chelmicka, a technical assistant in Ravensbrück, to work in Hohenlychen in 1942–1943. A letter by Gebhardt reveals that she worked in the sanatorium's photographic section.<sup>12</sup> According to statements of colleagues, Chelmicka lived at Hohenlychen isolated from patients and other employees. When Gebhardt fled in April 1945 from Hohenlychen to Flensburg, he took her with him.<sup>13</sup> Her fate is unknown. The First American Military Tribunal in the "Nuremberg Doctors' Trial" in 1947 convicted Gebhardt of carrying out inhuman medical experiments. He was sentenced to death and executed a year later. The forced labor at Hohenlychen did not play any part in this and later trials.

**SOURCES** No sources or eyewitness statements that could give further information about the prisoners' work or the Hohenlychen subcamp are known, other than those referred to in the text. The names of the prisoners, death lists, and poems from the Hohenlychen external details, which were smuggled out of Ravensbrück and buried, have survived. Constanze Jaiser discusses these documents in her dissertation "Poetische Zeugnisse: Gedichte aus dem Frauen-Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück 1939–1945," in *Ergebnisse der Frauenforschung*, vol. 55, (Stuttgart: Weimar, 2000). The significance of Hohenlychen as part of the Ravensbrück resistance is referred to in several short passages in publications by former Ravensbrück prisoners: Germaine Tillon, *Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Lüneberg, 1998); Dunja Breur, *Ich lebe, weil du dich erinnerst: Frauen und Kinder in Ravensbrück* (Berlin, 1997); Wanda Symonowicz, *Über menschliches Mass: Opfer der Hölle Ravensbrück sprechen* (Warsaw, 1970).

A work on Zofia Ryś is being put together by Gabriele Knapp, *Musik und Gesänge aus Ravensbrück* (to be published). Excerpts from Alois Moser's report are to be found in publications about the Jehovah's Witnesses in the Third Reich: Detlef Garbe, *Zwischen Widerstand und Martyrium* (Munich, 1993); Alfred Ludwig Hillinger, *Kraft, die über das Normal hinausgeht: Zeugnisse unerschütterlichen Glaubens* (Oberwang, 1999). Otherwise, Hohenlychen is usually only mentioned in connection with economic matters and Karl Gebhardt's medical experiments on the women from the Ravensbrück concentration camp; *Vernichten und Heilen: Der Nürnberger Ärzteprozess und seine Folgen*, ed. Angelika Ebbinghaus and Klaus Dörner (Berlin, 2001). An essay with further information about the Hohenlychen Sanatorium during the National Socialist era is to appear shortly: "Karl Gebhardt und die Heilanstalt Hohenlychen," by Judith Hahn, in *SudA*.

Judith Hahn  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. See ZdL at BA-L, 409 AR 641/60, File 9 AR 641/60, pp. 2, 12.
2. See MGR, Häftlings-Kartei.



3. See the report by Alois Moser dated May 23, 1986. Thanks to Detlef Garbe, who provided information about Alois Moser and provided access to his report. See also Detlef Garbe, *Zwischen Widerstand und Martyrium* (Munich, 1993), pp. 424–445.

4. See excerpts from Alois Moser's report in Alfred Ludwig Hillinger, *Kraft, die über das Normal hinausgeht* (Oberwang, 1999), p. 38.

5. See MGR, Document: "Elfriede Beckmann an MGR" (February 21, 1995).

6. See Alois Moser, "Erlebnisbericht" (May 23, 1986).

7. Interview by Loretta Waltz with Zofia Ryś on September 21, 2001. From the video collection series *Widerstand leben—Frauenbiographien* (1979–).

8. Ibid.

9. See excerpts from a report by Janina Iwanska, in Germaine Tillon, *Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Lüneberg, 1998), p. 189. Iwanska was a victim of Gebhardt's medical experiments.

10. "I arrived in Ravensbrück on September 13, 1941. About four weeks later I had to service the equipment in the hospital at Hohenlychen (prisoner's barracks). The prisoners' barracks was part of the pathology department . . ." BA-L, ZdL, 409 AR 641/60, File 9 AR 641/60, p. 12.

11. See MGR, Häftlings-Kartei.

12. See Gebhardt's letter to the President of the Swedish Red Cross, Count Bernadotte (May 8, 1945), GStAPK, I. HA, Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Rep. 335 Fall 1, Nr. 365, "Verteidigungsdokumentbuch" 1, Nr. 17, p. 85. The document originates from the files of the Nuremberg Doctors' Trials of 1946–1947. The document collection is now available as *Der Nürnberger Ärzteprozess 1946/47: Wortprotokolle, Anklage und Verteidigungsmaterial, Quellen zum Umfeld*, ed. Klaus Dörner, Angelika Ebbinghaus, and Karsten Linne (Munich, 1999).

13. See Gebhardt's letter to the President of the Swedish Red Cross, Count Bernadotte (May 8, 1945), GStAPK, I. HA, Rep. 335 Fall 1, Nr. 365 "Verteidigungsdokumentbuch" Nr. 1, Nr. 17, p. 85; MGR, Doc.: "Elfriede Beckmann an MGR" (February 21, 1995).

## KALLIES

About 70 kilometers (44 miles) southwest of Gdańsk, a subcamp attached to Ravensbrück was created in Kallies (Pommern Provinz; later Kalisz Pomorski, Poland). An unknown number of male inmates were deported to Kallies, most likely from the men's camp at Ravensbrück. The Kallies subcamp was created to supply cheap labor to the Gerätewerk Pommern in mid-1944. The introduction of concentration camp inmates from Ravensbrück and other camps into the armaments manufacturing workforce stemmed from an agreement forged between the SS-Business and Administration Main Office (WVHA) and the administration of the armaments firms. Inmates were provided to the firms at a low, per-day "price" paid by the firms to the WVHA.

No further information about the subcamp at Kallies, including the number of inmates, camp guards, commandant,

living and working conditions, or postwar trials, could be found. The inmates were evacuated from Kallies to the main Ravensbrück camp in early 1945.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Kallies subcamp of Ravensbrück. For a brief outline of the camp, including opening and closing dates, kind of prisoner work, and so on, see the entry for Kallies in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen, 1979).

The ZdL (now BA-L) in Ludwigsburg contains various files related to or that make note of the Kallies camp: see IV 409 AR-Z 99/70 VI/VIII; IV 409 AR 1485/66; and IV 409 AR 1591/66. Additional materials are most likely stored at the AG-R.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## KARLSHAGEN I AND II

The concentration camp Karlshagen I, near Peenemünde on the island of Usedom on the Baltic coast, was one of the largest Ravensbrück subcamps for male prisoners. Some 1,800 prisoners passed through it during its almost two years of existence, from May 1943 to the end of April 1945.

The testing unit of the Reich Air Ministry (RLM) operated the camp (for the testing of the aerial bomb Fi 103 better known as the V-1 rocket), which fell back on earlier experience in using large numbers of different categories of forced labor, such as prisoners of war (POWs) and foreign civilian workers.

The initiative to use concentration camp prisoners stemmed from the testing unit, which had applied for these services at the end of April 1943.<sup>1</sup> Four weeks later, the first 253 prisoners were transferred from Buchenwald to the Karlshagen I subcamp. There followed transports up to January 1945, above all from Buchenwald but also from Sachsenhausen and Natzweiler, totaling 1,540 prisoners. The majority of the prisoners came from the Soviet Union. The next largest groups were from Poland and France. There were other nationalities represented, but their numbers were by no means as great.

Karlshagen I and Barth were the worst of the Ravensbrück subcamps for male prisoners. In the period from June 1943 to March 1945, 228 prisoners died in Karlshagen I.<sup>2</sup> In addition, quite a few were evacuated in the four "sick transports" that took 600 prisoners in June and September 1944 and January 1945 to Bergen-Belsen. Another "invalid transport" from Karlshagen I headed in the middle of February 1945 for the Barth subcamp.<sup>3</sup>

SS-Obersturmführer Hans Baumgart was commander of the Karlshagen I subcamp until July 1944. Later, he was replaced by a lieutenant of the Wehrmacht. The SS guards were largely replaced in the summer by members of the Luftwaffe.<sup>4</sup>



The average of approximately 1,000 prisoners were used for heavy labor such as transport, earth and grading works, as well as working for the Schlempp construction unit and the Luftwaffe. The debilitating work was often made worse by abuse and mistreatment by the guards and a few Kapos.<sup>5</sup>

Not to be forgotten is the spectacular escape of 10 Soviet prisoners under the leadership of air force officer Michail Dewjatajew from the Karlshagen I subcamp in February 1945. They stole a Heinkel (He) 111 bomber and successfully reached Soviet lines.

At the end of March 1945, about 950 prisoners were taken to Ellrich, a subcamp of the Mittelbau concentration camp. A few days later the majority of these prisoners were taken to Bergen-Belsen. At the end of April, the remaining prisoners were taken by ship to Barth, and a few days after their arrival, they were forced to march in a westerly direction. They were liberated by the Red Army a short distance from Rostock.<sup>6</sup>

The Karlshagen II subcamp near Peenemünde on the island of Usedom was attached to the serial test works of the Army's Weapons Office (Heereswaffenamt) for the development and production of the A4 (aggregat 4), or V-2 rockets. It was established in the middle of June 1943 and administered by the concentration camp at Ravensbrück. The camp was dissolved in the middle of October 1943 after the massive air attack on Peenemünde on the night of August 17–18. The total number of male prisoners held in the camp on that date was 600.

From the beginning of the war, foreign and forced laborers (POWs and foreign civilian laborers) were used in Peenemünde in large numbers. As the production of the V-2 rockets came closer to reality in 1943, the already chronic shortage of labor worsened additionally because of the efforts to maintain secrecy. After initial thoughts to replace the civilian forced laborers with concentration camp prisoners, an A4 Committee delegation inspected the Heinkel factory in Oranienburg in the middle of April 1943. Here 4,000 prisoners from the nearby Sachsenhausen concentration camp were used by Heinkel.<sup>7</sup>

Two months later, the first transport of 200 prisoners from Buchenwald arrived; a second transport with another 400 prisoners from Buchenwald followed on July 9, 1943. Two-thirds of the prisoners were from France and the Soviet Union. There were also a large number of German "protective custody" prisoners. The prisoners were housed in the cellar of the large assembly building. This "advance detachment" was engaged primarily in heavy manual labor in construction and assembly. During the four-month existence of the Karlshagen II subcamp, 15 prisoners died, excluding those who died during air raids.

SS-Untersturmführer Arnold Strippel was commander of the Karlshagen II subcamp. A large number of the guards were ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche) and elderly Wehrmacht members.<sup>8</sup>

A heavy raid by the Royal Air Force during the night of August 17–18, 1943, hit the assembly factory, killing 18 prisoners. After this air attack, all plans for the mass production

of V-2 rockets in Peenemünde were dropped. The prisoners were kept for a few weeks in Peenemünde, where they cleaned up and dismantled the facilities. In the middle of October 1943, they were taken via Buchenwald to the recently established Mittelbau subcamp. Here they were housed in underground tunnels and again put to work in debilitating construction and assembly work in setting up this new underground production facility.

**SOURCES** A comprehensive study of the Karlshagen I subcamp remains to be written. The best overview is that by Jens-Christian Wagner, "Zwangsarbeit in Peenemünde (1939–1945): Praxis und Erinnerung," *ZR-MM-V* 1, (2000): 15–21. There are many works on the V-1, although most of them mention the Karlshagen I subcamp and forced laborers either in passing or not at all. See, for example, Heinz-Dieter Hölsken, *Die V-Waffen: Entstehung—Propaganda—Kriegseinsatz* (Stuttgart, 1984); Volkhard Bode and Gerhard Kaiser, *Raketenspuren: Peenemünde 1936–2000* (Berlin, 2001). For the use of concentration camp prisoners in the production of rockets, see Florian Freund, *Arbeitslager Zement: Das Konzentrationslager Ebensee und die Raketenrüstung* (Vienna, 1989), esp. pp. 39–48.

For the escape of the Soviet POWs, see M.P. Dewjatajew, *Flucht von der Insel* (1964; Berlin/Ost, 1972). There are other unpublished survivors' reports, as well as contemporary documents scattered throughout numerous archives.

A scholarly work on the Karlshagen II subcamp remains to be written. For research literature, see Michael J. Neufeld, *Die Rakete und das Reich: Werner von Braun, Peenemünde und der Beginn des Raketenzeitalters* (Berlin, 1999); also published in English: (*The Rocket and the Reich. Peenemünde and the Coming of the Ballistic Missile Era* (New York, 1995).

The most detailed report, published shortly after the liberation, is a report by a survivor, the then-19-year-old Frenchman Michel Fliccx: *Pour délit d'espérance: Deux ans à Buchenwald, Peenemünde, Dora, Belsen* (Evreux, 1946). Other unpublished memoirs and statements by former prisoners, as well as contemporary documents, are kept in different archives, including BA-MA.

Bernhard Strebel  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Typed report on flak/GL discussion dated April 27, 1943, cited by Florian Freund, *Arbeitslager Zement: Das Konzentrationslager Ebensee und die Raketenrüstung* (Vienna, 1989), p. 45.

2. Sources: "Kalendarium der Todesfälle im Männerlager des KZ Ravensbrück," compiled by Włodzimierz Kuliński (Warsaw, 1991), supplemented by Bernhard Strebel (Hannover, 1997); Nummernbücher des Männerlagers des KZ Ravensbrück, IPN (Warsaw), KL Ravensbrück, pp. 39–42.

3. Bernhard Strebel, *Das KZ Ravensbrück: Geschichte eines Lagerkomplexes: Mit einem Geleitwort von Germaine Tillion* (Paderborn, 2003), pp. 455, 498.

4. Ibid p. 447.

5. Włodzimierz Kuliński, *Z pobytu w Peenemünde* (Warsaw, n.d.) (private collection), p. 8; Jean Fournier, *Vacances à Peenemünde* (Le Bourq, 1994) (private collection), p. 16.

6. Fournier, *Vacances à Peenemünde*, p. 20.; Kuliński, *Z pobytu w Peenemünde*, pp. 37–40.

7. Heeresanstalt Peenemünde, “Aktennotiz, betr. Besichtigung des Häftlings-Einsatzes bei den Heinkel-Werken, Oranienburg, am April 12, 1943, April 16, 1943,” BA-MA (Freiburg i. B.), RH 8/v. 1210, Bl. 105 f. 1210, p. 105.

8. History of the Creation of the Test Series Works at Peenemünde, vol. V, BA-MA, RH 8/v. 1210., p. 20; Michel Flicx, *Pour délit d'espérance. Deux ans à Buchenwald, Peenemünde, Dora, Belsen* (Evreux, 1946), p. 28.

## KLÜTZOW

The Klützw subcamp (in the present-day town of Kluczewo) Kreis Pyritz (Pyrzyce)/Regierungsbezirk Stettin (Szczecin) was probably constructed in the late summer of 1942 and used from the spring of 1943 to the beginning of 1945 as a camp for male prisoners from the camp for men in the Ravensbrück concentration camp. It was located close to the Klützw airfield about 7 kilometers (4.4 miles) to the south of Stargard. As part of the process whereby production sites of industries vital for the war effort were relocated, the production facilities of the Gerätewerk Pommern GmbH Stargard were relocated to the site. The company's principal place of business had been located in Stargard since 1943.<sup>1</sup> The company was owned by the Askania Werke AG Berlin-Friedenau. The company manufactured aircraft armaments. The camp is described differently in a number of documents and reports, example, Aussenkommando Fliegerhorst Klützw, Aussenkommando Stargard, or Gerätewerk Pommern GmbH in Stargard im Pommern.

The camp's history can be divided into two phases: construction and operation. It was probably at the end of 1942 that the first 80 to 100 prisoners, most of them from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, were deported via the Ravensbrück concentration camp to Klützw to construct the camp. Three to five barracks were separated from the Wehrmacht accommodation on the military airfield and transformed into a concentration camp.<sup>2</sup> At times the camp was shielded from the outside world with a paling fence. To maintain security within the camp, it was planned to have four guard towers. Its size was approximately 80×100 meters (262×328 feet). The camp was divided into a section for the prisoners' barracks, an infirmary, and administrative and kitchen buildings. One of the three (or four) prisoners' barracks had sanitary facilities, the so-called bathhouse (*Badehaus*). One of the rooms in the support barracks, the so-called Bunker, was part of the SS punishment system. At the entrance to the camp there was the guards' office and the roll-call leader (Rapportführer) building. The factory was about 300 meters (984 feet) from the camp and was located in the former hangars on the airfield. During the first phase, the

buildings were cleaned and facilities installed for the manufacture of aerial torpedoes. The prisoners constructed shrapnel trenches on the site.<sup>3</sup> Little is known about the prisoners' work conditions (or their treatment by company employees and SS men). The company not only produced torpedoes but probably tested them at the site.<sup>4</sup> There were labor detachments that brought the raw material from the railway station, about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) away.

The first prisoners were probably under the command of SS-Oberscharführer Ahrens. He was transferred from the Natzweiler concentration camp to supervise the construction of the Klützw camp and in mid-1943 was transferred again.<sup>5</sup> There were approximately 25 SS men as guards.<sup>6</sup> Some of the prisoners were deported from the camp under construction to other subcamps. A number of different concentration camp transfer lists (*Überstellungsliste*) document the largest deployment of prisoners from the spring of 1943. Several transports of between 50 and 100 people were deported from the Buchenwald concentration camp to the Klützw subcamp.<sup>7</sup> The majority of the prisoners originated from the Soviet Union and Poland. To improve the efficiency of the prisoners, so-called skilled prison laborers (*Häftlingsfacharbeiter*) were transferred in October 9, 1943, from the Flossenbürg concentration camp to the Arbeitslager Gerätewerk Pommern GmbH in Stargard. According to an SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Amt D letter dated September 23, 1943, seven plumbers, mechanics, and machinists were to be sent. SS-Oberscharführer Franz Pribil<sup>8</sup> was in charge of the Klützw camp<sup>9</sup> from 1943 to October–November 1944 after Ahrens was transferred back to Natzweiler.<sup>10</sup> Pribil worked for the Ravensbrück camp commander, Kögel, as his personal secretary in the command office in 1942. In February 1945, he was the last commander of the Ravensbrück subcamp at Neustadt-Glewe.

From the autumn of 1943 to the summer of 1944, SS-Rottenführer H. Wolter was the responsible labor allocation officer (Arbeitseinsatzführer) and guard duty officer. Wolter had previously been a member of the Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler, later serving in the command office of the Buchenwald concentration camp and in 1942 in the command office of the Ravensbrück concentration camp as accommodation administrator (Unterkunftsverwalter). On December 16, 1942, he married the wardress Georgine F. in Fürstenberg/Havel, who also served in the command office at Ravensbrück.<sup>11</sup>

Wolter is described as a sadist regardless of when witnesses made postwar statements and regardless of which country they were made in. His brutal behavior remains in their memories. The SS murder of prisoners and the excess of violence in the Klützw camp are constantly described by survivors.

Wolter himself came under pressure in the summer of 1944 following an escape attempt. In a letter dated July 2, 1944, from the Gendarmerie group station Dölitz, Kreis Pyritz, to Landrat in Pyritz, it was stated that on June 26, 1944, three Russian concentration camp prisoners had escaped from the Gerätewerk Pommern.<sup>12</sup> On July 2, the three escaped prisoners were found in the Sallentin Forest, 15 kilometers (9.3

miles) south of Klützow. SS-Rottenführer and head of the Guards' Company (Wachkompanie) Helmut Wolter, who took part in the search, shot at the prisoners. Two of the men were killed and the third wounded. According to the report by the Gendarmerie, the third prisoner was able to get away. The dead prisoners, Wasil Prichodjko (prisoner number 4013) and Prochor Tkalschenko (prisoner number 5821) were collected by an SS squad.

The main reason that this report was written was that when the shooting began, Ernst Pawilkowski, an assistant shepherd who was helping in the search, was shot and injured by one of the searchers and later died from his wounds. The death resulted in an investigation by the State Prosecutor. Wolter was questioned on July 4, 1944.<sup>13</sup> The question to be determined was whether the shot came from Wolter's machine gun. The results of the investigation are not known. It is also not known if and where the dead were buried.

The dissolution of the camp is described by the former commander Suhren in the Rastatt Trial.<sup>14</sup> He gave details on the number of prisoners in the camp as 600. In February 1945, on the order of SS-Obergruppenführer Heissmeyer, the subcamp was to be relocated to Ravensbrück. As no train was available, the prisoners were ordered to march by foot. The survivors were then sent on a death march from the Ravensbrück main camp.

The record from interviews largely confirms that this was the camp's dissolution date and also confirms the march to the Ravensbrück main camp.<sup>15</sup>

**SOURCES** Details on the Klützow subcamp originate from the initial research of the MGR/SBG (January 2000–January 2002; A. Meyer. Dr. E. Schwarz, S. Steppan).

There are no published sources specifically on this subcamp.

Archival records are held in the BA-L and other repositories, as indicated in the notes.

Angelika Meyer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA, R3, Nr. 2005/0216, Reichsbetriebskartei, Stand February 29, 1944.

2. BA-L, AR-Z 99/70, Bd. VII, p. 1087.

3. BA-L, AR-Z 99/70, Vernehmungsprotokoll von Willi K., Bd. II, p. 217.

4. BA-L, AR-Z 99/70, Bd. VI, p. 741.

5. Vgl. BA, BDC NS 4 Na/ p. 114.

6. BA-L, AR-Z 33/73, Bl19.

7. Sammlungen MGR, Bd. 20, Ber. 188, AG-B, 46/21, Transport Glützkow vom 18.05.1943, Schreibstube Buchenwald; see also AG-B, NARA, Rg. 242, Film 16. The village Glützkow should refer to the camp at Klützow.

8. It cannot be exactly determined from the files of ZdL, at BA-L, whether the prisoners recalled a third camp commander, Drehpfahl (phon.) Rudolph, in the period either before or after Pribil. BA-L, Bd. VII, p. 1089.

9. BA-L, Bd. VIII, p. 1144.

10. BA-L, Bd. VIII, p. 1221.

11. BA-L, Bd. VII, p. 881.

12. BA-L, Bd. VII, p. 1180. The Polish Main Commission for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes in Poland transferred copies of the original documents to the ZdL (BA-L) in July 1974.

13. BA-L, AR-Z, Bd. VIII, p. 1182. Kopie einer Vernehmungsschrift vom July 4, 1944; Waffen-SS Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück, Arbeitslager Klützow.

14. Tribunal Général de Gouvernement Militaire pour la Zone Française d'Occupation en Allemagne 1949, Rastatt. See Sammlungen MGR/SBG n.p.

15. BA-L, entnommen Britisches Militärverfahren JAG 225, pp. 216–222; siehe auch AR 1492/66, pp. 80–86.

## KÖNIGSBERG (NEUMARK)

The Königsberg (Neumark) subcamp was located on the grounds of an airport, 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) south of Königsberg (present-day Chojna, part of the Polish administrative district of Szczecin).<sup>1</sup> The town, in the northeast of the Prussian province of Brandenburg, formed a part of the Frankfurt/Oder government district and was also its administrative center. It was about 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the Ravensbrück main camp and the city of Fürstenberg/Havel in Mecklenburg. The main airport in Königsberg (Neumark) was apparently constructed in 1938–1939.<sup>2</sup> The so-called work centers at Märkisch-Friedland and Gabbert in Pomerania, 75 and 44 kilometers (47 and 27 miles) east of Stargard, as well as Mohrin, 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) south of Königsberg, were part of the airport. The airport was given the code name Fuggerhaus. The Königsberg (Neumark) airport was used to engage in hostilities from the first days of the war in action against Poland. The main airport and its work centers then served as training grounds for pilots. The developments on the Eastern Front from 1943, as well as the Allied air raids on the Reich, revealed the inferiority of the Luftwaffe and changed the nature of the air war. The airport at Königsberg (Neumark) was given new and additional tasks and functions. German fighters left Königsberg (Neumark) to attack the Anglo-American four-engine bomber units. Fighter pilots received crash training courses. Obviously, the airport conditions up to then were not equipped for the additional demands. In 1944, it was expanded, above all to extend its takeoff and landing runway. The Wehrmacht, specifically the Luftwaffe, was responsible for the construction. A number of sources state that the Organisation Todt (OT), using Italian military internees (IMIs), French prisoners of war (POWs), Polish forced laborers, and concentration camp prisoners, was also involved with the project.

The Königsberg (Neumark) subcamp was opened around October 20, 1944, with the arrival of female prisoners from the Ravensbrück concentration camp. The camp existed until its closure at the end of January 1945 and was administered by the main camp administration.<sup>3</sup> French prisoners called the



camp “Petit-Koenigsberg” so as to distinguish the town in Neumark from the city of Königsberg in East Prussia.

The exact location of the camp is unknown. The area in which the camp was thought to be is covered with grass. According to descriptions by former prisoners, a barbed-wire electric fence surrounded the camp, which consisted of a number of barracks. Within the fence were several wooden barracks, which housed the prisoners. There was a barrack outside the camp, which was a warehouse and sewing room. The SS guards and the female wardens were housed here, and a sentry box gave shelter to the sentries.

Written records do not provide any information on the exact number of women who were held in the Königsberg camp. According to statements by survivors, it is probable that there were between 800 and 900 female prisoners in the subcamp. The largest group of prisoners came from occupied Poland. The majority came from Warsaw and were captured after the uprising in 1944. They were sent by Special Transport (Sondertransport) Number 105 on October 8, 1944, first to Ravensbrück, from where they were transported to Königsberg. The French women held in Königsberg came with an earlier transport, which left France on August 15 for Ravensbrück.<sup>4</sup> At a later stage, the largest group of these prisoners were transported to Torgau in Saxony, where they were forced to work in the army's munitions factory. Refusal to work and acts of sabotage resulted in their being removed from Torgau on October 6, 1944, and 250 were sent to the airport at Königsberg. According to other sources, prisoners from the Soviet Union, Holland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia were also in Königsberg. The transport from Torgau also included three English women. They were members of the secret service “Special Operation Executive” whose members, in the struggle against fascism, were sent on special missions into different occupied countries. They were brought back to the Ravensbrück main camp in January 1945 and summarily shot.

Details of the strength of the SS-Kommando and the names of its members who guarded the camp have not survived. One can assume, however, that the members of the Luftwaffe, who were assigned to SS guard details, were responsible for security. As a result of judicial investigations and prosecutions, five female wardens are known by name.<sup>5</sup> The behavior of the head warden, Wilhelmine Pielen, was regarded by the prisoners as particularly sadistic. Her efforts to care for the sick were inadequate. Food was withdrawn at the slightest infringement. Those who attempted to escape were imprisoned in a special unheated cell. She had women stand outside her office window for days (but not nights) in strict parade formation.

All the activities of the women were designed to keep the airport at Königsberg (Neumark) operational and to ensure that planes could take off and land. The women were assigned to heavy work details, which free women would not be expected to do. The majority of the women were used to widen the takeoff and landing runways. Others worked in the forest or on excavation required for the construction of roads, hangars, barracks, or other buildings. The prisoners' watery soup was prepared in the camp and brought in wooden vats to the

work sites. The women were housed mostly in unheated barracks with several-layered wooden bunks, which were covered with paper-filled sacks. The diet, low in calories, and the heavy work in extreme weather, first in autumn and later in winter, permanently weakened the women's condition. They suffered above all from colds and flu, abscesses, stomach illnesses, general weakness, and tuberculosis.<sup>6</sup> The sick and those who could no longer work were taken to the infirmary or were put to work inside the camp. Basic care was given to the patients by a female French and Polish doctor and nurses from the Soviet Union, Poland, and France. The efforts of these doctors and nurses were highly praised by several survivors. A month after the camp was opened, a transport with 30 sick prisoners returned to the Ravensbrück main camp.

The approaching front had a direct effect on the Königsberg (Neumark) camp. The SS guards and staff of the airport fled on February 1, 1945, in front of the rapidly advancing Soviet troops. However, the prisoners' freedom lasted only for two days, as units of the Wehrmacht and the SS appeared, who again imprisoned most of the women. The fate of these women differed. A group of the women, capable of being moved, were brought back to Ravensbrück. Those weakened women who could not stand up to the exertions of the journey were shot. A group of those who reached Ravensbrück was immediately sent to other subcamps, including the Lärz airport, and the testing ground of the Luftwaffe at Rechlin in Mecklenburg. Only a few survived this torture. Those too sick to work were put in the infirmary. Not all had the luck of those who were evacuated by the International Red Cross in a transport to Sweden. Others were murdered in the gas chamber. Another group consisted of prisoners from the infirmary and those who were able to hide in the sick barracks before the transport back to Ravensbrück. They were liberated on February 5, 1945, by troops of the Soviet Army. About 10 days later, these women, numbering more than 100, were taken by truck into the hinterland. After several months of medical care in Polish hospitals, they could return to their homes and countries.

The airport was used by the Soviet military from 1945 until the beginning of the 1990s. After their withdrawal, a residential and industrial park was constructed there.

**SOURCES** Simone Steppan and Erika Schwarz were the first to provide a detailed analysis of the history of the Königsberg (Neumark) camp in the *BWF* 20 (2003): 3–43. Details about the camp can be found in the publication by Christian Bernadac, *Kommandos de femmes: III. Ravensbrück* (Editions France-Empire, 1973), pp. 177–201; as well as in newspaper articles about the living conditions in the camp, above all the conditions for the French prisoners.

The most important sources on the Königsberg (Neumark) subcamp are the preliminary investigations by the ZdL (now BA-L) into a female warden, SS men, and the camp commander of Ravensbrück. Essential are the reports of the former prisoners.

Erika Schwarz  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini



## NOTES

1. The details on Königsberg (Neumark) originate from a research project of the MGR/SBG (January 2000–January 2002, A. Meyer, E. Schwarz, S. Steppan).

2. BLHA, Rep. 3B, Reg. Frankfurt/Oder, Abt. IS, Nr. 5.

3. The first description of the Königsberg (Neumark) camp is to be found in a note by the Central Committee of the Red Cross dated January 3, 1945, in Archive of ICRC, G 44 13-19 unp.

4. Germaine Tillion, *Frauen Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Lüneberg, 1998), p. 339. Also see “Les 57 000” compiled by Germaine Tillion based in part on the oral reports of survivors.

5. BA-L, AR-Z 135/72, Preliminary investigations of the ZdL of a female guard, as well as unknown SS men and Fritz Suhren, Lagerkommandant of the Ravensbrück concentration camp. See also the Militärgericht in Rastatt, 1950 proceedings against Suhren and the Rastatt-Prozess against Oberscharführer Hans Pflaum, head of the “Arbeitseinsatzes” at the Ravensbrück concentration camp, in MGR/SBG, Collection of the Ministerium der sozialen Angelegenheiten der Volksgesundheit und der Umwelt, Brussels.

6. See Biblioteka Narodowa w Warszawie, Handschriftenabteilung, Wanda Kiedrzyńska, AG-R, akc 12013/3, infirmary and internal work lists.

## MALCHOW

In March 1942, the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) decided to employ concentration camp prisoners for work in the ammunition industry. Initially, branches of the industry were built inside the concentration camps. However, from 1943, external camps of the main concentration camps were built near existing plants. One of the external camps of the Ravensbrück women’s concentration camp was located at Malchow/Mecklenburg.

The construction of the ammunition plant Munitions- und Sprengstoffwerk Malchow had begun in 1938. The plant was part of the Dynamit Aktien Gesellschaft vormals Alfred Nobel und Co. The order to build the plant came from the supreme command of the army, while a state company, Montan Industriewerke GmbH, owned the plant and was involved in its construction. It was operated by the Gesellschaft zur Verwertung Chemischer Erzeugnisse. At that time, the approximately 5,000 residents of Malchow were experiencing serious economic difficulties. The construction of the plant, which lasted until 1943, provided them with immediate financial opportunities.

The transfer of prisoners from Ravensbrück to the camp that was erected in Malchow to provide cheap labor for the ammunition plant began in the winter of 1943–1944. During the first months, about 900 women were imprisoned in the camp. From the autumn of 1944 until May 1945, with the detention of the Hungarian Jews and the evacuation of the concentration camps in the east, about 4,000 women were brought to Malchow. The women were Polish, French, Hungarian, Czech, Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Italian, German, and Greek.<sup>1</sup>

The majority of the women who were brought to the camp at the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945 were Jewish. By the time the Jewish girls and women arrived in Malchow, they had years of persecution behind them. For many of them, Malchow was the last phase on their Holocaust route.

The camp consisted of living barracks, a wash barrack, a kitchen, and an infirmary barrack.<sup>2</sup> The prisoners were guarded by SS men in the outer circle and by female guards (Aufseherinnen) in the inner circle. Wehrmacht soldiers who had been disqualified for the front guarded the women prisoners on their way to and from work.

Several of the female guards had come from Ravensbrück; some had been recruited from the ammunition industry according to the requirement of the SS to supply workers as guards for the hired-out prisoners. Another group of the SS staff had been transferred from the evacuated eastern camps. Among these was Luise Danz, head of the female guards (Oberaufseherin) of Malchow during the last months of the war. The male camp leader of Malchow was SS-Oberscharführer Lothar Kleinschmidt.<sup>3</sup>

The directors of the plant were Dr. Reuter and Dr. Verwoorst. Special guard units of the plant, headed by Herr Minderop, guarded its inner areas. Another unit guarded the plant from the outside, under the command of Freiherr von Hausen. The ammunition plant was divided into four separate areas. The different departments of the plant were scattered in separate bunkers to avoid having to shut down the entire plant in case of an explosion.

The plant’s workers consisted of German workers, foreign laborers, prisoners of war (POWs), and women prisoners from the concentration camp. The testimonies of the Jewish survivors refer to eight months between October 1944 and May 1945. That period can be divided into two according to the conditions in the camp and the change in its purpose: from October 1944 to the beginning of February 1945, and from February to May 1945.

The women who reached Malchow during the first period were surprised to find bearable living conditions.<sup>4</sup> They worked in the plant in 12-hour shifts, day and night. The work included weighing the explosive material, filling different molds with it, then compressing it, and packing the final product.<sup>5</sup> At noon the women had a lunch break.<sup>6</sup> The prisoners considered the plant a good working place, as it was indoors, in a warm, clean area. Life in Malchow from October 1944 to February 1945 was an improvement compared with the prisoners’ experience in other camps.

Conditions in the camp deteriorated radically during the second period. The women who reached Malchow in February 1945 had arrived in Ravensbrück from Auschwitz. Within two days, 3,000 women arrived in Malchow. The shortage in raw materials had reduced production in the plant so that most of the new prisoners were not assigned to work there. About 1,000 women were put in what some of them refer to as the “stable,” where they lay on straw on the floor.<sup>7</sup> The rest were squeezed into the blocks of the veteran prisoners, bringing filth and disease with them; boils and typhus spread rapidly.

If they were lucky, the late arrivals were able to get work in the forest or inside the camp. The policy during this second period was to keep the working women alive and to starve the rest to death. Danz boasted that she could kill an unlimited number of Jewish women.<sup>8</sup> The women realized that they were about to be starved to death.<sup>9</sup> They testified that the agony of starvation made Malchow the most atrocious camp they had been in. During the roll calls, Danz would pick out women, sometimes beating them to death. The camp leader would arrive on horseback at the end of the roll call and hit women with his whip.<sup>10</sup>

By the end of March 1945, the concentration camp was on the verge of collapse. On April 2, about 2,000 women were put on a transport to Leipzig. Women testified that the train, which traveled along a heavily bombarded route, was expected to be bombed. They overheard Danz saying: "We have to send a death transport on its way."<sup>11</sup> Contrary to Danz's expectations, the train arrived in Leipzig, where the prisoners were divided into two groups, one being sent to Taucha, the other to Hugo-Schneider AG (HASAG) Leipzig-Schönefeld.

During the last days of April, Red Cross packages were brought into the camp of Malchow, but most of them were stolen by the SS.<sup>12</sup> As part of the agreement among Folke Bernadotte, the representative of the Swedish Red Cross, Norbert Masur, representative of the World Jewish Congress in Sweden, and Heinrich Himmler, Red Cross trucks set out for Sweden on April 26, with 300 to 500 prisoners from Malchow.<sup>13</sup> At that stage, the remaining prisoners in the camp were given food only every 36 hours.<sup>14</sup>

On May 1, the remaining women who were still strong enough to walk were led out of the camp; they marched for about four days, during which several of them who were too weak to continue were shot.<sup>15</sup> The sick and wounded remained in the camp's infirmary. On May 2, Soviet soldiers entered the camp.

The Polish court in Kraków sentenced Oberaufseherin Luise Danz to life imprisonment in 1947, but she was released in 1957 and returned to her hometown in Germany. In 1996, the prosecutor of Meiningen decided, after years of investigations, to press charges against Danz for the murder of a young Jewish girl in Malchow;<sup>16</sup> nonetheless, her case was closed in 1997.<sup>17</sup> The juridical inquiry of 1990 against camp leader Lothar Kleinschmidt was discontinued since he had died in 1988.<sup>18</sup>

It is not known how many prisoners died in Malchow. However, it is clear that the role of the camp, which was originally erected as a "labor camp," changed with the evacuation of the eastern concentration camps and the decline in industrial production. From February 1945, the main purpose of the overcrowded Malchow camp was to get rid of as many prisoners as possible. Under the circumstances, and given the location of the camp in the midst of German civilians, starvation seemed to be the most "appropriate" extermination method.

**SOURCES** The main secondary source on the ammunition plant of Malchow is the booklet *Stadt Malchow* (Meckl.), ed., *Das Munitions- und Sprengstoffwerk in Malchow* (Meckl.),

1938–1945: *Heft 2 zur Geschichte der Stadt Malchow* (Meckl.) (Malchow, 1995), which contains information on the construction of the plant, the state and private or semiprivate enterprises involved, the ammunition it produced, and the manufacturing process. It also mentions the workers of the plant.

Primary source material can be found in the ASt-MCW, in particular, background documents pertaining to the financial arrangements between the town and the companies that built the plant. The AG-R contains various testimonies and documents. The BA-L and YVA contain the results of the legal investigations into the crimes perpetrated in the camp. The collection of testimonies at YVA also contains testimonies of women who were imprisoned in Malchow. Valuable interviews with survivors are located in the LUS (Lakocinski, Zygmunt, Deposition 1974, PIZ); HAFHDCB; and WL. Information on some of the camp perpetrators is located in the TStA-M (Bestand Suhl). Several memoirs published by survivors who were imprisoned in the Malchow subcamp provide valuable information and insight into the experience of the prisoners. For example: Inka Wajsbort, *Im Angesicht des Todes* (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 2000); Miriam Biderman, *Ne'urim betzel hamavet* (Tel Aviv: Davar Press, 1960); Raya Kagan, *Nashim belishkat hagebenom* (Merhavia, Israel: Sifriat Hapoalim, 1947); and Halina Nelken, *Freiheit will ich noch erleben* (Gerlingen: Bleicher Verlag, 1996).

Irith Dublon-Knebel

## NOTES

1. BA-L, AR-Z 55/71.
2. The number of barracks varies in the testimonies between 10 and 20; LUS, Zygmunt Lakocinski, Deposition 1974, PIZ, no. 240; BA-L, AR-Z-55/71(NY RH SE 50627/18/70); YVA, 033/3388.
3. TStA-M, Bestand Suhl 1112.
4. PIZ, nos. 102, 240, 174, 277.
5. PIZ, nos. 102, 240, 174; YVA, 03/5802
6. PIZ, no. 174.
7. YV, 03/9416.
8. Ibid.
9. PIZ, no. 487.
10. YVA, TR11/462; and BA-L, AR-Z-55/71 (379).
11. HAFHDCB, A-81019; BA-L, AR-Z-55/71 (Stadtgericht Bratislava SP 1893/70); WL, PIII h 441; YVA, 03-9416.
12. ASt-MCW, Archiv Gedenkstätte Report of R.F. Schwerin, March 25, 1946, Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus, Berlin.
13. PIZ, no. 102.
14. HAFHDCB, A-5700.
15. BA-L, IV 409 AR 1483/66.
16. TStA-M, Bestand Suhl 1121.
17. Ibid., 1113.
18. BA-L, AR-Z 55/71.

## MILDENBERG

The Mildenberg subcamp was located on the grounds of a brickyard in the Mildenberg district, Templin region, in the

former Prussian province of Brandenburg. It was about 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) to the southeast of the city of Fürstenberg/Havel, Mecklenburg, and the Ravensbrück concentration camp. H.C. Kröger & Co. bought the brickworks, situated in north Mildenberg, from the beneficiaries of Julian Prerauer, the Jewish owner, after his death in 1939. The facilities were buildings typical for a brickworks including, among others, two furnaces, a circular kiln, and numerous drying sheds. According to witness statements, production ceased in 1943. In the dormant brickworks, an overflow facility was located for the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) Amt II C 3, which comprised a unit of 32 men, responsible for a vehicle supply unit. The facility was given the code name "Werkstoff." Due to the bombing on the German capital city, hundreds of vehicles were to be relocated in the course of 1943 from Berlin to the brickworks, which was about 72 kilometers (45 miles) from Berlin. The 100-meter-long (328-foot-long) drying sheds and the ring kilns were particularly suited for garaging the vehicles.

Male prisoners from Ravensbrück were engaged to construct additional buildings, such as housing barracks and buildings for the maintenance of the vehicles and for storage of building materials. Initially, these men were transported early each day to work at Mildenberg and in the evening returned to the main camp. Only after the prisoners had built quarters for themselves could they remain on the grounds of the brickworks. The prisoners' barracks, according to one prisoner, were located close to a small river, the Welsengraben. A 1945 aerial photo shows other barracks in the immediate vicinity of the prisoners' quarters, which apparently were used by the vehicle supply unit personnel and the security guards.

It is believed that in Mildenberg there were at first about 30 and later about 80 prisoners from Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, and Germany. Among the prisoners were Kapos, as well as a cook who also prepared meals for the SS. The prisoners were guarded by SS guards, including the commander of a dog squad, who had been ordered away from Ravensbrück. The prisoners, once they had completed their work in the autumn of 1944, were sent back to Ravensbrück. During this period, the Mildenberg subcamp was administered by the main camp.

**SOURCES** Simone Stepan and Erika Schwarz were the first to describe the history of the Mildenberg camp in *BWF* 20 (2003): 44–52.

A former Czech prisoner of the Mildenberg subcamp only alludes to the existence of the camp in the AG-R. An entry in the BA collection on the RSHA also refers to the existence of the additional facility.

Erika Schwarz  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NEUBRANDENBURG

The Neubrandenburg subcamp was one of the first of the Ravensbrück subcamps for female prisoners. It was also the

largest. In the course of its two-year existence from March 1943 to the end of April 1945, at least 7,000 female prisoners passed through its gates. At the end of 1944 a camp for about 500 male prisoners was added there.

The Mechanischen Werkstätten Neubrandenburg (MWN) appears as the motivating force behind the establishment of the subcamp. This company was established in 1934 by the Reich Air Ministry (RLM). The know-how was supplied by the Carl Heber Mechanische Werkstätten from Berlin-Britz, a company that specialized in the construction and development of bomb-launching devices. The RLM provided the financing. The MWN had already used other types of forced laborers (foreign civilian laborers), which made up approximately 44 percent of the workforce by the end of 1943.<sup>1</sup>

A camp leader and a few SS men were responsible for the camp, as well as SS female guards trained in Ravensbrück, who were responsible for internal security, one for every 100 prisoners. Survivors have described the behavior of the female guards as extraordinarily brutal. External security was provided by elderly men from the MWN security guards.

The use of concentration camp prisoners was initiated by the MWN. The number of female prisoners increased continually, beginning with 200 in March 1943 to almost 2,000 at the end of February 1944. At the end of August 1944, when production had been exclusively switched over to concentration camp prisoners, there were 5,200 female prisoners in Neubrandenburg.<sup>2</sup> They were primarily female Poles, Russians (including a few prisoners of war [POWs]), Ukrainians, Yugoslavs, French, and Czechs.

The female prisoners were mostly used in the production, in particular, of bomb-dropping devices. Sometimes they had to engage in heavy manual labor, including the construction of a semisubterranean overflow camp, Waldbau, about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) away. German civilian workers were in control, and their behavior is variously described. Another form of control was the sophisticated use of informers. As a result, in May 1944 the Pole Klara Jeziorska was denounced for sabotage and executed in November 1944, following a brutal interrogation in Ravensbrück.

There was an infirmary for 150 patients, which in the last few months was completely overcrowded with 400 to 500 female prisoners. The more seriously ill and those who were no longer capable of working were returned to the main camp at Ravensbrück, where at the end of 1944–beginning of 1945 they were in danger of being selected for extermination.

The SS evacuated the camp on April 27, 1945, and drove the female prisoners on foot marches toward the northwest. Two days later, the 100 sick prisoners left behind in Neubrandenburg were liberated by Soviet troops.

An unusual form of resistance was the "Neubrandenburg Manifest," which in the spring of 1944 was put together by a group of female political prisoners of different nationalities as a form of ideal testament. A copy reached the main Ravensbrück camp.



**SOURCES** The most comprehensive overview of the Neubrandenburg subcamp is by Heinz Barche, *Mahnung und Verpflichtung: Leben, Ausbeutung und antifaschistischer Widerstandskampf weiblicher Häftlinge in den Konzentrationslagern Neubrandenburgs 1943–1945; Kommentare, Dokumente, Berichte* (Neubrandenburg, 1980). Details on the national composition of the subcamp and on the execution of Klara Jeziorska may be found in Wanda Kiedrzyńska, *Ravensbrück: Kobiety obóz koncentracyjny* (Warsaw, 1961), p. 165. On the use of informers, see Bernhard Strebel, *Das KZ Ravensbrück: Geschichte eines Lagerkomplexes*, intro. by Germaine Tillion (Paderborn, 2003), p. 454.

The most comprehensive report by survivors is by Micheline Maurel, *Kein Ort für Tränen: Bericht aus einem Frauenlager* (Hamburg, 1960); published in French as: *Un camp très ordinaire* (Paris, 1957).

Further reports, including unpublished ones by former prisoners and some fragmentary documents, are to be found in the AG-R and in BA-B.

Bernhard Strebel  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. "Bericht der Deutschen Revisions- und Treuhand AG über die MWN," Jahresabschluss 1943, BA-B, R 8135/2217.

2. Details from Statement by WVHA chief Pohl on February 21, 1944 (enclosure to a letter by Himmler to Göring, March 9, 1944), Nuremberg Doc. PS-1584; Dr. v. Lepel, "Erfahrungen mit weibliche Häftlingen bei den MWN," August 21, 1944, AG-R, 422.

## NEUSTADT-GLEWE

The Ravensbrück concentration camp subcamp in Neustadt-Glewe went into operation on September 1, 1944. It was set up as a result of negotiations between the manager in charge of the Dornier Works in Wismar, Schulte-Frohlinde, and the head of labor deployment at the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp, SS-Oberscharführer Flaum.<sup>1</sup> The Dornier Works had been evacuated in 1943 and moved to Neustadt-Glewe. The Ravensbrück women's concentration camp was to guarantee the workforce required to keep production going in the aircraft works in Neustadt-Glewe by supplying able workers.

The subcamp was established at the military airfield 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) south of Neustadt-Glewe, district of Ludwigslust (Mecklenburg).

The barracks of the ground personnel in the eastern section of the air base were evacuated, and the grounds were enclosed with electric and barbed-wire fences and equipped with watchtowers. The two barracks of the SS camp command as well as the guards' and overseers' lodgings were located outside the enclosure.

The camp is thought to have been under the command of an SS officer by the name of Heinrich Weiss until February 1945.<sup>2</sup> In handwritten documents from the Ravensbrück main

camp, the names Anna St., Helene Sch., and Ruth W. are mentioned as overseers at the Neustadt-Glewe subcamp.<sup>3</sup>

The camp was under the control of SS guard units; in the spring of 1945, these SS guards were replaced and/or supplemented to a certain extent by older Wehrmacht soldiers.

In the fall of 1944, an initial 300 women were committed to the subcamp; by the end of that year, the number had risen to approximately 900. The majority of these women, who arrived on transports from Ravensbrück, were Poles who had been arrested in connection with the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, as well as women from the countries of the Soviet Union and those of other nationalities from the German-occupied territories, including Sinti and Roma (Gypsies).

The prisoners were assigned to forced labor in the workshops of the Dornier Works as well as on the air base. The work, generally carried out in two shifts of 12 hours each, consisted primarily of the production and repair of airfoils for aircraft assembled in other factories. Moreover, the prisoners were employed in the assembly of aircraft engines and undercarriages and, on the airfield, as camouflage and roll squads responsible for rolling the aircraft out of their protective pits and onto the runway and, after landing, returning them to the pits and camouflaging them. The work was supervised by master workmen and foremen and carried out under the surveillance of the camp overseers.

A portion of the inmates were forced to carry out shaft and excavation work for the construction of air-raid shelters and trenches on the airfield and at the nearby Reich Labor Service (RAD) camp. One labor detachment was employed in the Kurz cement works in Neustadt-Glewe.

Beginning in mid-February 1945, transports of primarily Jewish women and girls from Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Romania, Holland, Germany, France, Belgium, Greece, and other countries arrived—prisoners who had survived the death march from Auschwitz. Among them were 12 women who had been victims of medical experiments at Ravensbrück and had been saved by fellow prisoners at the last minute before their intended murders by being smuggled onto the transports under false names.<sup>4</sup> Members of the Auschwitz underground resistance—Antonina Piatkowska, the doctor Slava Klein, and Vera Foltynowa—also were sent to Neustadt-Glewe.

The population of the Neustadt-Glewe subcamp, which had been set up to accommodate a maximum of 900 prisoners and was already severely overcrowded, now grew to approximately 5,000. (Due to the lack of records, the exact number cannot be reconstructed.)

The Neustadt-Glewe camp prisoners, who were already dangerously enfeebled by their previous sufferings and the death march, lived in disastrous conditions. The women were crowded into unheated storage rooms, factory halls, and barracks. There was hardly enough room to sleep, and the hygiene facilities were completely inadequate. The majority of the women suffered from undernourishment and disease. Some of the most severely ill were taken "back" to Ravensbrück on trucks.



Nearly 1,000 women and girls did not survive the inhumane conditions and died at the Neustadt-Glewe camp (88 of them in the hospital on the days following liberation).<sup>5</sup> The high death rate is to be attributed above all to the prisoners' undernourishment, which provided favorable conditions for the spread of epidemics such as typhoid, tuberculosis, and dysentery. The women who died in the camp were buried at the cemetery and in mass graves in the nearby woods by fellow prisoners who had been assigned to the so-called corpse unit. (In 1946, a mass grave with the bodies of 46 women was discovered in the forest. These bodies were moved to the cemetery.)

There is no specific information on the overall number of dead, since neither documents nor name lists pertaining to the subcamp exist. The above-named figure is derived from the reconstruction of the memories of former subcamp prisoners (eight), among them members of the corpse unit, in correspondence with other eyewitness accounts and surviving notes.

Prisoner transports continued to arrive in Neustadt-Glewe until the end of April 1945.

On the morning of May 2, 1945, the members of the guard units left the camp in plainclothes and left the inmates locked in the barracks. The women broke down the doors and window bars. On the afternoon of May 2, the Red Army occupied the airfield, the camp, and the town of Neustadt-Glewe. Some 300 severely ill women received medical care in the infirmary, which was placed under the command of the Soviets on May 4, and in the town school, which had been in use by the Wehrmacht as a field hospital. Alone or with the aid of the Red Army, a number of the women still capable of traveling left the camp immediately. Others remained to regain strength before leaving the camp and the town.

**SOURCES** Information on the Neustadt-Glewe subcamp may be found in the following sources: *Der Totenkopfgeneral* (Schwerin: Schweriner Volkszeitung, 1959); *Der antifaschistische Widerstandskampf unter Führung der KPD in Mecklenburg von 1933 bis 1945* (Rostock: Ostseedruck, 1970); and Karl Heinz Schütt, *Ein vergessenes Lager?* 4 vols. (Schkeuditz: GNN-Verlag Sachsen/Berlin, 1997–2002).

Primary sources for this subcamp are available at MPW, Signatur A-882 (Krankenbuch KZ-Revier Neustadt-Glewe). Files, testimonies, and minutes of the public attorney's investigation into the war crimes committed at the Neustadt-Glewe subcamp are archived in BA-L, AR-Z 23/70. Eyewitness reports and manuscripts are to be found in the AG-R, AM-BN-G, APMO, and ALR-LWL. Additional material is in MLHSN, Bezirksleitung der SED Schwerin, V/1/137 (n.d.). At the time of the dissolution of Ravensbrück concentration camp by the SS, the majority of documents and files were destroyed, among them all documents that could have shed light on the Neustadt-Glewe subcamp. The information now available on the Neustadt-Glewe subcamp is based primarily on firsthand reports by women who experienced the Neustadt-Glewe subcamp as prisoners (compiled by the author); research carried out by the author and reports by other

eyewitnesses are included in the two publications in *Ein vergessenes Lager?*

Karl Heinz Schütt  
trans. Judith Rosenthal

## NOTES

1. Sammlungen Ravensbrück, AG-R, Bd. 25/372 (Bericht 228-SS-Suhren).

2. According to information provided the author by Ms. Krystyna Smorzewska on April 6, 1998, and January 17, 2001, as well as by Ms. Janina Popkow on March 24, 1999.

3. AG-R, Sammlungen Ravensbrück, Bd. 2/994.

4. Anna Piatkowska, "Z Oświęcimia—na wolność," APMO, Wspomnienia, t 85 Sygn. wsp/475 Nr. Inw. 157606, 45, 54/62.

5. Krankenbuch KZ-Revier Neustadt-Glewe, MPW, Signatur A-882.

## NEUSTRELITZ-FÜRSTENSEE

About 100 kilometers (62 miles) north of Berlin, a subcamp attached to Ravensbrück was created in Neustrelitz-Fürstensee (Mecklenburg province). An unknown number of male inmates were deported to Neustrelitz-Fürstensee most likely from the men's camp at Ravensbrück sometime in 1943. During the trial of several Ravensbrück staff members in 1946, former Ravensbrück block elder (Blockältester) and witness Hermine Salvini confirmed in cross-examination that Neustrelitz was attached to Ravensbrück and tentatively totaled the number of prisoners in Neustrelitz, Konterei, and Kellehelt between 70 and 100. No further breakdown of the number of inmates in Neustrelitz is available.<sup>1</sup>

There is no further information about the subcamp in Neustrelitz, including the number of inmates, kind of prisoner work, camp guards, commandant, living and working conditions, or postwar trials. The camp was occupied on April 30, 1945, by Allied troops.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Neustrelitz-Fürstensee subcamp of Ravensbrück. For a brief outline of the camp, including the dates of occupation, and so on, see the entry for Neustrelitz in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen, 1979).

The ZdL in Ludwigsburg contains some files related to the Neustrelitz camp: see BA-L, IV 409 AR-Z 39/59 and IV 409 AR 1592/69. The camp is briefly mentioned in the postwar trial documentation of several Ravensbrück staff members, copies of which are located in USHMMA: Judge Advocate General's Office: War Crimes Case Files, Second World War, RG-59.016M, Reel 10 (originals stored in the PRO, London, WO 235/305). Additional materials are most likely found at the AG-R.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTE

1. Trial of members of Ravensbrück staff, Judge Advocate General's Office: War Crimes Case Files, Second World War [1945–1953], PRO (London), WO 235/305 (as copied in USHMM, RG-59.016M, Reel 10).

## PRENZLAU-KLEINE HEIDE

### [ALSO HINDENBURG, BIRKENHAIN]

A specific date for the establishment of the Prenzlau-Kleine Heide subcamp of the Ravensbrück concentration camp is unknown. The existing statements by former prisoners are very contradictory and range from May 1943 to the autumn of 1943.

In all likelihood, a labor detachment of about 30 prisoners was brought to the vicinity of Prenzlau to construct the camp in the late summer of 1943. The camp itself changed locations from Prenzlau-Kleine Heide to Hindenburg (present-day Lindenhagen). At the latter site, an existing windmill, circus wagons, and barracks constructed at a later date served as a camp. The transfer of the prisoners to the vicinity of the Birkenhain construction site was intended as a means of economizing on fuel. The distance to the place of work was now 2 kilometers (1.2 miles), which had to be traveled on foot. A proportion of the prisoners also had their living quarters directly in Birkenhain.

According to an official report, the camp's dissolution took place on April 27, 1945. This date is presumably incorrect, however, in view of the fact that the personal staff of Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler had already left Birkenhain—code name “Birkenwald”—at the end of March 1945, and the existing buildings were occupied by military operations of fices until the war came to an end in the Uckermark.

The prisoners were initially assigned the task of constructing alternative headquarters for the personal staff of the Reichsführer-SS. To this end, large buildings were confiscated, and a considerable number of prefabricated wooden barracks were erected. The completion of the various facilities dragged on into the spring of 1945. In isolated cases, prisoners were employed at the Birkenhain site as custodians, gardeners, and cleaning staff.

The entire facility was under the command of the personal staff of the Reichsführer-SS. The guard units assigned to oversee the prisoners at their living quarters and at work were deployed from Ravensbrück.

On the basis of eyewitness interrogations and the evaluation of the existing archives, it was possible to ascertain the following prisoner insignia: red triangles for political prisoners, purple triangles for Jehovah's Witnesses, green triangles for criminals. In a few cases, foreign (Eastern European and French) prisoners were also assigned to labor in Birkenhain.

The precise size of the workforce employed in Birkenhain at any given time cannot always be reconstructed since the SS records did not survive. On May 14, 1944, 59 prisoners were on labor duty in Birkenhain; on August 25, 1944, 172.

According to the few existing documents and eyewitness reports, the prisoners were not tortured at their place of work, and there were no murders.

Witnesses to the events stated that, at their living quarters, prisoners were beaten for the slightest violations of the camp regulations.

The identities of this subcamp's leaders are not ascertainable. The names of the guards are known. They were deployed from the guard units of the main camp. According to eyewitness interrogations, it came about on occasion that prisoners were hired out to the people of Hindenburg as skilled workers. Jobs for electricians were mentioned in this context.

For one resident of the town of Hindenburg (the owner of the windmill), the prisoners painted two oil paintings in return for his help in the form of additional food. These paintings are still in the family's possession.

At least one attempt must have been made to escape from the camp, since there is a document regulating the collaboration between the SS and the local police/gendarmerie in the event of a further escape attempt.

One witness to the events spoke of two prisoners who were allegedly caught, shot to death, and then buried in the forest; however, it has not been corroborated.

The dissolution of the camp along with its workforce presumably took place in late March 1945. Individual laborers—women and Jehovah's Witnesses who worked as cleaning personnel—are reported to have been present in the officers' lodgings until April 1945. Proceedings against individual members of the SS who belonged to the guard units from Ravensbrück were carried out in the Federal Republic of Germany between the 1940s and the 1960s.

**SOURCES** The author's research uncovered just a few key bibliographical references. These include Elisabeth Kinder, “Der Persönliche Stab Reichsführer-SS: Geschichte, Aufgaben und Überlieferung,” in *Aus der Arbeit des Bundesarchivs: Beiträge zum Archivwesen, zur Quellenkunde und Zeitgeschichte*, ed. Heinz Boberach and Hans Booms (Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt Verlag, 1977), pp. 379–397; Axel Klätte, “Von der Randow zur Ucker—Die Kampfhandlungen am 25. und 26. April 1945 im östlichen Vorfeld Prenzlau,” *MUGP* 6 (1997): 147–166; Marion and Reinhard Timm, “Aktion ‘Birkenwald,’” *HKfKrP* (1989): 87.

Numerous documents on the history of the subcamp are to be found in the BA-K, Bestandsnummer NS 19, Persönlicher Stab RFSS. File No. AR Z 94/1971, Prenzlau, in the BA-L is likewise significant. It contains statements by former prisoners on the working and living conditions in Birkenhain. In the holdings of the BA-B is a film of documents (Film No. 3612) on the Birkenhain camp containing reports on the labor deployment of the prisoners from the perspective of the SS. The author's archive contains records of numerous eyewitness interrogations.

Reinhard Timm  
trans. Judith Rosenthal

## RETZOW [AKA RECHLIN]

Retzow is a district of the town of Rechlin and is located southeast of Müritz (district of Waren, state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania).

The barracks camp in Retzow was built between 1939 and 1942. It was to provide lodgings for workers employed in the construction of the Lärz airport. The airfield was part of the Luftwaffe testing site in Rechlin. The camp was located 500 meters (1,640 feet) from the northern entrance to Lärz airfield. Until 1943, the camp provided lodging primarily for members of the Reich Labor Service (RAD) and Italian workers. In 1943, 4 of the 12 barracks in the camp as well as a large proportion of the social barrack were fenced in. On the basis of the type of enclosure that was built, it was soon clear that a special type of camp was being set up—a concentration camp. In the early summer of 1943, 1,000 to 1,200 male prisoners were committed to this camp.

It is very difficult to determine what camp the men came from. In any case, they were not from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. It is assumed with some certainty that they came from the men's camp in Ravensbrück.

For the most part, the prisoners were put to work carrying out excavations for the construction of the Lärz airfield and of a pilot's shelter. Some witnesses to the events have claimed, however, that there were specialists among the prisoners who were assigned to help with assembly tasks at the airfield or the testing site. During the performance of their labor assignments, the prisoners were subjected to rigorous treatment by the guard units. The rations were relatively satisfactory. In the early summer of 1944, a large majority of the men were transferred. To replace them, women were sent from Ravensbrück on July 9, 1944. By the late autumn of 1944, the camp population had risen to 3,000 at times. The number fluctuated strongly during this period.

Whether women or men, the prisoners were put to work primarily in the construction of the Lärz maneuvering area. As a rule, they carried out excavation work. This labor was often much too strenuous for women.

Beginning in the autumn of 1944, the majority of the women were employed building so-called camouflage pits.<sup>1</sup> These pits were depressions dug into the ground, over which—on a wooden framework—a camouflage net was spread to hide the aircraft from enemy pilots flying overhead. Here again, excavation constituted the major proportion of the work. At times, smaller groups of men were also assigned to help with the harvest. The women, for their part, were assigned to work in the halls in smaller groups. The work in the halls was considered easier. The greatest burdens placed on the women were the trench work and the clearing work following air raids. The work was organized by the management of the testing site or by the command of the air base. Among the male as well as the female prisoners, various nationalities were represented in the camp. According to the memories of former prisoners, a conspicuous number of French people were imprisoned in Retzow. From the autumn of 1944 onward, due

to lack of space in the barracks, the cinema of the social barracks was also used as living quarters. The prisoners lodged in the cinema were primarily Jewish women who had previously been imprisoned in Auschwitz. This was also the period in which the camp population rose to as many as 3,000. The death rate fluctuated sharply. Relatively few men died. Several of them were shot to death during alleged escape attempts. A great deal more of the women died. In the period from the end of 1944 to April 1945, the rations were severely reduced.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the prisoners suffered increasingly from vermin of all kinds, ranging from rats to head lice. As a result, the incidence of many kinds of disease increased to the point where they could be classified as epidemics.

The dissolution of the Eastern European extermination camps and the resulting deportations of Jewish prisoners to concentration camps in the West caused the situation in the Retzow subcamp to change. The Jewish women had separate lodgings, being literally crammed into the cinema of the social barracks.<sup>3</sup> There, selections were carried out regularly, and the selected women were taken back to the Ravensbrück main camp, presumably for extermination.<sup>4</sup> Every Friday, a transport of women classified as “unfit for life” was sent to the Ravensbrück concentration camp. In her monograph on Ravensbrück, Germaine Tillion, a prisoner in the main camp, describes a scene she witnessed on March 27, 1945. That evening, there was a transport from Rechlin on the camp street. She passed close by it on her way back from work. The women were lying in front of the washroom wing on the ground, and five or six of the women had died during this time. The others were horribly emaciated, very tan from the sun, but pale at the same time. Their gazes were full of fear and agitation.<sup>5</sup> In February 1945, even more prisoners were detained in the cinema, among them a large number of French women.<sup>6</sup> Even prisoners who had been in various concentration camps in the course of the years and were sent to the cinema barrack described the conditions there as especially atrocious. There is no evidence as to whether any of the women held in the cinema survived. Anise Postel Vinay recounts that, on April 26, 1945, women who had previously been in the Retzow subcamp were transported in trucks from the Uckermark camp to the main camp and then murdered.<sup>7</sup>

The memoirs of Tillion, Postel Vinay, and Renault indicate that, at least in certain phases, the camp was divided in its functions: Some of the prisoners were forced to perform the heaviest conceivable labor—but were out in the fresh air. Other women were doomed to vegetate in locked rooms day and night with minimal rations. Hunger, thirst, overcrowding, and disastrous hygienic conditions led to the deaths of the women.

Many of the prisoners who died in Retzow were taken to Ravensbrück for cremation.<sup>8</sup> A large number of women were killed during air raids. They were not evacuated but merely subjected to the bombing without any form of protection. Another considerable portion were killed in work-related accidents.<sup>9</sup> The extension of the runway was carried out while the planes were in operation, and the women were frequently



blown to the ground by landing aircraft with such force that they subsequently died.

Altogether 251 dead prisoners—men, women, and children—were buried at three sites in Retzow.<sup>10</sup> In 1948, 30 of the corpses were exhumed, identified as French women, and transported to France. The remaining 221 were dug up in 1950, cremated in Schwerin, and buried at a memorial in Waren (Müritz). Three other bodies were buried in a neighboring village. The overall death toll of the Retzow subcamp, however, has never been determined.

It is difficult not only to find the names of the dead today but also to describe the routes taken by the prisoner transports. It is known for certain that major relocations of prisoners took place in February 1945. At that time, the men who had remained in the camp in the summer of 1944 and many women prisoners were deported by train to the Ellrich concentration camp in the Harz (a subcamp of the Mittelbau concentration camp). These prisoners had been selected because they were still in relatively good physical condition. At Ellrich they were put to work in the construction of underground industrial facilities. In Ellrich, as well, there was little chance of survival.

No information concerning acts of resistance in Retzow has been found. In February 1944, one man succeeded in escaping from the camp. He was found by a forest worker 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the camp in a wooded area, suffering from a severe chill. He allowed himself to be taken back to the camp without resistance.<sup>11</sup>

On April 30 and May 1, 1945, the majority of the prisoners were driven on foot in the direction of Röbel-Malchow under the close surveillance of guards.<sup>12</sup> They were ultimately liberated by U.S. troops. The number of prisoners who died on the road is not known. The guards not needed for the evacuation were ordered to report to Neustadt-Glewe. Altogether, 71 women remained behind in the camp. At this point in time, 56 women were dead. The remaining prisoners were liberated by soldiers of the Red Army on the morning of May 2. At the instruction of the first in command of the Red Army in the town, Karl Wulf, a citizen of Retzow, assumed the medical care of the living prisoners and the burial of the dead. An additional 10 women died in May, the last in July. The women of the town were assigned to help Wulf. He succeeded quite well in caring for these severely enfeebled people, particularly in view of the fact that he initially had no medical personnel at his disposal.

Beginning in 1969, the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg instituted legal proceedings against alleged criminals of the Retzow subcamp. In 1974, criminal proceedings were initiated against the guard Paul P. on charges of murder. Paul P. claimed that he had been a guard at the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp, that he guarded male prisoners during the construction of stables at the Damshöhe subcamp, and that he was assigned to guard duty as a concentration camp guard at the Rechlin runway and transferred to Barth, a subcamp of Ravensbrück, in the winter of 1944.<sup>13</sup> In 1975 he was sentenced to youth custody for three years by the District Court of

Kleve. The verdict was amended by the 3rd Criminal Division of the Federal Supreme Court after the defendant lodged an appeal (on account of a procedural error). The charge was changed from consummated murder to attempted murder. The 1976 sentence was for two years and six months.<sup>14</sup>

No other trials were carried out. No original documents on the SS guard personnel have been uncovered.

**SOURCES** Material relevant to this subcamp may be found in Heinrich Baetke and Heinrich Ross, *Aus der Geschichte der Erprobungsstelle Rechlin* (Waren, 1999); Christian Bernadoc, *Les Mannequins Nus* (Paris, 1973); Heinrich Beauvais et al., *Flugerprobungsstellen bis 1945: Johannistal, Lipezk, Rechlin, Travemünde, Tarnowitz, Peenemünde West* (Bonn, 1998); Magistrat der Stadt Mörfelden-Walldorf, ed., *„Das Geheimnis der Erlösung heisst Erinnerung“: Ein Begleitheft zum Historischen Lehrpfad am ehemaligen KZ-Aussenlager Walldorf* (Mörfelden-Walldorf, 2000). Useful information may also be found in Grit Philipp, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Frauen-KZ Ravensbrück 1939–1945* (Berlin, 1999).

As is the case of many of the Ravensbrück subcamps, there are hardly any primary sources on Retzow. The only existing detailed memoirs pertaining to the history of the Rechlin-Retzow camp were provided by French women formerly imprisoned at the camp; they are available in the form of written testimonies. Various set pieces of the memories of individual inmates are in the “Erika Buchmann” file in the AG-R. In this source, however, often neither the point in time nor the specific context of the events described is known. The documents of the ZdL were transferred to the holdings of the BA-L in the year 2000. The public attorney investigations comprise records of hearings of men and women formerly imprisoned in the Retzow subcamp, carried out between 1968 and 1971. Because of the author's personal interest in the history of this subcamp, he conducted interviews with eyewitnesses for many years. Many of these people were already very old at the time of the interviews and insisted on remaining anonymous. Their memories have been incorporated into this text. Two published testimonies on this subcamp are Maisie Renault, *La grande Misère* (Vannes, 1948); and Germaine Tillion, *Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Lüneburg, 1998).

Heinrich Ross  
trans. Judith Rosenthal

## NOTES

1. Cf. Marie Moulan, “Les Colonnes,” Sammlung AG-R/SBG, RA-Nr. 32, Bericht 286. Cf. Maisie Renault, *La Grande Misère* (Vannes, 1948).

2. Interviews with witnesses to the events conducted by Heinrich Ross.

3. In 1998, an international student group developed a memorial at the authentic site. In a personal interview conducted there with Johanna Krause, who was 90 years old at the time, she stated with regard to her period of imprisonment in Retzow that having been a political and Jewish concentration camp prisoner for many years, she had become accustomed to a great deal. The accommodation in this so-called cinema was an especially devastating and unforgettable experience.



4. On the subject of transports, cf. Ilse Hunger, Briefe an die VVN Berlin, Sammlung MGR/SBG, RA-Nr. 18, Bericht 74; interviews with former residents of Retzow conducted by Heinrich Ross.

5. Germaine Tillion, *Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Lüneberg, 1998), p. 312; Katalyn Weinberger, Interview 1996, YVA.

6. In Tillion's memoirs there is an account of a transport of 2,000 French women to Rechlin on February 14, 1945. As in the Uckermark camp, the treatment of the women was aimed at their murder. Selections were carried out in March and April in this subcamp as well. The selected prisoners were picked up by trucks and probably murdered in the Ravensbrück gas chamber. See Grit Philipp, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Frauen-KZ Ravensbrück 1939–1945* (Berlin, 1999), pp. 194, 201.

7. Philipp, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Frauen-KZ Ravensbrück 1939–1945*, p. 202.

8. Sammlung AG-R/SBG, RA-Nr. 20, Bericht 188/1.

9. Heinrich Ross, interview with witnesses to the events.

10. MLHSN, SED Bezirksleitung Neubrandenburg Abt. V Bezirkskomitee Antifaschistischer Widerstandskämpfer, Nr. V/10/8, August 12, 1950.

11. Memories of a forestry worker in interview with Heinrich Ross.

12. Before the liberation of the subcamp, a so-called death march of some 3,000 women left the Ravensbrück main camp on March 22, 1945, and headed toward Rechlin by way of the town of Wesenberg. In the process of the so-called evacuation, the subcamps thus served as "catch basins" for the main camp. Philipp, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Frauen-KZ Ravensbrück 1939–1945*, p. 201.

13. BA-L, AR-Z 120/70, Bl. 554–557.

14. Ibid., pp. 708–713.

## RHEINSBERG

About 80 kilometers (50 miles) north of Berlin, a subcamp attached to Ravensbrück was created in Rheinsberg (Brandenburg province). An unknown number of male inmates were deported to Rheinsberg, most likely from the men's camp at Ravensbrück. The inmates were transferred there to perform clearing work after air raids; however, there is no specific information about the date the camp was established.

Moreover, no further information about the subcamp in Rheinsberg is available, including the number of inmates, kind of prisoner work, living and working conditions, evacuation or occupation date, or postwar trials of guards or the commandant. The fate of the Rheinsberg inmates is unknown.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Rheinsberg subcamp of Ravensbrück. For a brief outline of the camp, including the kind of work, gender of inmates, and so on, see the entry for Rheinsberg in the ITS's, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen, 1979).

Relevant materials may be found at the AG-R.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## ROSTOCK-SCHWARZENPFOST/ STEINHEIDE

In 1943, one year after the especially heavy bombardment of the Hanse city of Rostock, the idea was formulated to relocate essential armament production facilities to well-camouflaged sites. One such top-secret project lay concealed behind the code name "Robert" in the extensive forests of the Rostock Heath. Illusionary plans for constructing a large new aircraft factory were under consideration. Following the bombing of the Heinkel Works in Rostock-Marienehe, the plant had been divided into 40 small- and medium-size operations spread all over Mecklenburg, a solution that, however, did not guarantee acceptable production figures. Now a large facility was to be constructed on an area measuring 97 hectares (240 acres). The plant was built from the ground up almost exclusively by concentration camp prisoners and foreign workers. In addition, there was also a lodging camp for female prisoners in Oberhagen, a district of Rövershagen. It was enclosed by an electrically charged barbed-wire fence and kept under surveillance from three watchtowers manned by heavily armed guards belonging to the Ravensbrück unit of the SS-Totenkopfstandarte (Death's Head Regiment). In addition to an administration building, five barracks had been built to serve as lodgings for approximately 300 prisoners. Every day the emaciated inmates were driven on foot a distance of more than 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) to a forest near Schwarzenpfost to carry out 12 hours of the heaviest conceivable construction work.

A large number of eyewitness documents were discovered in the estate of Alfred Weber in the Western Pomeranian Landesarchiv in Greifswald (VLA-G). Among them is a letter written from Bulgaria by Mara Zanewa Beltschewa Göblsmann, excerpts of which are reproduced here:

One day—the picture that I still see in my mind's eye even today—two hundred women and young girls came from the Barth camp and were taken to join the other prisoners. They also had to work in the same factory [Schwarzenpfost]. They were so dirty, so infested with lice, that I could not possibly take them to the other prisoners. I left them standing in the courtyard and ran to the overseer to ask for fresh underwear and clothing for them. They hadn't changed for months and the shirts on their backs were like hard boards. The shirt . . . [?] them more than it warmed them. Their backs, their bodies were covered with sores. . . . These women were primarily journalists, doctors, teachers. They had deliberately been insulted, humiliated in this way, simply not given any change of clothing for eight months. . . . Then I took two hundred dresses and two hundred shirts for all of them.<sup>1</sup>

Magdalena Szabolcsi Imrene of Hungary recounted her memories of the Schwarzenpfost camp in 1964:

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In April 1945 we were taken to Schwarzenpfost to work in an aircraft factory, but because of our weakness, we were no longer in a position to do so. There was no kitchen whatsoever; we survived on what we found on the ground. The camp was not far from the road, and we could see that the people were fleeing from the advancing front. . . . In Schwarzenpfost camp there were approximately three hundred women. There were also men there, but they were separated from us by a wire fence; how many of them there were I do not know, because contact of any kind with them was entirely impossible. As far as the nationality of the inmates was concerned, there were Germans, Czechs, Hungarians, Yugoslavs, Dutch, and above all Russians. The overseers were SS women. Our lodgings were in Schwarzenpfost, as I remember. I can remember with absolute certainty that there were several barracks there, though I can no longer say exactly how many. During the death march which ended in Warnemünde and led from Schwarzenpfost through the forest, many women were killed. . . . On the night of April 29, 1945, the advancing front forced the SS to evacuate the camp. The prisoners—in April, male inmates had arrived from the east, some on foot, some in trucks—were driven through the forest to Hinrichshagen. From there the march went on to the Hohe Düne by way of Markgrafenheide. When the SS guard troops learned that the Red Army was already close to Warnemünde, they put on civilian clothing. One SS officer who had always treated us with such fine expressions as “scumbags,” “sows,” and “bitches” suddenly called out to us: “You’re free, ladies!” Now suddenly we were “ladies.” . . . On the way, we heard shots again and again; prisoners who were too weak to go on were “finished off,” murdered, by the SS.<sup>2</sup>

What Weber concealed and negated as he was gathering the witnesses’ reports on behalf of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) was the circumstance that among the prisoners there were hundreds of Jewish men and women of various nationalities, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), homosexuals, so-called asocials, criminals, and others. Even in the internal, unpublished documents, antifascism was equated exclusively with the concept of communism. As a consequence, many of the documentations were decried because of their obvious bias in the recounting of historical events.

References to the Schwarzenpfost/Steinheide camp are also found in the rationality of indexes and statistics, often concealed behind code names such as “Robert” and “Sturm.” The organizational plan of the Heinkel aircraft works includes a depiction of the company hierarchy showing not only the chief branches in Rostock, Oranienburg, Vienna, and Stuttgart but also a number of subsidiaries under the administration of the Rostock branch. The sites Patriotischer Weg, Werftstrasse, Bleicherstrasse, Pütnitz bei Ribnitz-Damgarten Kraków, Lübz,

Güstrow, Rövershagen, Oelsnitz, and Adorf in Voigtland as well as the underground facility Kabel und Leitungswerke AG (Cable and Conductor Works, Inc., KALAG) in Stassfurt were listed in conjunction with the Rostock main factory.

In the International Tracing Service (ITS) catalog, the following memo is found on Schwarzenpfost: “Schwarzenpfost, District of Rostock, Russian Zone, CC-Kommando of Ravensbrück (Concentration Camp Kommando) May 1944—one thousand women at Heinkel Company.”<sup>3</sup> In another list published by the ITS, the following can be read in connection with the Schwarzenpfost camp: “Opened in mid-1943 according to a statement by a chief department head of the SS-WVHA (Business Administration Main Office).”<sup>4</sup>

The Central Archive of the Federal Commissioner for the Documentation of the State Security Service (BSTU) also holds documents that shed light on the history of Schwarzenpfost camp. Particularly in the 1960s, the Ministry for State Security (Staatssicherheit, Stasi) of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) carried out a considerable number of investigation procedures on the concentration camps in Mecklenburg and Western Pomerania. In this context, it is conspicuous that quite a few persons decisively involved in the camp hierarchy carried out their offices and functions in the GDR until their deaths, although they had been proven guilty.

In April 1964, Prof. Dr. Köhler, who as head of operations in the Heinkel company was responsible for the establishment of the concentration camps in Barth and Schwarzenpfost, among others, was interrogated on this subject. In the course of the hearing, he stated the following about a conversation with higher-ranking SS men in Ravensbrück: “The only thing I remember about the negotiations was that the conditions of the already existing Oranienburg concentration camp [by this he meant the Sachsenhausen concentration camp] were included in the basis for the agreements.”

Köhler also claimed: “Shortly before the divestiture a proportion of the prisoners from Barth concentration camp were employed in the construction of a forest plant for the Heinkel company near Rövershagen. The prisoners’ wages were paid by the Heinkel company as a flat rate, two to three Reichsmark per day. The payments were settled with Office D (SS-Economic Office). This form of payment brought the Heinkel company a financial advantage which was passed on to the Ministry of Aviation only in part. Through this form of payment, the services actually performed by the prisoners were by no means compensated.”<sup>5</sup>

Finally, two drawings were found in which the camp grounds, the course of the electric fence, and, to some extent, the locations of individual buildings are depicted. These drawings are of particular value for the endeavor to carry out targeted research work on the former camp grounds themselves.

**SOURCES** There is to date no completed publication on the Schwarzenpfost/Steinheide concentration camp near Rövershagen. More specifically, a brochure was issued by Prof. Dr. Karl Bittel titled *Wir klagen an—Die Wahrheit über die faschistischen Konzentrationslager im Ostseengebiet* (Stralsund, 1966),

but its documentary value is extremely doubtful since—in keeping with the state doctrine of East Germany at that time—facts were concealed or purposely changed. This assessment also applies to the work carried out by Alfred Weber during the same period. The first objectively correct publication on this camp is in volume 5 of the *Schriften der Geschichtswerkstatt Toitenwinkel* (Rostock, 1998) in an article titled “Kriegsgefangene und Zwangsarbeiter zwischen Warnow und Barthe.” Since 2002, a research group has undertaken a thorough investigation of the camp.

As far as is known, there is little in the way of archival material on the concentration camp. In the ASt-Ros, among the forestry records, the files 1.10.537 “Mitbenutzung der Holzverladestelle u.a. Heinkel AG” and 1.10.477 “Einsetzung von Kriegsgefangenen in der Rostocker Heide” are to be found. A number of isolated documents were found in the AG-R. In BStU the following material pertaining to this concentration camp was found: “Untersuchungsvorgang Zöllner, Arnold,” the “Bildbericht zur Exumierung von zehn ermordeten KZ-Häftlingen aus zwei Gräbern in der Gemeinde Rövershagen Krs. Rostock.”

Wilfried Steinmüller  
trans. Judith Rosenthal

## NOTES

1. Excerpt from the file Rep. BI V / 5 Nr. 326, VLA-G.
2. Excerpt from the file Rep. Bi Nr. 3069, VLA-G.
3. Quoted in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 632.
4. Quoted in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1: 197.
5. Excerpt from the file HA IX/11 Archiv ZUV 4 Akte 3, BStU.

## SIEMENSLAGER RAVENSBRÜCK

The Siemens subcamp (Siemenslager) was located on a swampy rise above Lake Schwedt in the immediate vicinity of the Ravensbrück women’s concentration camp and the Ravensbrück “production center” of the Siemens concern. On December 3, 1944,<sup>1</sup> detainees of the so-called Siemens detail were transferred to the Siemens subcamp. The history of the Siemens detail is the history of the Siemens subcamp as well as the Siemens & Halske (S&H) firm’s involvement with the Ravensbrück women’s concentration camp.

At the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942, following the failure of the Blitzkrieg, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler and Generalluftzeugmeister Erhard Milch arranged for the utilization of concentration camp prisoners to produce Luftwaffe armaments.<sup>2</sup> Siemens quickly assumed a key role in the arrangement: out of the companies already using concentration camp detainees as labor at this time, Siemens had the

largest share—at that time, over 1,500 of the 6,400 female detainees at Ravensbrück. In addition, Siemens at this initial phase had the responsibility for coordinating the use of female detainees as labor at other firms. The reason for this was that Siemens had full order books, but its Berlin factories were desperately short of labor.<sup>3</sup> The Reich Air Ministry’s (RLM) interest in the expansion of production by its important supplier was such that Siemens could shift a large proportion of its investment costs to the Reich. The factory erected next door to the Ravensbrück concentration camp, built at the cost of the RLM, was ready for use. The factory buildings were then leased to Siemens, which in turn fitted out the buildings with the relevant machinery.<sup>4</sup>

The project became a reality on June 8, 1942, when male and female prisoners from Ravensbrück constructed, from precast materials, the factory buildings next to the concentration camp. Production began in the factory on August 21, 1942, in one of the first buildings constructed.<sup>5</sup> Adroit female detainees with finger dexterity and good eyesight were chosen for the production line. The women manufactured relays, microphones, toggle switches, and other electronic parts. The items were manufactured from precast parts from Berlin. All the products were destined for use by the Luftwaffe.<sup>6</sup> A total of 20 buildings were erected over a period of time. With its “own Ravensbrück operation,”<sup>7</sup> Siemens increased its production capacity of telephone terminals (WWFg), radios, building components (WWR), telegraphic equipment (WWT), and meters (WWM).<sup>8</sup>

Records of the numbers of people in the Siemens detail are fragmentary and incomplete. In January 1945, Siemens used 2,307 prisoners, the largest number. In February 1945, 2,298 female concentration camp detainees, the biggest production detail of female prisoners, were still being used for labor by the Siemens complex.<sup>9</sup>

The workplaces were fitted out with ergonomic facilities. They were adequately heated and lit because of the work required on the delicate material. Nevertheless, the work was very demanding and burdensome. The prisoners worked initially in 8-hour shifts and later in 12-hour shifts, day and night. The work required a high degree of concentration. In addition, there was the constant supervision and demands by Siemens employees and female SS guards. In cooperation with the SS, the factory management established a system, based on an assumed piecework rate of production, to measure an individual’s “learning” and production rates. For adequate or good performance, there were additional rations; for inadequate performance, as punishment, there was additional work or rations were withheld, or the detainees were subjected to a hierarchy of beatings, or they were reported to the SS. Notwithstanding the burdensome work, the prisoners feared being dismissed from the detail; it was considered a “disconnection” because those affected went back into the pool of “disposable” people who were allocated the most strenuous work, largely unprotected in the open air. By manipulating the account settlement statements, the prisoner-functionaries employed in the workshops and offices of the firm tried to support and protect their

fellow detainees. The extent and effectiveness of this sabotage, which is given a prominent account in survivors' reports, are difficult to gauge. All that is known for certain is that Siemens was so satisfied with the detainees' work that it used the Ravensbrück "production center" model, for example, at the Flossenbürg, Graslitz and Zwodau subcamps.<sup>10</sup>

The main camp, in which the Siemens detail prisoners were originally quartered, had filled beyond capacity. The cumulative catastrophic overcrowding, together with typhoid and dysentery epidemics and general camp disorganization, resulted in the creation of the Siemens subcamp in the second half of 1944. Probably the firm expected a reduction in downtime from this camp, by shortening the period in which the more than 2,000 detainees marched to and from the camp. Also hoped for was an increase in control over the food supply.

Some 13 barracks, enclosed by an electric fence, were constructed between the factory and Lake Schwedt. The barracks functioned as lodgings, kitchen, dispensary, and washing facilities. Unlike the main camp, the lodgings consisted of a single, large room. There were no toilets. The latrine consisted of simple ditches with long boards across them. The women detainees found it particularly degrading when they had to relieve themselves under the gaze of the SS guards.<sup>11</sup> The lodgings are described as unheated, overcrowded, and stifling. Until the beginning of 1945, most of the detainees had to share their bunks. Bedding on the bunks was sacks of straw. There were approximately 250 to 300 prisoners per barracks. This was a marked contrast to the overcrowded main camp where, in many barracks, between 700 and 800 detainees were crowded together.<sup>12</sup>

The Siemens camp was under the command of SS-Hauptscharführer Grabow and SS-Oberaufseherin Holthöver. The head of the Kapos of the Siemens subcamp, Anna or Anni Vavak, acted as the unofficial camp elder (*Lagerältester*).<sup>13</sup> Some prisoners claim that Grabow beat them, while others report that they were "justly treated." Many survivors hold him responsible for the fact that during their work-free periods they were required to transport peat to the camp for flowerbeds. It is said of Holthöver that she personally often beat detainees and represented the "old camp methods," that is, the common practice of humiliating and mistreating the prisoners. The behavioral patterns created in the main camp were transferred to the Siemens subcamp with the results that the block elders (*Blockältester*) also often beat the detainees, and prisoner-functionaries of the so-called prominent block enjoyed privileges such as daily showers.<sup>14</sup> The detainees successfully maintained their cultural activities (thereby asserting themselves against the SS) in the Siemens camp. Reports mention theater performances, group singing, and New Year's festivities.<sup>15</sup>

Overall, the transfer from the main camp represented only a small improvement in living conditions. The most significant was the food: less was misappropriated from the kitchen in the Siemens subcamp than in the main camp. In the infirmary with some 20 beds, presumably with double occupancy, and in the face of a shortage of medicine and bandages, the detainees' chief doctor, Dr. Court, and chief nurse, Countess

zu D., could not provide adequate care for the sick. Seriously ill detainees were transferred back to the main camp. Yvonne Useldinger strikingly described those conditions in her diary—on a visit to the dentist in the main camp, she had to step over corpses. The Siemens subcamp itself supposedly had no deaths among the prisoners.<sup>16</sup>

Production decreased in the last few months of the war because of air-raid alarms and difficulties in the supply of energy and components for production. This resulted in production decreases and reductions in the size of the Siemens detail, which were dangerous for the prisoners because selections then took place. Elderly and "less productive" women were the main targets. The firm management was directly and decisively involved in determining who would be "disconnected" and transferred either to the main camp or to the youth camp Uckermark.<sup>17</sup> An additional life-threatening danger arose in the spring of 1945 for those "unproductive" detainees when a gas chamber at Ravensbrück commenced operation.<sup>18</sup>

The Siemens subcamp was probably evacuated on April 13 and 14, 1945. With the evacuation of the subcamp, the Siemens model project, its "own Ravensbrück production center," came to an end. Male detainees of an "evacuation transport" from Mittelbau or Buchenwald then occupied the empty barracks.

Between 1946 and 1948 in Hamburg, the British occupying authorities conducted 7 "Ravensbrück Trials" against members of the SS camp and security personnel as well as against prisoner-functionaries of the women's concentration camp. Only in 2 of the trials did the accused have a connection with Siemens' use of detainees or the Siemens subcamp. In the first trial, lasting from December 5, 1946, to February 3, 1947 (Judge Advocate General [JAG] 225), Eugenia Skene, the block elder in the Siemens subcamp, was sentenced to more than 10 years' imprisonment. On the other hand, the military tribunal in the 6th trial that took place between July 2, 1948, and July 21, 1948 (JAG 334), acquitted Christine Holthöver, the senior female guard at the Siemens subcamp, because of a lack of evidence. The French occupying authorities also prosecuted Ravensbrück SS personnel and prisoner-functionaries. Between 1946 and 1950, 11 trials were conducted in Reutlingen and Rastatt. Only the proceedings against Emmy Kowa and Ruth Schumann had a connection with Siemens. Kowa, a temporary guard in the Siemens factory, was sentenced on February 20, 1948, in Rastatt to 20 years' imprisonment with hard labor. Schumann, a former Siemens employee, was acquitted on appeal. Under the Soviet Military Administration in Germany (SMAD) and in the German Democratic Republic (DDR), a number of trials against Ravensbrück SS personnel were conducted. However, the trials did not meet the requirements of the rule of law. The accused were tried before a military tribunal. Most of the accused had neither legal representation nor translators, so the accused were not in a position to defend themselves. Later trials in the DDR in the 1960s were conducted in accordance with the requirements and under the supervision of the Ministry for State Security (MfS). They were mainly characterized by political opportunism and doubtful verdicts relating



to the social behavior of the accused in the social milieu of the DDR. They should thus be seen as being politically motivated and as a means for securing power. The trials played neither a role in appraising nor explaining the National Socialist crimes committed in the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

**SOURCES** As it is difficult to provide a complete overview of the scholarly literature dealing with the Ravensbrück Siemens subcamp and the prisoners' forced labor, only a selection will be given here. Reinhard Plewe and Jan Thomas Köhler provide a history of construction of the women's concentration camp and its typology, including the Siemens subcamp, in *Baugeschichte Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück* (Berlin, 2001). A calendar of the camp history appeared in Grit Phillip, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Frauen-Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück 1939–1945* (Berlin, 1999). Carola Sachse and Tilla Siegel analyzed Siemens's strategy and practical application of detainee labor in Ravensbrück in their respective articles in *IWK* 27:1 (1991): "Zwangsarbeit jüdischer und nicht-jüdischer Frauen und Männer bei der Firma Siemens, 1940–1945," pp. 1–12; "Die doppelte Rationalisierung des 'Ausländereinsatzes' bei Siemens," pp. 12–24. This work still forms the basis for all subsequent studies. The works by Ursula Krause-Schmidt (1993), Ulrike Brandes et al. (1994), and Sigrid Jacobeit (1999) should also be mentioned in this context. Karl Heinz Roth has compared a number of cases where Siemens used forced labor in "Zwangsarbeit im Siemens-Konzern (1938–1945): Fakten—Kontroversen—Probleme," in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft, 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen, 1996), pp. 149–168. The thesis prepared by the author, "Zwangsarbeit von Konzentrationslagerhäftlingen in der letzten Phase des Zweiten Weltkrieges: Das Beispiel Siemens unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Aussenlager Siemens-Haselhorst und 'Siemenslager' Ravensbrück" (Master's thesis, Technische Universität Berlin, 1997), contains a study of the structured typology of Siemens forced labor. The monograph by the former director of the AS-M, Wilfried Feldenkirchen, was published on the 150th anniversary of Siemens AG, *Siemens 1918–1945* (Munich, 1996). Its obvious apologetics should be noted, above all the generous use of annotations from documents in the unregistered files of the Siemens temporary archive, which are inaccessible to the public.

The location of the SMAD files is unclear. They are most likely located in CAFSSRF and are probably inaccessible. The BStU holds the files of the DDR trials. Included in these files are numerous statements made by former SS female guards. These statements were made before 1950, so they are, like numerous other National Socialist documents, not codified the way such documents in later decades were. In 1959, the ZdL, now BA-L, conducted an exhaustive preliminary investigation into the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp (AR-Z 39/59), including the Siemens subcamp (AR-Z 39/59 SH). As there were no killings in the Siemens subcamp, the results of the investigations were not handed over to the state prosecutors. The holdings of the AS-M are apparently quite extensive. Regrettably, to a large extent the "unregistered files of the temporary archive" are not accessible for independent researchers. This includes the Ravensbrück production center's monthly "production

center reports," including information about the genesis of the use of detainees and cooperation between management and the SS and the Siemens subcamp. Researchers are therefore forced to rely on state archives. In addition to the already mentioned trial documents, the BA-B has micro-filmed records of the Deutsche Bank. Deutsche Bank was Siemens's banker, and representatives of the bank sat on the board of directors of S&H. The detailed information kept by the bank and now in the BA contains valuable information on the origins and development of the use of Ravensbrück detainees by Siemens. Also kept in the BA are microfilms of documents seized by the OMGUS. These documents deal with the production of armaments by Siemens. The original documents are held by NARA. Additional extensive collections dealing with armaments and economic administration are held in the BA-MA. Reports by former, mostly Communist, detainees of the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp, which are unrelated to judicial proceedings, are kept at a number of locations. The reports deal mostly with issues of solidarity and resistance. They are found at the AG-R, DÖW, as well as in the former BPASSED-B(O), which is now part of LA-B. This latter archive keeps in particular the records of Bruno Baums, a former concentration camp prisoner. The Compensation Treuhand GmbH has collected other important records. Dating from the beginning of the 1960s, the records concern compensation claims by Jewish survivors against large German companies. As a result of the claims, the German companies made available their management files. Excerpts from these files can be found in the preliminary investigations conducted by the ZdL. Probably the most valuable collection of documents is the record group M32 in YVA. However, the author was not granted access to those records on the basis that they contained personal confidential information. Other sources have been quoted in the text. In many of the publications of survivors of Ravensbrück, the Siemens subcamp plays a role as an important provider of work in the main Ravensbrück camp. A drawing of the Siemenslager by prisoner Astrid Petersen Blumensaad is reproduced in Sigrid Jacobeit, "Arbeitsalltag Ravensbrück: Aus der Lebensbeschreibung von Rita Sprengel, Häftling Nr. 12867," in *Verfolgung, Alltag, Widerstand, Brandenburg in der NS-Zeit, Studien und Dokumente*, ed. Dietrich Eichholtz (Berlin, 1993), pp. 303–321. Prisoner-functionaries have published reports about their activities with Siemens, such as Margaret Buber-Neumann, *Als Gefangene bei Stalin und Hitler: Ein Welt im Dunkel* (1958; repr., Frankfurt am Main, 1993); or Rita Sprengel, *Im Schatten der eisernen Fesse* (Berlin [East], 1949); and *Der rote Fadden: Lebenserinnerungen; Ostpreussen, Weimarer Republik, Ravensbrück, DDR, Die Wende*, ed. Sigrid Jacobeit (Berlin, 1994); as well as Maria Montuoro, "Schicht 'B,'" *DaHe* 3 (187): 221–230, a worker on the production line.

Records of the trials are kept at AG-R and PRO.

Rolf Schmolling  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

VOLUME I: PART B

## NOTES:

1. Yvonne Useldinger, "Selbstkritik an den Rand geschrieben: Aus meinem Tagebuch, geschrieben im Siemens-Lager-Ravensbrück," AG-R, 475; BA-L, ZdL, Ordner Häftlingsberichte/Vorläufige Zeittafel des FKL Ravensbrück, AG-R, 475, AG-R, 918.

2. See Peter Witte et al., eds., *Der Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1941/42* (Hamburg, 1999), p. 325; as well as "Protokolle der Amtschefbesprechungen beim Stab Generalluftzeugmeister," January 27, 1942, February 17, 1942, and March 10, 1942, BA-MA, RL3/45, pp. 449/854, 437/8134, 427/8116.

3. On the order situation, see Wilfried Feldenkirchen, *Siemens 1918–1945* (Munich, 1996), p. 257; as well as a memo by Dr. Lohse, August 15, 1940, Betr.: "Lage im Wernerwerk F," p. 74; further, BA-MA, RL3/4117, especially "Gesamt-Umsatzentwicklung LGW 1941/42" P 114; as well as "Gesamt-Bestelleingang u. Umsatz," p. 141; on the labor situation, see "Entwicklung der S&H- und SSW-Belegschaft in Berlin und ausserhalb Berlins 1929–1944," "Referat Direktor Leifer [Fabrikenoberleitung] für die Vorstandssitzung 22.4.1944," BA-MA, RL3/4497; on the labor situation esp. re: female workers, see Niederschrift über die Berichte, gegeben beim Besuch von Herrn Gauleiter Sauckel, September 25, 1942, in the Wernerwerken der S&H in Siemensstadt, AS-M, 14Lt 397.

4. See memo S&H Betr.: "Kz-Lager Ravensbrück [sic]"—Besprechung im RLM am 16.4.[1942], April 18, 1942, AS-M 10235–2.

5. On the timing of the start of construction, see Schreiben SS-OGruF Pohl and RFSS Himmler, October 20, 1942 Betr.: Herstellung von Nachrichtengerät in den KL, BA-B, NS19/968; on the construction of the factory, see Vernehmungsniederschriften Rudolf Karl August Kn., September 25–26, 1967, in Steinfurth/Oberhessen, BA-L, ZdL, 405AR1485/66 Ordner K; as well as Aussage Sara H. geb. Gr., November 30, 1970, in Naharya, Israel, ZdL, 409 AR-Z 39/59 SH5, S. 38ff; on the start of production, see ZdL, Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück: Eine Gesamtdarstellung, ZdL, AR-Z 39/59, p. 130; as well as AG-R, RA V/1, Nr. 28, RA Bd. 14, Arbeitseinteilungen FKL Ravensbrück.

6. Interview with Irma Trksak, April 2, 2001, in Vienna, in the possession of the author, as well as [Oberkapo] Anna Vavak, "Siemens & Halske A.G. im Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück" (np. [Vienna], n.d.); ZdL, 409 AR-Z 39/59 SH5, pp. 104–109; Vernehmungsniederschrift Josef J. v. December 16, 1971, in Kattowitz, ZdL, 409 AR-Z 121/64 (StA Köln) Ordner I+J.

7. Verlagerungsbefehl d. Rüstungsamtes, April 14, 1944, S&H, WWR nach "eigenes Zweigwerk Ravensbrück," Messwiderstände, Potentiometern, Heissleitern, Kleintransformatoren, Glimmer-Sikatrop- u. Styroflexkondensatoren, BA-B, R3/253, p. 24.

8. See map "Geplante Verlegungsstellen von S&H u. zugeh. Ges. (ohne TB | Stand Anfang April 44)" aus Referat Dir. Leifer, Aktenvermerk S&H AG Dr. Lohse, April 15, 1940.

9. All numbers from NARA, RG260, Box 173. For the time before, see statements of Oberkapo Anna Vavak of the Siemens commando. See Anna Vavak, "Siemens & Halske AG im Frauenkonzentrationslager Ravensbrück," ZdL; the "Monatsberichte der Fertigungsstelle Ravensbrück" in AS-M are not available for research. See Feldenkirchen, *Siemens*, p. 552.

10. On work productivity, see die Rechtfertigungsschrift "Einsatz ausländischer Zivilarbeiter, Kriegsgefangener, Juden und KZ-Häftlinge im Hause Siemens," October 31, 1945, p. 32, AG-S, XXXIX/2.

11. See Edith Klemmich, "Sein oder Nichtsein in Ravensbrück, Tatsachenbericht von Edith Klemmich," AG-R, Bericht 649, S. 10ff. On the latrine, see Interview with Irma Trksak.

12. See Astrid Petersen Blumensaad, "Siemenslager, KZ Ravensbrück," Jacobeit, "Arbeitsalltag Ravensbrück: Aus der Lebensbeschreibung von Rita Sprengel, Häftling Nr. 12867," p. 307; Yvonne Useldinger, "Unmenschliche Ausbeutung bei Siemens-Ravensbrück," AG-R, 480; Vgl. Vernehmung Eva L., June 24, 1969, in Freiburg, ZdL, 409 AR-/39/59SH5, p. 1.

13. On Grabow und Holthöver see ZdL, Gesamtdarstellung FKL Ravensbrück, p. 133.

14. Bericht Hilde St.-S., December 1957, ZdL, 409 AR-Z39/59SH5, pp. 13–14.

15. See Boza Velikonja-Legisa, "Wir feierten Neujahr im KZ"; Cirila Kozjak Curk and Marta Urbancic, "Kulturpolitisches Leben," AG-R, 895.

16. See Yvonne Useldinger, "Selbstkritik an den Rand geschrieben: Aus meinem Tagebuch, geschrieben im Siemens-Lager-Ravensbrück," AG-R, 475, entry of February 19, 1945.

17. See Yvonne Useldinger, "Unmenschliche Ausbeutung," AG-R, 480.

18. See Grit Phillip, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Frauen-Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück 1939–1945* (Berlin, 1999), p. 187.

## STARGARD IN POMMERN

About 40 kilometers (25 miles) southeast of Stettin (Szczecin), a subcamp attached to Ravensbrück was created in Stargard in Pommern (later Stargard Szczecinski, Poland). Created in mid-1943, a contingent of both male and female inmates was deported to the Stargard camp from both the Flossenbürg and Ravensbrück main camps.<sup>1</sup> The Stargard subcamp was created to supply cheap labor to the Gerätewerk Pommern GmbH in Stargard. The introduction of concentration camp inmates from Ravensbrück and other camps into the armaments manufacturing workforce stemmed from an agreement forged between the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) and the administration of the armaments firms. Inmates were provided to the firms at a low, per-day "price" paid by the firms to the WVHA.

No further information about the subcamp at Stargard, including the number of inmates, camp guards, commandant, living and working conditions, or postwar trials, is available. The inmates were evacuated from Stargard to the main Ravensbrück camp in early 1945. The further fate of the Stargard inmates is unknown.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Stargard in Pommern subcamp of Ravensbrück. For a brief outline of the camp, including opening and closing dates, kind of

prisoner work, and so on, see the entry for Stargard in the ITS's *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen, 1979).

The ZdL (now BA-L) contains various files that may provide additional information on the Stargard camp: see files IV 409 AR 1475/66; VI 302 AR-Z 47/65; IV 409 AR-Z 39/59; IV 410 (F) AR 2629–67; IV 409 AR-Z 99/70; and IV 409 AR 1479/66. Additional materials are most likely stored at the AG-R.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTE

1. See BA-L, ZdL, files IV 410 (F) AR 2629/7 and IV 409 AR-Z 99/70.

## STEINHÖRING

The village of Steinhöring is situated east of Munich. In the summer of 1944, it became a headquarters of the SS organization Lebensborn e.V., which was established by Heinrich Himmler on December 12, 1935. “Lebensborn” was part of National Socialist ideology: The SS authorities supported German women to deliver babies. They established so-called Lebensborn homes (*Lebensbornheime*) where—in most cases, unmarried—women and girls could deliver their babies. The first Lebensborn home was “Haus Hochland” in Steinhöring, which was built in September 1936. About two-thirds of the approximately 1,400 children at Steinhöring had mothers who were unmarried.

The first Lebensborn headquarters was located in Berlin, but it was transferred to Munich in 1938. On July 11, July 12, and July 13, 1944, Allied air strikes destroyed the buildings of the Lebensborn in Munich. The SS started the evacuation to Steinhöring in July 1944 and completed the evacuation on September 20, 1944.

Steinhöring was a subcamp in the broadest sense, because the SS authorities allowed the female prisoners to walk around. In addition, the prisoners wore civilian clothes. There was a maximum of 24 female prisoners from the Ravensbrück concentration camp and about 27 male prisoners from the Dachau concentration camp. SS authorities counted 27 male prisoners in Steinhöring on April 3, 1945, and 24 female prisoners were counted by Allied authorities after the liberation on May 3, 1945. Most of the female prisoners were Jehovah's Witnesses and worked between 1943 and 1945 at the Lebensborn e.V. The female inmates had a German background. However, 3 prisoners came from Austria, 2 others came from the Netherlands, and 1 woman was a prisoner from Poland. The work they were forced to do was housework at the Hochland maternity clinic or at the local Lebensborn administration department. At first they lived in a hut outside the maternity clinic, but later authorities gave them some beds inside the Hochland house. Only in the case of serious diseases were female prisoners deported back to the Ravensbrück main camp.

The male prisoners arrived from the concentration camp of Dachau: They were forced to work in the establishment of

huts outside the maternity clinic—there were six huts, each 42.5 meters (139.4 feet) long and 12.5 meters (41 feet) wide. The huts were used as living space, stores for textiles and equipment, and offices. Moreover, some prisoners built the house of SS member Max Sollmann in Steinhöring. The first male prisoners were a bricklayer, a tailor, and an electrician. In October and November 1944, a shoemaker, a cook, and two tailors from Poland as well as a cook, a baker, and a welder from France arrived as prisoners in Steinhöring.

A small SS unit controlled the whole area, while Dr. Gregor Ebner led the maternity clinic, together with one hospital matron and five or six nurses. The SS deported the male prisoners from Steinhöring to Dachau on April 28, 1945, and left Steinhöring one day later. In contrast, the female prisoners were asked by the hospital matron to stay and help with the babies even after the liberation; as a result, most of the female prisoners left Steinhöring two months after the end of the war.

**SOURCES** Secondary sources on Steinhöring include Johannes Wrobel, “Steinhöring (männliche KZ-Häftlinge),” in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, vol. 2, *Frühe Lager, Dachau, Emslandlager* (Munich, 2005), pp. 500–502. Steinhöring is listed as a Ravensbrück subcamp in Gudrun Schwarz, *Die Nationalsozialistischen Lager* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), p. 220. On the “Lebensborn” program, the standard work is Georg Lilienthal, *Der “Lebensborn e.V.”: Ein Instrument nationalsozialistischer Rassenpolitik* (1985; repr., Stuttgart: Gustav Fischer Verlag, 2003).

Primary sources for the Steinhöring subcamp of Ravensbrück may be found at AG-R.

Alexander Jossifidis

## ZICHOW

The Zichow subcamp was established 75 kilometers (46.6 miles) from the city of Fürstenberg-Havel in Mecklenburg and from the Ravensbrück concentration camp that was within Fürstenberg's municipal area.<sup>1</sup> The subcamp was located near Gramzow on the manor of the same name. The farm, in Uckermark in the northeast part of the Prussian province of Brandenburg, was owned by Adolf Julius Albrecht Bernd Count von Arnim,<sup>2</sup> member of an extended aristocratic family that owned a large number of manors.

Von Arnim owned the Kleinow and Netzwow manors, 15 and 60 kilometers (9.3 and 37.3 miles), respectively, from Zichow. Servants and day laborers worked on his manor, and then beginning in 1940, first Polish, later French, and from 1942 on, Russian prisoners of war (POWs) also worked on the farm.<sup>3</sup> As the labor force in the German Reich was getting scarcer in the armaments industry, due to the war, the number of POWs on the manor went from 60 to 13 in 1944.<sup>4</sup> These people and the German and foreign agricultural workers were insufficient labor for harvesting the 608 hectares (1,502 acres) that were under cultivation—220.75 hectares (545.5 acres) of grain, 315.25 hectares (779 acres) of root crops,



43 hectares (106.3 acres) of oil and fiber plants capable of being woven, and 29 hectares (71.7 acres) of forage crops. Von Armin must have had good connections directly to the SS or via the offices and people of the Wehrmacht. This is the only way that he could have ensured that detainees from the Zichow subcamp could be made available for work at his manors in a time of severe labor shortage where the priority lists for the use of detainees, POWs, and forced laborers rapidly changed.

The exact date when the Ravensbrück concentration camp prisoners arrived at Zichow cannot be determined. All that is certain is that at the beginning of 1944, at the commencement of the harvest, 70 female prisoners were assigned to von Armin's manor. They were housed in a brick building with iron bars over the windows, a former storehouse, not far from the manor house. Inside, there was a lounge and bedroom, both 147 square meters (176 square yards). Both rooms were drafty and unheated. The detainees' kitchen is said to have been located in the cellar of the farm building opposite the storehouse. The Zichow subcamp closed, and the detainees were transported back to Ravensbrück on February 3, 1945.<sup>5</sup>

The population of the detachment fluctuated during the seven months of its existence, as the prisoners were rotated several times. This was necessary because not all of the women were able to do the heavy farmwork, especially since they had been weakened by a long period of detention. Those who could not meet the demands were promptly returned to the main camp. On December 16, 1944, for reasons that are not fully clear but possibly because there was less work, a transport of 28 women left the subcamp in the direction of Ravensbrück. It is possible to identify approximately 100 prisoners who for either a shorter or longer period were brought to Zichow as forced laborers. The Ravensbrück concentration camp administered Zichow from the moment it opened to its closure.

All the women came from Germany, except for one Polish woman. The youngest was 18 and the oldest 43; 35 of the women were between the ages of 22 and 24. They all wore a red triangle, so Gestapo officials had classified them as political detainees. The reasons for their arrest have not been clearly determined, but it is certain that some had been sent to the concentration camp for "adulterous relations" with foreign forced laborers.

The leader of an SS detachment was in control of the Zichow subcamp. He maintained a line of communication to the main camp and organized matters relating to the detainees, including exchanging detainees, basic medical care, clothes, mail, and recommendations for awards. SS men guarded the camp. At least three female guards, sent from Ravensbrück, were present and ensured that the detachment's work was done without any trouble.

The women primarily worked in the field from Monday to Saturday, regardless of the weather. By November they had harvested hay, grain, rapeseed, flax, root crops, as well as

vegetables. After that they loaded sugar beets, cabbage, straw, and potatoes.<sup>6</sup> Sick detainees and those incapable of doing this work worked inside, mostly in the kitchen. Two prisoners had special functions, one in the kitchen and the other doing things outside the camp. The detainees were encouraged to exceed work norms by means of an award system. The detainees were given award cards valued at either 1 or 2 Reichsmark (RM), which, among other things, they could exchange for stamps. Conversely, the prisoners were punished if, in the opinion of a supervisor, they had not worked hard enough or had not carried out an instruction. In September 1944, two women were not given lunch for four days.

The heavy work in the heavy clay Uckermark soil, for which the detainees had inadequate clothing and footwear, produced many colds and flu, rheumatic pains, stomach and intestinal problems, boils and abscesses, and abdominal complaints. The Zichow subcamp did not have an infirmary. A dentist in Gramzow, 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) away, dealt with minor dental problems—but only after the detachment leader had spoken with the head of the dental unit in the Ravensbrück main camp and after a transfer pass was presented. The detainees' mail was sent by the detachment leader to be checked in Ravensbrück, from where the mail was sent out.

On October 7, 1944, three women attempted to escape after they had succeeded in taking a key from one of the female guards. Their absence was discovered the following day during morning roll call. They were discovered that morning hiding in an adjacent barn where Russian POWs were held. The following day the three women were returned to Ravensbrück. On October 21, 1944, the manor received replacement laborers.

**SOURCES** The history and purpose of the Zichow subcamp were first mentioned by Simone Steppan and Erika Schwarz in *BWF* 20 (2003): 30–42. A research project of the MGR/SBG, from January 2000 to January 2001, by A. Meyer, E. Schwarz, and S. Steppan, began to collect further information about the Zichow subcamp.

The most important source on the Zichow subcamp is a file on the camp's internal organization, which is located in the collection of AG-R. The BLHA holds other documents on the manor.

Erika Schwarz  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Details about the internal operations of the subcamp are found in surviving documents in the Sammlungen AG-R/SBG, Bd. 45, Bericht 1030.

2. Further information, in particular about the manor, can be found in BLHA, Rept. 37, Zichow.

3. See BLHA, Ber. 37 (Rept. 37), Zichow, Nr. 69, n.p.

4. See BLHA, Rept. 37, Zichow, Nr. 30, n.p.

5. See Sammlungen AG-R/SBG, vol. 45, Bericht 1030/1.

6. See BLHA, Bericht 37, Zichow, Nr. 378, pp. 72–95.



## RIGA-KAISERWALD



Post-liberation photograph of an execution site in the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp.  
USHMM WS #96909, COURTESY OF STA. LG HAMBURG

## RIGA-KAISERWALD MAIN CAMP [AKA MEŽAPARKS]

On March 15, 1943, the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) established the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp, with SS-Sturmbannführer Albert Sauer as commandant.<sup>1</sup> Situated at the Mežaparks Forest resort near Riga, Latvia, the camp was divided into male and female sections separated by barbed-wire fencing. Some 47 German and Polish criminal, political, and “asocial” inmates from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp set up the “prisoner self-administration.” This contingent grew to 500 prisoners, but most were returned to the Reich by December 1943. A Ravensbrück detachment, including “asocials,” opened the women’s section. Under the supervision of the Wolf & Döring construction firm, Jews from the Riga ghetto built the camp, which had three accommodation barracks per section and an infirmary.<sup>2</sup> Located in the camp’s rear was the Anode Kommando, a battery recycling detachment, which was accessed by a narrow path between the men’s and women’s sections. Holding approximately 2,000 to 3,000 prisoners at a time, Kaiserwald was a clearinghouse for an estimated 15,000 Jewish prisoners deployed in 12 to 14 subcamps, called quartering sites (*Kasernierungen*).<sup>3</sup> Although Kaiserwald registered the prisoners, some were moved from one site to another without entering the main camp. Kaiserwald’s prisoner statistics are scant, because shortly after the camp opened, SS-Brigadeführer Richard Glücks, the head of IKL, exempted the newly established camps in the East from reporting admissions and deaths to IKL and because most of its records were destroyed prior to evacuation.<sup>4</sup> An incomplete mortality list, from December 15, 1943, to August 8, 1944, recorded 484 deaths.<sup>5</sup> To these must be added the numerous prisoners killed in shooting opera-

tions (*Aktionen*), the synonym for “selections” that carried over from the ghetto. The victims were placed on trucks and dispatched to the forests for shooting. Prisoners and staff referred to the killing sites by the euphemism, “base command” (*Stützpunktkommando*).

Although ostensibly a concentration camp, Kaiserwald differed from other IKL camps in three salient respects. First, family life and friendships formed in the Riga, Vilna, and Libau ghettos carried over into the camp. Husbands and wives and, in some cases, their children communicated across the fences dividing the men’s and women’s sections. Friendships from the ghetto fostered a reliable rumor mill between Kaiserwald and its subcamps. The placement of friends and relatives at other sites and regular transfers between the sites made this source of unofficial news possible.<sup>6</sup> Second, except for the Sachsenhausen and Ravensbrück inmates, the Kaiserwald prisoners did not normally wear prisoner uniforms with color-coded triangles. Most were ordered to paint or sew yellow stars and prisoner numbers on their civilian clothes; in some cases, they had to paint white stripes on the sleeves and trouser legs as well. Many did not get “zebra” uniforms, as the prisoners called them, until just prior to the evacuation in the summer of 1944, at which time they also got prisoner haircuts, with a stripe shaved down the middle of the scalp for males and shaved heads for females.<sup>7</sup> Finally, as discussed below, the establishment of *Kasernierungen* rather than a full subcamp system distinguished Kaiserwald from other IKL camps.

Prefiguring the establishment of Kaiserwald and its quartering sites was a dispute between the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) and the Reich Commissariat Ostland (Reichskommissariat Ostland, RKO) over the status of the Salaspils police camp. On December 1, 1942, the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) in Berlin asked the Commander of the Security Police and SD (BdS) Riga, Dr. Rudolf Lange, whether Salaspils was a concentration camp and, if so, why it did not fall under WVHA jurisdiction.<sup>8</sup> Located to the southeast of Riga and built by Riga ghetto labor in 1941, Salaspils held non-Jewish Latvians, Estonians, and Lithuanians. An SS-Obersturmbannführer, later Standartenführer, in the SD (Nazi Party no. 290308), Lange emphatically denied it was a concentration camp, instead calling Salaspils a work education camp (*Arbeitserziehungslager* [AEL]) and police prison (*Polizeigefängnis*).<sup>9</sup> That Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler found this explanation unsatisfactory was evident shortly after Kaiserwald’s establishment, when he called Salaspils a concentration camp in everything but name, pointing out that it properly belonged to the WVHA and ordering that it perform war-related tasks, not construction or “peat work” (*Torfstich*).<sup>10</sup> In a demonstration of Lange’s autonomy,



Interior of a barracks at Riga-Kaiserwald shortly after evacuation in September 1944.

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Salaspils remained under Security Police (Sipo) control until the German abandonment of Latvia.

On June 21, 1943, Himmler decreed the closure of all ghettos in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia (the Ostland) and the formation instead of IKL camps by August 1, 1943. Jews were to perform war work, especially for Wehrmacht units but not for “private firms.” Those deemed unfit were to be deported “to the East,” a euphemism for mass murder.<sup>11</sup> With the important exception that Kaiserwald never had a gas chamber/crematory complex, Himmler’s model was the Lublin-Majdanek concentration camp, which confined Jews from liquidated ghettos in the General Government. Himmler’s order similarly affected the concentration camps at Kauen (Kaunas) and Vaivara. In Riga, Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Ostland Friedrich Jeckeln informed his superior, Reichskommissar Hinrich Lohse, about the reorganization. The ghetto authorities quickly closed 125 old Kasernierungen, and, according to historian Andrew Ezer-gailis, 312 employers lost Jewish labor, while additional firms underwent drastic workforce cuts.<sup>12</sup> In early August 1943, Lohse altered the meaning of Himmler’s decree, calling for the establishment of “big” and “small” concentration camps. Focusing on the alleged security “threat” posed by Jewish prisoners, Lohse demanded their strict separation from Riga’s population.<sup>13</sup>

On August 18, 1943, the RKO’s and BdS Riga’s interference became apparent when the Riga Stadtkommissar announced the creation of “Jewish camps” (*Judenlager*). Naming 13 “big” Kasernierungen, the Stadtkommissar claimed they were answerable to the Sicherheitsdienst (SD)—that is, to Lange of BdS Riga—not to the WVHA. The list included “old,” ghetto-administered, as well as “new” quartering sites designed for big projects. They were (1) Kaiserwald, (2) Dünawerke, (3) SD-Werkstätte (Lenta), (4) Truppenwirtschaftslager (TWL), (5) Spilve airport, (6) Heereskraftfahrzeugpark (HKP), (7) Papierfabrik Schlock, (8) Reichsbahn, (9) Armeebekleidungsamt (ABA) 701, (10) Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG), (11) Zementfabrik Riga, (12) Strasdenhof, and (13) Generalkommissar (GK) Abteilung Finanzen. Not all of these quartering sites became subcamps. Of the 16,450 Jews to be allocated, over 7,800 prisoners had already been deployed.<sup>14</sup>

The Stadtkommissar’s list was misleading. The paper factory utilized Kaiserwald prisoners, and it has yet to be established whether GK was a quartering site or a Kaiserwald work detachment. In the fall of 1943, Kaiserwald opened a complex of camps near the Baltic Sea in Kurland (Kurzeme), for the erection of the Dondangen (Dundaga) SS “sea camp” (*Seelager*). The camps consisted of Dondangen I, Dondangen II (Poperwahlen), and Kurben. The HKP and ABA sites spawned subcamps, respectively, at Hirtenstrasse and Krottingen. Kaiserwald also formed a quartering site in October 1943 for railway work at Elley-Meiten. The International Tracing Service’s (ITS) claim that AEG had a battery-producing subcamp at Strasdenhof appears to be unfounded,

because witnesses place this detachment in the Kaiserwald camp. The Kaiserwald detachment was contracted to the Wehrmacht, not to AEG. In the class-action suit brought against AEG in the late 1950s, one witness mentioned working in the Anode Kommando, but she was removed from it by truck to work at the AEG camp at Strasdenhof.<sup>15</sup> Depending upon whether the Dondangen complex is counted as one camp or three, then Kaiserwald had 12 to 14 subcamps. According to the ITS, Kaiserwald also furnished work details for Gummifabrik “Meteor,” a rubber factory, and for a number of SS construction projects.

Although Himmler ordered the Ostland ghettos’ closure by August 1, 1943, the liquidations concluded between September and November 1943. From Lithuania, the Germans dispatched the survivors of the Vilna (Vilnius, Wilno) ghetto to Kaiserwald in late September 1943. From Kurland, the Libau (Liepāja) ghetto’s survivors arrived in early October 1943. In October 1943, the Germans stopped assigning Riga ghetto inhabitants to the Kasernierungen. On November 2, 1943, the Riga Sipo sent its remaining inhabitants to Auschwitz II-Birkenau, where 850 were gassed upon arrival.<sup>16</sup> In addition to the Ostland ghettos, Kaiserwald received approximately 2,000 Hungarian Jewish women from Birkenau in June 1944.

Several Kaiserwald staff members had lengthy IKL experience. Born on August 17, 1898, in Misdroy, Sauer (Nazi Party no. 862698; SS no. 19180) served at the Berlin Columbia Haus early camp in 1935, was the commandant of the Bad Sulza early camp during its dissolution in 1937, and worked in Sachsenhausen’s administration. He was the first commandant of the Mauthausen concentration camp but was dismissed in early 1939 after a dispute with the Austrian police. Working for the Reich Commissariat for the Strengthening of Germanism (RKFDV) until 1943, he was briefly attached to the Auschwitz staff before assuming command at Riga. Posted to Ravensbrück after Kaiserwald’s evacuation, Sauer was killed in action on May 3, 1945.<sup>17</sup> Kaiserwald’s administrators were SS-Obersturmführer Eberhard von Bonin, until June 1, 1944, and SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Vogler from the Stutthof concentration camp, from that date until Kaiserwald’s closure. The chief of labor allocation (Arbeits-einsatzführer) was SS-Hauptscharführer Hans Brüner.

Born on August 8, 1894, Kaiserwald’s camp doctor, SS-Sturmbannführer Dr. Eduard Krebsbach, had previously occupied the same position at Mauthausen. His eagerness to murder patients by phenol injection at Mauthausen gave rise to his nickname “The Needle” (Spritzbach).<sup>18</sup> In the Mauthausen Trial, the U.S. Army condemned him to death and executed him on May 28, 1947. Krebsbach’s assistant SS-Sanitätsdienstgrad (SDG) Heinz Günther Wisner was born Heinz von Wisotzky in Danzig on December 5, 1916. Joining the Allgemeine-SS on March 14, 1935, he worked in the Danzig sanitarium and trained as an SDG. On February 1, 1939, he joined the Nazi Party and became a police reservist on August 22, 1939. Before Stutthof became an IKL camp,



Wisner served as its SDG and from May 27, 1942, held the same post at the Flossenbürg concentration camp. After joining the Waffen-SS in June 1943, he underwent ideological training in Berlin and was promoted to Unterscharführer in the summer of 1943. On November 1, 1943, Wisner joined Kaiserwald's staff and was later promoted to Oberscharführer. Wisner selected numerous Jews in Kaiserwald and its subcamps for murder and killed infirm patients by lethal injection. Many of the infirm victims were from the subcamps, especially Dondangen, which consumed lives at a catastrophic rate.

Kaiserwald's camp elder (Lagerältester) was Xavier Abel, known to the prisoners as "Mr. X." A Sachsenhausen criminal, he committed homicides at Kaiserwald and carried on illicit relationships with younger female prisoners. According to Josef Katz, a Jewish prisoner from Lübeck, Abel drowned the Riga ghetto's police chief, Haar, in the latrine during a drinking party for the German prisoners. According to Katz, "Mr. X" and other German prisoners still at Kaiserwald shortly before its evacuation were recruited for the Dirlewanger Brigade, a Waffen-SS unit composed chiefly of German green and black triangle prisoners in 1944.<sup>19</sup> Kapos Hans "Hannes" Bruhn and Reinhold Rosemayer also brutalized the inmates. For a time, Bruhn was the camp elder at the Strassenhof subcamp. The prisoner-functionaries instituted penal drills, forcing new prisoners, like Ernest Kan, to remove caps with the appropriate snap.<sup>20</sup> In 1961, the Hamburg State Prosecutor inconclusively investigated Bruhn for his activities at Sachsenhausen.<sup>21</sup>

Approximately 30 male and female prisoners worked in the Anode Kommando. The men unloaded large Wehrmacht truck batteries from an adjacent train depot, and in a small workshop, the women dismantled them in order to extract their carbon anodes. One prisoner, Schoschana Rabinovici (born Susanne Weksler), credited the detachment leader, a German army Feldwebel, with protecting her during an Aktion. For the women at least, the work took place indoors, but it required the handling of corrosive and noxious chemicals that blackened and burned the hands.<sup>22</sup>

"Children's operations" (*Kinderaktionen*) occurred regularly at Kaiserwald and in the subcamps. Especially endangered were children who stayed in the blocks while their parents worked. Thanks to alert adults, a few youngsters managed to evade these selections. As an 11-year old, Rabinovici was deported in late September 1943 from Vilna to Kaiserwald with her mother and older stepsister. Her mother, Raja Indurski-Weksler, used subterfuges with the connivance of friends from Vilna to prevent the Germans from discovering that Schoschana was prepubescent, including standing in front of her when prisoners were ordered to undress and awakening her earlier than the rest of the block so that she could clean up in private. At Kaiserwald, Rabinovici usually worked in the Anode detail, but when her mother perceived a change in SS behavior, thereby indicating an imminent Aktion, she was told to report to an outside detail for the day.<sup>23</sup>

From May to September 1944, the Sonderkommando (SK) 1005 B under SS-Obersturmführer Walter Helfsgott attempted to obliterate evidence of the "Final Solution" in the Riga area, exhuming mass graves that dated back to 1941. At Lange's insistence, Helfsgott deployed only Jews for this task. At his 1969 jury trial in Stuttgart, where he was acquitted on technical grounds, the court noted that the likely source of this labor was Kaiserwald. In succession, two detachments of 30 inmates disinterred mass graves in the Rumbula and Bikernieki forests, cremated the bodies, and scattered the ashes and bones. As "bearers of secrets" (*Geheimnisträger*), the groups were shot after completing their tasks.<sup>24</sup>

With the Red Army advancing on Riga, Kaiserwald commenced preparations for evacuation in late June and July 1944. Among them Krebsbach and Wisner conducted a series of selections, including the "Krebsbach Aktion" on July 28, 1944, which involved the main camp and every subcamp in Riga. Apart from some prisoners who reached Stutthof overland via Libau, most were marched to the port of Riga, where they boarded ships bound for Danzig. On August 6, 1944, the *Bremerhaven* departed Riga with 6,382 Jews from the subcamps. Subsequent sea evacuations took place in mid-September 1944 (called the Rosh Hashanah Transport by prisoners) and on September 24 or 25 (the Yom Kippur Transport).<sup>25</sup> On the latter, the *Kanonier* carried 3,155 prisoners to Danzig. A final 190-member cleanup detail left Riga on October 11, 1944. Held below decks for three days with few provisions, the inmates suffered from overcrowding and seasickness caused by rough seas. To distribute food and remove excrement from the holds, the Kapos improvised a bucket-and-winch system, but the high seas caused food and excrement to spill onto the prisoners below. A few prisoners got fresh air by relaying buckets to the deck. Landing at Danzig, the survivors were marched to the Vistula River, where they boarded 500-person barges for two or three days before entering Stutthof.<sup>26</sup> According to Rabinovici, the vessel carrying her family sailed under a Red Cross flag, which protected it from attack. Katz remembered that the last vessel in the Rosh Hashanah Transport was sunk by a Soviet submarine.<sup>27</sup> Most of Kaiserwald's survivors were scattered among the Stutthof subcamps. Others were sent to Dachau/Mühldorf, Buchenwald/Magdeburg (Polte), and Nevengamme/Hamburg-Fuhlsbüttel.

**SOURCES** The Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp is discussed in chapters and articles on the Latvian Holocaust, but to date there is not a one-volume history of the camp. The most recent and best-documented study is Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die "Endlösung" in Riga: Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–1944* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006). Another useful work is Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia, 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; published in association with USHMM, 1996). Ezergailis erroneously terms Kaiserwald and other IKL camps "SD" camps. The source of his confusion is the Riga Stadtkommissar's announcement of August 18, 1943. Additional information may be gleaned



from three contributions by historian and Latvian Holocaust survivor Marģers Vestermanis, *Juden in Riga: Auf den Spuren des Lebens und Wirkens einer ermordeten Minderheit; ein historischer Wegweiser* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1995); “Die nationalsozialistischen Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland, 1941–1945,” in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1998), 1:472–492; and “Das SS-Seelager Dondangen—Ein Modell für die geplante nazistische ‘Neuordnung Europas,’” *MiGe* [GDR] 25:2 (1986): 145–146. For an overview of the Kaiserwald, Vaivara, and Kauen concentration camps, see Alfred Streim, “Konzentrationslager auf dem Gebiet der Sowjetunion,” *DaHe* 5 (1989): 174–187. The earliest treatment of Kaiserwald is Max Kaufmann, *Churban Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn, intro by Steven Springfield (1947; repr., Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1999). Kaufmann was a survivor of the Riga ghetto, Kaiserwald, and Riga (HKP, Hirtenstrasse). Another survivor’s account that covers Kaiserwald and selected Kasernierungen is Alfred Winter, *The Ghetto of Riga and Continuation* (Monroe, CT: Self-pub., 1998). Based in large measure on other survivors’ memoirs, it must be used with due caution because the sources are not cited. Essential background on Kaiserwald, including evacuation statistics, may be found in Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004). Kugler discusses the IKL-BdS Riga rivalry to show how SS-Untersturmführer Fritz Scherwitz, the camp leader of Riga (Lenta), used his connections with Lange in order to maintain a degree of autonomy from Kaiserwald. Riga-Kaiserwald and its work detachments are listed as separate men’s and women’s camps in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:247. On Sauer, see French L. MacLean, *The Camp Men: The SS Officers Who Ran the Nazi Concentration Camp System* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Pub., 1999), p. 197; Gordon J. Horwitz, *In the Shadow of Death: Living Outside the Gates of Mauthausen* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1991), pp. 31–32; and Tom Segev, *Soldiers of Evil: The Commandants of the Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1987), p. 89. On Sauer and Krebsbach, additional information may be found in Evelyn Le Chêne, *Mauthausen: The History of a Death Camp* (London: Methuen, 1971), pp. 30, 38, 88–93. The Wisner case (Lfd. 896) will be included in a forthcoming volume of *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* but is listed cursorily on the publication’s Web site, [www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv](http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv). The author would like to thank Dick de Mildt for furnishing supplementary biographical information on Wisner.

Primary sources for Riga-Kaiserwald start with Heinrich Müller’s announcement of its opening in USHMMA, RG 11.001 M.05, Reel 75, RGVA, fond (record group) 504, opis (inventory) 2, delo (file) 8 (504/2/8), which also contains documentation on the Salaspils police camp. On the Kasernierungen and BdS Riga’s intervention, see Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im “Reichskommissariat Ostland”: Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998),

Docs. 253–254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces Lohse’s announcement of early August 1943 and the Riga Stadtkommissar’s memorandum on the Kasernierungen of August 18, 1943. According to the ITS Archival Catalog, Kaiserwald transports are mentioned in the following pre-1955 holdings: Inventory No. 107: Buchenwald GCC 2/189 a–c Ordner 10, “Zugänge vom KL Riga, Sachsenhausen, und, Sachsenburg,” December 11, 1943, August 20, 1942, to March 31, 1945, and July 27, 1937; Inventory No. 112: GCC2/193/d–f Ordner 15, “Transportlisten, Abgänge vom KL Buchenwald nach KL Riga,” March 15, 1943; Inventory No. 150: Buchenwald GCC2/189 IC/6 Ordner 159, “Zugänge vom KL Riga und Sachsenhausen,” December 11, 1943, August 20, 1942, to July 31, 1944; Inventory No. 164: Buchenwald GCC 2/193 Ordner 170, “Abgänge nach KL Ravensbrück und KL Riga,” April 24, 1941, to January 26, 1945, and March 15, 1943; and Inventory No. 276, Buchenwald GCC 2/119 IIB/19 Ordner 236, “Listen um überstellten Häftlingen, deren Effekten vom KL Buchenwald dem KL Ravensbrück, Riga, Sachsenhausen, Stutthof, und Warschau übergeben wurden,” April 26, 1941, to August 20, 1944, and March 17, 1943, to May 5, 1943. These lists apparently concern only the German and Polish prisoners sent to Kaiserwald and returned to the Reich in 1943. The ITS received the documents on loan from the U.S. Army. Further research is required to determine whether any of the Reich prisoners originated from Buchenwald instead of Sachsenhausen. As cited by Angrick and Klein, additional archival sources on Kaiserwald may be found in BA-B, R 92 (GK Riga). For the partial death list, Vestermanis cites LVVA, P 132/30/43a, pp. 1–44. Himmler’s query to Lange, March 18, 1943, concerning Salaspils is reproduced in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1: xxxi. The Krebsbach trial is listed as US 401 Case No. 000–50–5, *USA v. Hans Altfurdisch, et al.* The Helfsgott trial (Ks 22/67) is summarized in Lfd. 701, JuNS-V 31: 693–798. As cited by Kugler, BA-L holds witness testimony in connection with Kaiserwald’s involvement in SK 1005 B’s operations. As cited by Angrick and Klein, the investigation of Bruhn is listed as Hamburg Sta. 141 Js 534/60. The personnel files of Lange and Sauer are available at BA-B and NARA. Lange was a participant in the Wannsee Conference of January 20, 1942. See NG-2586 in John Mendelssohn, ed., *The Holocaust: Selected Documents in Eighteen Volumes*, vol. 11, *The Wannsee Protocol and a 1944 Report on Auschwitz by the Office of Strategic Services*, intro. Robert Wolfe (New York: Garland, 1982). Unpublished prisoner testimony from Riga-Kaiserwald may be found at USHMMA. In RG-12.004.02 \*02 and \*04, Benjamin Ferencz Collection, Claims against German Industrial Firms Records, 1952–1994, AEG Correspondence, there are several affidavits on the Riga AEG camp, which help to document Kaiserwald’s role as a registration center. In RG-12.004.02 \*02, see Betty Rothschild Willner (notarized affidavit, October 13, 1958) and Golda Geller Lewinsohn Klein (unsigned

affidavit, October 1, 1958); in RG-12.004.02\*04, see Hilde Diamant (n.d.); Tauba Maskin Buchhalter (September 19, 1958); Marga Hahn (undated letter); and Luba Klot Slodov (statement of May 24, 1960). USHMMA also holds a substantial collection of oral histories by Kaiserwald survivors, some of which have been transcribed. Interviews helpful for this essay are RG-50.431\*1076, Ernest Kan interview, June 7, 2001, by HDEC; RG-50.030\*0150, Lily Margules interview, January 3, 1990; RG-50.030\*0176, Bella Simon Pasternak interview, April 21, 1994; RG-50.030\*0216, Rochelle Blackman Slivka interview, June 15, 1990; and RG-50.030\*0220, Steven Springfield interview, March 30, 1990. In a follow-up telephone interview with the author, September 27, 2006, and an email exchange, Ernest Kan furnished additional details on Kaiserwald's subcamps and the camp's rumor mill. The interview summary is to be deposited at USHMMA. There are many unpublished witness statements on Kaiserwald at WL and reproduced in *Testaments to the Holocaust* (originally WL), <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>. Particularly useful for this essay is P III H No. 286 (Riga), Herman Voosen, "Report on the Criminals of Riga," July 28, 1945. Riga-Kaiserwald is mentioned or alluded to in several published documents in *USA v. Oswald Pohl, et al.* (NMT Case IV) in TWC 4: 382–383, 387, 626: NO-020 a (Pohl to Himmler, April 5, 1943, on the expansion of the camp system); NO-1558 (Glücks circular, April 26, 1943); NO-2403 (an English translation of Himmler's order of June 21, 1943); and 1469-PS (Pohl to Himmler, September 30, 1943, on death cases). On the Riga transport to Auschwitz, see Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: Henry Holt, 1990), p. 519. Published prisoner testimonies include Josef Katz, *One Who Came Back: The Diary of a Jewish Survivor*, trans. Hilda Reach (New York: Herzl Press and Bergen-Belsen Memorial Press, 1973); and Schoschana Rabinovici, *Thanks to My Mother*, trans. James Skofield (New York: Dial Books, 1998), pp. 101–190. Brief testimonies may be found in two compilations by Gertrude Schneider, ed., *Muted Voices: Jewish Survivors of Latvia Remember* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1987); and *Unfinished Road: Jewish Survivors of Latvia Look Back* (New York: Praeger, 1991).

Joseph Robert White

## NOTES

1. USHMMA, RG 11.001 M.05, Reel 75, RGVA, 504/2/8, RSHA IV C 2 (Heinrich Müller), Rundschreiben Nr. 43086, Betr.: "Konzentrationslager (Arbeitslager) Riga," April 2, 1943, p. 170.
2. On the barracks, Josef Katz, *One Who Came Back: The Diary of a Jewish Survivor*, trans. Hilda Reach (New York: Herzl Press and Bergen-Belsen Memorial Press, 1973), p. 140.
3. As estimated by Margers Vestermanis, "Die nationalsozialistischen Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland, 1941–1945," in *Die nationalsozialistischen*

*Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1998), 1:487.

4. NO-1558, Glücks circular, April 26, 1943, TWC 14: 387.

5. LVVA, P 132/30/43a, pp. 1–44, cited in Vestermanis, "Die nationalsozialistischen Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland, 1941–1945," p. 487.

6. USHMMA, RG-50.030\*0220, Steven Springfield interview, March 30, 1990; RG-50.431\*1076, Ernest Kan interview, June 7, 2001; Kan telephone interview with the author, September 27, 2006.

7. See, for example, USHMMA, RG-50.030\*0150, Lily Margules interview, January 3, 1990; but compare with RG-50.030\*0216, Rochelle Blackman Slivka interview, June 15, 1990; on "zebra" clothing, RG-50.431\*1076, Kan interview, June 7, 2001.

8. RG 11.001 M.05, Reel 75, RGVA, 504/2/8, SS-Obersturmbannführer Dr. Berndorff, RSHA IV C 2, to BdS Riga, Allg. Nr. 42485, n.d. (received December 1, 1942), FS Nr. 16488, "Dringend," p. 156.

9. RG 11.001 M.05, Reel 75, RGVA, 504/2/8, BdS Ostland, IV C 2—5198/42, to RSHA IV C 2, December 19, 1942, IV C 2 Allg. Nr. 42485, p. 169.

10. RFSS to Oswald Pohl, WVHA, and Ernst Kaltenbrunner, RSHA, March 18, 1943, Geh./111/10, reproduced in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderen Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1969), 1:xxxi.

11. NO-2403 in TWC 4: 626. The original is quoted in Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die "Endlösung" in Riga: Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–1944* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), p. 386.

12. Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; published in association with USHMM, 1996), p. 364.

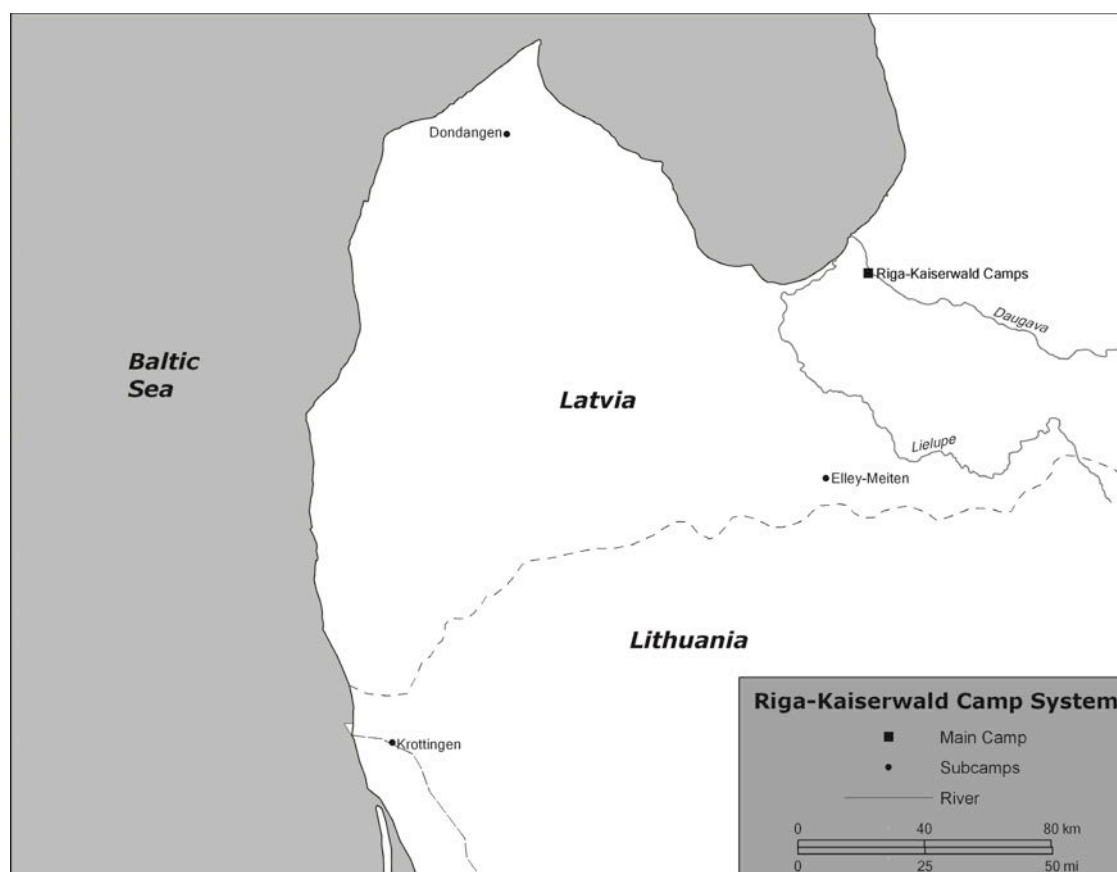
13. Schreiben des Reichskommissars für das Ostland an die Generalkommissare vom August 1943, über die "Zusammenfassung von Juden in Konzentrationslagern" [LVVA, R69-1 A-6, fol. 129, copied in USHMMA, RG 18.002M, Reel 2], reproduced in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 253, p. 265.

14. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. "Umsetzung" von Juden in Konzentrationslager" [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], *ibid.*, Doc. 254, pp. 265–266.

15. Schoschana Rabinovici, *Thanks to My Mother*, trans. James Skofield (New York: Dial Books, 1998), pp. 128–129; Katz, *One Who Came Back*, p. 180; RG-12.004.02\*04, Betty Rothschild Willner, Notarized Affidavit, October 13, 1958.

16. Entry for November 5, 1943, in Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: Henry Holt, 1990), p. 519.

17. Sauer BDCPF summarized in French L. MacLean, *The Camp Men: The SS Officers Who Ran the Nazi Concentration Camp System* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Pub., 1999), p. 197.



18. Quoted in Evelyn Le Chêne, *Mauthausen: The History of a Death Camp* (London: Methuen, 1971), p. 88.

19. Katz, *One Who Came Back*, pp. 143–144, 192; P III H No. 286 (Riga), Herman Voosen, “Report on the Criminals of Riga,” July 28, 1945, p. 4.

20. RG-50.431\*1076, Kan interview, June 7, 2001.

21. Hamburg Sta. 141, Js 534/60, cited by Angrick and Klein, *Die “Endlösung” in Riga*, p. 392.

22. Rabinovici, *Thanks to My Mother*, pp. 151–153.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 102, 105, 112, 124, 135, 150–151; see also Katz, *One Who Came Back*, pp. 151, 181–182, for a Kinderaktion at a subcamp; also Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn, intro. by Steven Springfield (1947; repr., Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1999), p. 388; at the AEG Kasernierung, RG-12.004.02\*04, Luba Klot Slodov statement, May 24, 1960, pp. 4–7.

24. Ks 22/67, Lfd. 701, JuNS-V 31: 733; Sta. Stuttgart, 17 Js 270/64, Hans Sohns indictment, December 11, 1967; and BA-L, 204 AR-Z 419/62, Erich Brauer statement, February 10, 1949, pp. 985, 989, cited in Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004), pp. 418–419.

25. On the Krebsbach Aktion, P III H No. 286 (Riga), Voosen, “Report on the Criminals of Riga,” p. 5; for the Rosh Hashanah Transport, see Katz, *One Who Came Back*, pp. 201–202; for the Yom Kippur Transport, Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland*, p. 427.

26. Rabinovici, *Thanks to My Mother*, pp. 171–183; Katz, *One Who Came Back*, pp. 201–208.

27. Rabinovici, *Thanks to My Mother*, p. 178; Katz, *One Who Came Back*, p. 202.



## **DONDANGEN I AND II, WITH KURBEN [AKA SEELAGER DONDANGEN, DUNDAGA, POPERWAHLEN]**

In the late summer of 1943, Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp established a subcamp for the SS “sea camp” (*Seelager*) at Dondangen (Dundaga). The camp was intended to erect an SS colony near the Baltic coast in Kurland (Kurzeme), Latvia. According to a West German report, Dondangen held 12,000 prisoners.<sup>1</sup> A more conservative estimate by Mārgers Vestermanis puts the total number of prisoners, mostly Latvian, Lithuanian, and Hungarian Jews, at 5,000.<sup>2</sup> Dondangen’s catastrophic death rate, 10 to 20 prisoners per day, may help to reconcile these estimates, because the camp was constantly replenished by fresh Kaiserwald prisoners. Unlike other camps and quartering sites (*Kasernierungen*) in the Riga-Kaiserwald complex, the prisoners at Dondangen wore striped uniforms with yellow stars.<sup>3</sup>

Dondangen had two successive camp leaders (Lagerführer), SS-Oberscharführer Gröschel and SS-Hauptscharführer



SS-Hauptscharführer Gustav Sorge, camp leader of the Heereskraftfahrzeugpark and Spilwe camps in Riga, and subsequently of the Dondangen complex. At the time this mug shot was taken, Sorge was a defendant in the Soviet Sachsenhausen trial, 1947.

USHMM WS #33598, COURTESY OF CAFSSRF

Gustav Sorge. Gröschel’s mismanagement prompted the commandant of Riga-Kaiserwald, SS-Sturmabführer Albert Sauer, to replace him with Sorge on January 30, 1944. Gröschel assumed command at Sorge’s former post, the Kaiserwald Kasernierung at Riga-Spilwe. An Esterwegen and Sachsenhausen concentration camp guard whose career in the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) dated back to 1934, and who had been a guard at the Esterwegen early camp in 1933, Sorge lived up to his nickname “Iron Gustav” (*Eiserne Gustav*). During the two years prior to commanding Dondangen, he had been Arbeitseinsatzführer at Vught, the Herzogenbusch main concentration camp in the Netherlands, and served in the summer of 1943 in a “bandit”-hunting (anti-partisan) detail for the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Ostland. In the Riga complex, he had previously commanded Spilwe and the neighboring Heereskraftfahrzeugpark (HKP) Kasernierung.<sup>4</sup>

Designed as a “Germanization” colony, the SS-Seelager Dondangen was to become a permanent SS base.<sup>5</sup> At Dundaga, the SS displaced some 15,000 Latvian farmers in the summer of 1943. For the SS, one of Dondangen’s attractive features was Dundaga Castle, erected in 1249 for the Livonian Order of crusaders, which served as the SS headquarters. Critical to the project was the erection of a troop training base (*Truppenübungsplatz*) for SS-Panzer personnel. To create the base, Dondangen’s prisoners cleared forests, built roads, and erected troop barracks. A survivor of Dondangen II (Poperwahlen), Vestermanis observed that the Seelager “was probably Himmler’s only colonization experiment in the temporarily occupied Soviet territories that was half-way realized. It shows how the ‘European New Order’ strived for by the Nazis should have looked.”<sup>6</sup>

The living conditions at Dondangen (and subsequently the Poperwahlen and Kurben subcamps) were by far the worst in the Riga-Kaiserwald complex. Prisoner Abraham Shpungin characterized Dondangen as an “extermination camp,” but historian Andrew Ezergailis described it as a camp for “extermination through labor” (*Vernichtung durch Arbeit*).<sup>7</sup> While the prisoners erected SS troop accommodations, they lived in “Finnish tents” (*Finnenzelter*), plywood structures with dirt floors and a stove in the center, somewhat like primitive Quonset huts.<sup>8</sup> The overcrowded tents did not protect against the cold Baltic winds. The SS never bothered to erect a barracks camp at Dondangen or in its subcamps. The prisoners’ rations consisted of thin soup, bread, and very little else.

Compounding the lethal conditions was the brutal behavior of Gröschel and Sorge. Gröschel dealt with Dondangen’s staggering mortality by ordering the bodies dumped into the half-frozen Baltic Sea.<sup>9</sup> In the spring of 1944, as the ice thawed, fishermen discovered some corpses, which prompted Sorge, who had already assumed command, to institute the “bathing Kommando.” Consisting primarily of weakened prisoners, this detail removed the bodies from the sea and cremated them in improvised pyres on the beach. According to Shpungin, the detachment also had a high mortality rate.<sup>10</sup>



Despite the frightful conditions, the Truppenübungsplatz opened by the spring of 1944. Training at this facility were the Nachrichten-Ausbildungs- und Ersatz-Abteilung 1, SS-Panzer-Ausbildungs- und Ersatz-Regiment 1, and the Fourth SS-Panzer-Aufklärungs-Ausbildungs-Abteilung 2. Some of the Waffen-SS troops were Dutch volunteers. Sorge ordered the Waffen-SS to shoot escaping prisoners on sight.<sup>11</sup>

A small exception to Dondangen's brutal conditions was the troop supply depot (*Truppenwirtschaftslager* [TWL]), which was situated in the city of Dundaga. Not to be confused with Kaiserwald's separately listed TWL Kasernierung, this detachment consisted of 20 Jewish men and 5 Jewish women. Fearing epidemics, the detachment leader, SS-Oberscharführer Wilhelm Wichmann, had the prisoners cleaned up and ensured that they received a steady supply of nutritious rations. Eventually, he secured Sorge's permission to quarter them in an apartment in Dundaga, with the women held in the smaller and the men in the larger room. The detachment's prisoners included Shpungin and Mendel Poliak, who escaped in late July 1944, when word came to evacuate Dondangen. In the city of Dundaga, the Vanags family (parents Anton and Klara and daughter Skaidrite) gave them food and shelter until the Soviet liberation, which in Kurland did not take place until the German surrender on May 8, 1945.<sup>12</sup> For their efforts in saving Shpungin and Poliak, Yad Vashem awarded the Vanags family the Righteous among the Nations medal in 1993.

Dondangen opened a second subcamp for both male and female Jewish prisoners at Poperwahlen (Popervāle), also known as Dondangen II. Under SS-Rottenführer Baufeldt, this subcamp also consisted of Finnish tents. The first 165 prisoners, 15 of whom were female, entered the camp in November 1943, but the camp swelled to 1,000 prisoners by June 1944, including some Hungarian Jewish women dispatched from Auschwitz II-Birkenau.<sup>13</sup> The prisoners cleared swamps in preparation for the erection of an airfield. Some Poperwahlen prisoners were redeployed inside the Reich in May 1944, in fulfillment of a March 1944 order from the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA).<sup>14</sup> According to Vestermanis, Poperwahlen opened a crematorium for the disposal of Dondangen's dead in the spring of 1944.<sup>15</sup>

The sources disagree on the existence of the third Dondangen subcamp at Kurben. While the International Tracing Service (ITS) counted Kurben as a Dondangen subcamp, Vestermanis does not list it. Shpungin claimed that Kurben was the third "entity" of Dondangen, which held as many as 5,000 Hungarian Jewish women dispatched from Birkenau, an estimate that is exceedingly high.<sup>16</sup> Prisoner Ernest Ābols likewise called Kurben a Dondangen subcamp. Survivor Helen Rodak-Izso, a Jewish woman from Kassa, Hungary, who was deported to Birkenau on June 4, 1944, and shortly thereafter dispatched to Kaiserwald, was held at Kurben, which she called "Kurbe." Rodak-Izso built roads and felled trees for approximately one month. An Oberscharführer headed the camp, and the guards included female SS, who oversaw the work details.<sup>17</sup>

With the Red Army's approach, Dondangen II (Popervahlen) closed in late June or early July 1944, after which the prisoners were moved to Dondangen. En route, the prisoners had to cross the Venta River by swimming and holding on to one another, as the main bridge had been bombed out and only German troops were permitted to use the temporary bridge. A number of Poperwahlen prisoners escaped during the march, including Vestermanis, who shortly joined the partisans.<sup>18</sup> Like those from Poperwahlen, the Kurben prisoners undertook a similar crossing of the Venta before arriving at Dondangen.<sup>19</sup> Dondangen I closed on July 26 or 27, 1944, and the prisoners proceeded in the direction of Goldingen (Kuldīga). The SS dumped many of the dead in a mass grave at Zlekas.<sup>20</sup> From Windau, most of the prisoners were dispatched by sea to the Stutthof concentration camp in Poland. A smaller group marched to Libau (Liepāja) and then were sent by train to Stutthof.

A Bonn court sentenced Lagerführer Sorge to life imprisonment plus 15 years for 67 murders and 20 attempted murders. None of the charges brought against him arose from his service in Latvia, however.<sup>21</sup>

**SOURCES** Dondangen I and II are discussed extensively in the partially autobiographical studies of Mārgers Vestermanis, "Die nationalsozialistischen Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland, 1941–1945," in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1998), 1: 488–489; and "Das SS-Seelager Dondangen—Ein Modell für die geplante nazistische 'Neuordnung Europas,'" *MiGe* [GDR] 25:2 (1986): 145–146. The latter article furnishes extensive background on the SS-Seelager project. The first chronicler of the Latvian Holocaust, Max Kaufmann, discusses Dondangen and Poperwahlen at some length in *Churbn Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn, intro by Steven Springfield (1947; repr., Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1999), pp. 418–422. The most important English-language account of Dondangen is Andrew Ezergailis, *The Holocaust in Latvia, 1941–1944: The Missing Center* (Riga: Historical Institute of Latvia; published in association with USHMM, 1996), pp. 364, 367. The Dondangen project is also recounted in Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die "Endlösung" in Riga: Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–1944* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), pp. 399, 402, 424. Angrick and Klein also mention Poperwahlen in passing. Dondangen is also mentioned in Alfred Streim, "Konzentrationslager auf dem Gebiet der Sowjetunion," *DaHe* 5 (1989): 177. Some information on Dondangen may be gleaned from the account by Riga-Kaiserwald survivor and chronicler Alfred Winter, in *The Ghetto of Riga and Continuation* (Monroe, CT: Self-pub., 1998), pp. 81–93. Winter's account must be used with due caution, however, because he did not cite his sources. A useful account of the Dutch troops at Dondangen and Poperwahlen can be found in L.M. Bruyn, "KZ-Lager Poperwahlen (Latvia)" (unpub. MSS, n.d.), [www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/popervale](http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/popervale). The Dondangen I, Dondangen II (Popervahlen), and Kurben camps are listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 248–249. The opening and closing dates found in these listings are

erroneous. The Vanags family is listed in *Index to the Righteous Gentile Registry of Yad Vashem* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2002), p. 166. Some background on Dundaga Castle may be found at [www.castle.lv/castles4/episkop-eng.html](http://www.castle.lv/castles4/episkop-eng.html).

Primary documentation for the Dondangen complex is scattered. On the SS-Seelager, Angrick and Klein cited documentation in BA-B, R 92. The trial of Gustav Sorge is listed as 8 Ks 1/58, Lfd. Nr. 473, in JuNS-V, 15: 399–658. As cited in Angrick and Klein, Poperwahlen is mentioned in the Wehrwirtschaftskommando Riga, Lagebericht, March 30, 1944, available at BA-MA. An unpublished Dondangen testimony is P III h. No. 1023, Statement of Max Bunzl (Salaspils & other Latvian Camps), “The Sadism of Nazi Camp Leaders,” August 31, 1948, *Testaments to the Holocaust*, originally WL, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>. As cited by Ezer-gailis and Vestermanis, three survivors who contributed unpublished testimonies were Ernest Ābols, Joseph Berman, and Lagersanitäter A. Jakobsen. Published testimonies on Dondangen include the account by Basja Zin, *Wie ein grauenhafter Traum: Vier Jahre zwischen Leben und Tod; Jüdische Schicksale aus Lettland, 1941–1945*, trans. Kurt Foss, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn (Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1998), pp. 27–31. Although she named the camp where she and her husband were held as “Dondangen,” from context it appears that she was held in Poperwahlen. The TWL detachment and other parts of the Dondangen camp are recorded in Abraham Shpungin, “The Terrors of Dundaga,” trans. Isaac Leo Kram, in *The Unfinished Road: Jewish Survivors of Latvia Look Back*, ed. Gertrude Schneider, (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1991), pp. 151–166. A firsthand account of Kurben is Helen Rodak-Izso, *The Last Chance to Remember* (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies and the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, 2001), pp. 30–31, 39–41, 44–47. On the mass grave at Zlekas, Vestermanis cites a newspaper article in *VBal*, March 30, 1993.

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## NOTES

1. Gustav Sorge Urteil, 8 Ks 1/58, Lfd. Nr. 473, JuNS-V 15: 420.
2. Margens Vestermanis, “Das SS-Seelager Dondangen—Ein Modell für die geplante nazistische ‘Neuordnung Europa,’” 25:2 (1986): 145.
3. P III h. No. 1023, Statement of Max Bunzl (Salaspils & other Latvian Camps), “The Sadism of Nazi Camp Leaders,” August 31, 1948, p. 4, *Testaments to the Holocaust*, originally WL, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>.
4. Sorge Urteil, 8 Ks 1/58, Lfd. Nr. 473, JuNS-V 15: 418–420.
5. BA-B, R92/1004, n.p., Bericht über die geplante Errichtung eines Truppenübungsplatzes, n.d., cited in Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die “Endlösung” in Riga: Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–1944* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), p. 399.
6. Vestermanis, “Das SS-Seelager Dondangen,” p. 146.
7. Abraham Shpungin, “The Terrors of Dundaga,” trans. Isaac Leo Kram, in *The Unfinished Road: Jewish Survivors of*

*Latvia Look Back*, ed. Gertrude Schneider (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1991), p. 151.

8. Ibid., p. 152.

9. P III h. No. 1023, Statement of Bunzl (Salaspils & other Latvian Camps), “The Sadism of Nazi Camp Leaders,” August 31, 1948, p. 4.

10. Shpungin, “The Terrors of Dundaga,” pp. 155–156.

11. P III h. No. 1023, Statement of Bunzl (Salaspils & other Latvian Camps), “The Sadism of Nazi Camp Leaders,” August 31, 1948, p. 4.

12. Shpungin, “The Terrors of Dundaga,” pp. 159–165.

13. Report by Lagersanitäter A. Jakobsen, cited in Margers Vestermanis, “Die nationalsozialistischen Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland, 1941–1945,” in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1998), 1: 488.

14. BA-MA, RW 30/72, pp. 52–54, Wehrwirtschaftskommando Riga, Br. B. Nr. 819/44g, Lagebericht für die Zeit vom 1.3. bis 31.3.1944, March 30, 1944, p. 52, as cited in Angrick and Klein, *Die “Endlösung” in Riga*, p. 424.

15. Vestermanis, “Die nationalsozialistischen Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland, 1941–1945,” p. 488.

16. Quoted in Shpungin, “The Terrors of Dundaga,” p. 151.

17. Helen Rodak-Izso, *The Last Chance to Remember* (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies and the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, 2001), pp. 44–47.

18. Vestermanis interview, February 20, 1996, cited in L. M. Bruyn, “KZ-Lager Poperwahlen (Latvia)” (unpub. MSS, n.d.), [www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/popervale](http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/popervale).

19. Rodak-Izso, *The Last Chance to Remember*, p. 47.

20. *VBal*, March 30, 1993, cited in Vestermanis, “Die nationalsozialistischen Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland, 1941–1945,” p. 488.

21. Sorge Urteil, 8 Ks 1/58, Lfd. Nr. 473, JuNS-V, 15: 415.

## ELLEY-MEITEN

Between October 1943 and June 1944, the SS deployed nearly 3,000 male and female Jewish prisoners from Lithuania and Poland at Elley-Meiten (Eleja-Meitene). Elley-Meiten was 1 of about 12 to 14 subcamps, called quartering sites (*Kasernierungen*), that were absorbed or established by the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp. The date of its foundation indicated that Elley-Meiten was a “new” Kasernierung. Living in 16 barracks at a disused tractor factory, the prisoners performed railway repair work for the construction firms of Rippel, Berger, and Ottlieb. The SS returned the prisoners to Riga-Kaiserwald beginning in May 1944, well before the dissolution of other Kasernierungen, most of which closed in August 1944 in connection with the Red Army’s advance.

**SOURCES** This subcamp is briefly discussed in Margers Vestermanis, “Die nationalsozialistischen Haftstätten und Todeslager im okkupierten Lettland, 1941–1945,” in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 1998), 1: 488. It is listed

as separate men's and women's camps in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 248. It is also listed with some information on the construction firms in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 661.

As cited by Vestermanis, the primary sources for this subcamp may be found in LVVA, in file P-132/26/13, p. 197.

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## KROTtingEN

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), Krottingen originated as a Buchenwald subcamp that was transferred to Riga-Kaiserwald's administration in order to supply female Jewish labor for the Army Clothing Office 709 (Armeebekleidungsamt [ABA]). The subcamp was the second Riga-Kaiserwald quartering site (*Kasernierung*) established for the ABA; the first was Mühlgraben, which furnished female Jewish inmates for ABA 701. Krottingen opened in May 1944, when 200 Mühlgraben prisoners were transferred to the new site. Eventually, the subcamp grew in size to approximately 700 prisoners, according to survivor Johanna Rosenthal.<sup>1</sup>

Appointed a prisoner forewoman (Vorarbeiterin) after two weeks in the camp, Rosenthal reported that cold, hunger, and "heavy labor" made existence difficult.<sup>2</sup> There were several selections at Krottingen, which in the language of Kaiserwald were called "operations" (*Aktionen*). The largest took place on July 28, 1944, when 200 weakened prisoners were removed for killing. In preparation for Riga-Kaiserwald's evacuation, the Krottingen inmates were given concentration camp haircuts in early July 1944, but the issuance of "zebra clothing" (*Zebra-Kleidung*) only took place in August 1944.<sup>3</sup> Although Krottingen officially closed in August 1944, with most of the prisoners removed by sea and evacuated to the Stutthof concentration camp in Poland, Rosenthal and a small group remained behind at Krottingen until Yom Kippur 1944. The remaining prisoners were evacuated to Libau (Liepāja).<sup>4</sup>

**SOURCES** This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 248.

Mühlgraben and Krottingen prisoner Johanna Rosenthal described Krottingen in her testimonies, listed in *Testaments to the Holocaust*, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>, which were originally collected by WL. Rosenthal's undated statement said that the major selection took place on July 28, 1944, while her June 26, 1945, statement placed the date on June 28, 1944.

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## NOTES

1. P III h No. 538 (Riga), Statement of Johanna Rosenthal, June 26, 1945, pp. 2–3; P III h No. 283 (Riga), Rosenthal

Statement, n.d., p. 4, in *Testaments to the Holocaust*, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>.

2. Quoted in P III h No. 538 (Riga), Rosenthal Statement, June 26, 1945, p. 2.

3. Ibid., p. 3; P III h No. 283 (Riga), Rosenthal Statement, n.d., p. 4.

4. P III h No. 538 (Riga), Rosenthal Statement, June 26, 1945, p. 3.

## RIGA (BALASTDAMM)

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), Riga-Kaiserwald had a men's and women's quartering site (*Kasernierung*) located at Balastdamm (Balasta) on Kipsala Island in the city of Riga. Listed as "Zementwerk Riga" by Detachment III of the Riga Stadtkommissar, it was 1 of 13 *Kasernierungen* absorbed from the Riga ghetto or established by Kaiserwald on August 18, 1943. Balastdamm had a planned capacity of 300 prisoners but an effective strength at the time of 205.<sup>1</sup> The cement factory was the Sägewerk Zunda, which manufactured prefabricated construction parts. According to chronicler of the Latvian Holocaust Max Kaufmann, the camp reached the planned strength of 300 prisoners, of whom 30 were females, and had Latvian SS guards. The prisoners also worked for the SS-Bauhof, a construction unit, and for a carpentry workshop.

According to Riga (Lenta) prisoner Abraham Bloch, prisoners from Balastdamm reported, in early August 1944, that the SS had just concluded a "children's operation" (*Kinderaktion*) in their subcamp, during which 25 young Jews were selected for killing.<sup>2</sup> Kaufmann subsequently listed 22 young victims of this Aktion and stated that most of its remaining Balastdamm prisoners were murdered at the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp after Balastdamm's closure on August 7, 1944.

**SOURCES** The Riga (Balastdamm) *Kasernierung* of Riga-Kaiserwald is described in Max Kaufmann, *Churban Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn, intro. by Steven Springfield (1947; repr., Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1999), pp. 415–416; and in Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004), pp. 415–416. The subcamp is also mentioned in Margers Vestermanis, *Juden in Riga: Auf den Spuren des Lebens und Wirkens einer ermordeten Minderheit; ein historischer Wegweiser* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1995), pp. 70–71. It is listed as separate men's and women's camps in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 250.

Primary sources for this subcamp begin with the documents compiled by Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces the Riga Stadtkommissar's memorandum on the Riga-Kaiserwald *Kasernierungen* of August 18, 1943. As cited by Kugler, Abraham Bloch's memoirs are available in Yiddish and Russian in MSS form at MEL.

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## NOTES

1. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. "Umsetzung" von Juden in Konzentrationslager [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, p. 266.

2. Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004), pp. 415–416, citing Abraham Bloch memoirs, MEL.

## RIGA (DÜNAWERKE)

Established in the city of Riga, with a planned capacity of 1,500 male and female Jewish prisoners, Dünawerke was 1 of 13 old and new quartering sites (*Kasernierungen*) formed or absorbed by the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp on August 18, 1943. On the date of its foundation, the subcamp had 398 prisoners.<sup>1</sup> Important information on this *Kasernierung* comes from survivor Lily Margules, who entered Kaiserwald and Dünawerke after the liquidation of the Vilna ghetto in September 1943. According to her account, the inmates performed construction work under the supervision of Organisation Todt (OT) personnel and older German guards who were unfit for frontline duty. The prisoners wore civilian clothing with white rings and white stripes painted on them in order to prevent escape. At Dünawerke, Margules and other prisoners hauled sand in wheelbarrows. "Russian" civilians who worked on the same job site were kind to the prisoners. The men's and women's compounds, she recalled, were in the same building but separated by "a very heavy door." The availability of water and beds made this *Kasernierung* relatively tolerable. Margules recalled that the camp leader (Lagerführer), who was an SS-Obersturmführer, had an illicit relationship with a Jewish woman from Berlin that benefited the prisoners, as his treatment softened somewhat. According to Riga survivor and historian Alfred Winter, the Lagerführer was actually an Oberscharführer, which is more consistent with the ranks of known *Kasernierungen* leaders.<sup>2</sup>

Margules's sister, who for a time worked for the camp administration, contracted rheumatic fever while at Dünawerke. Unlike the fate suffered by many patients in the infirmaries of the Kaiserwald *Kasernierungen*, she received care from a German doctor, who gave her more than three weeks to recover. As Margules recognized, patients who stayed longer than three days were usually selected in operations (*Aktionen*) and murdered in the forests near Riga.<sup>3</sup>

As evidenced by the account of Golda Geller Lewinsohn Klein, there were some transfers of prisoners between Dünawerke and the other *Kasernierungen*. Dispatched to Kaiserwald from the Vilna ghetto in late September 1943, Klein was sent to Dünawerke three days later. After five months, she and other prisoners were returned to Kaiserwald and reassigned to the

Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) camp at Riga-Strasdenhof.<sup>4</sup>

At Dünawerke, the prisoners composed poetry and songs to keep up their morale. Margules's friend Tosha, who subsequently perished, composed a song called "Dünawerke," which "tells us that . . . [the camp was] an island surrounded by waters and forests, and there are Jews from all [over] the world that work very hard and are constantly freezing in the cold weather. In the morning, it is still dark, but the bell rings and we have to go out, stand up and go to work. And we are asking the world why are the Jews punished? . . . For whose things are Jews being punished?"<sup>5</sup>

As part of the dissolution of Kaiserwald's *Kasernierungen*, Dünawerke closed in the summer of 1944. The prisoners were evacuated by ship via Danzig to Stutthof.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** This subcamp is briefly mentioned in Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die "Endlösung" in Riga: Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–1944* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), p. 405. Dünawerke is described in some detail in Alfred Winter, *The Ghetto of Riga and Continuance* (Monroe, CT: Self-pub., 1998), pp. 112–113. This account must be used with due caution, as the author, who was a survivor of the Riga ghetto and Kaiserwald concentration camp, synthesizes many uncited survivors' accounts and continually employs the first-person plural in describing Kaiserwald and its *Kasernierungen*, making it difficult to distinguish what he personally witnessed from what he pieced together from other survivors' accounts. It is listed as having separate women's and men's camps in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 250.

Primary sources for Dünawerke begin with its listing in the documents compiled by Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces the Riga Stadtkommissar's memorandum on the Riga-Kaiserwald *Kasernierungen* of August 18, 1943, and copied from NARA. The affidavit of Golda Geller Lewinsohn Klein was submitted in the class-action suit against AEG brought by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims against Germany. It is located in USHMMA, RG-12.004.02\*04, Benjamin Ferencz Collection, Claims against German Industrial Firms Records, 1952–1994. The most detailed account of Dünawerke is found in USHMMA, RG-50.030\*0150, Lily Margules oral history interview, January 3, 1990, which is available in videotape and transcript.

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## NOTES

1. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. "Umsetzung" von Juden in Konzentrationslager [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum*



und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944 (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, p. 265.

2. USHMMA, RG-50.030\*0150, Lily Margules oral history interview, January 3, 1990, transcript, pp. 1, 13, 15 (quotation), 16.

3. Ibid., pp. 16–17.

4. USHMMA, RG-12.004.02\*04, Benjamin Ferencz Collection, unsigned affidavit of Golda Geller Lewinsohn Klein, BM-SG/HI/Imi, October 1, 1958, Betr.: AEG, p. 1.

5. Margules interview transcript, p. 17.

6. Ibid., p. 18.

### **RIGA (HEERESKRAFTFAHRZEUGPARK, HIRTENSTRASSE) [AKA PARK]**

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), Riga-Kaiserwald established a quartering site (*Kasernierung*) at Hirtenstrasse, Riga, at the end of January 1944. Called “Park,” Hirtenstrasse provided male and female Jewish prisoner labor for an army vehicle repair facility (Heereskraftfahrzeugpark [HKP]). It was the second HKP *Kasernierung* formed in Riga; the first had already been established by August 18, 1943. The subcamp closed on August 6, 1944, as the SS closed the *Kasernierung* during the Red Army’s advance, and the survivors were eventually sent by ship and barge to Stutthof.

**SOURCES** The only source for the Hirtenstrasse subcamp is ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 251, where the men’s and women’s camps are listed separately.

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### **RIGA (HEERESKRAFTFAHRZEUGPARK)**

On August 18, 1943, the SS established a quartering site (*Kasernierung*) for male Jewish prisoners for the army vehicle repair installation (Heereskraftfahrzeugpark, HKP) in the city of Riga. Located near the Spilwe (Spilva) airport, this camp held 1,000 male Jewish prisoners from the Riga ghetto, then in the process of being liquidated by the Germans. According to the Stadtkommissar of Riga, it held 375 prisoners when it began operating. HKP was 1 of the original 13 *Kasernierungen* established or absorbed by the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp.<sup>1</sup> According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), the SS established a second HKP *Kasernierung* at Hirtenstrasse in Riga in late January 1944 [see Riga-Kaiserwald/Riga (Heereskraftfahrzeugpark, Hirtenstrasse)]. According to survivor Max Kaufmann, the prisoners from the two *Kasernierungen* were able to maintain some informal communications.<sup>2</sup>

On December 15, 1943, the camp leader (Lagerführer) of Riga-Spilwe, SS-Hauptscharführer Gustav Sorge, also assumed command at HKP. He had only been appointed camp leader at Spilwe on December 1. A staff member at the Esterwegen and Sachsenhausen concentration camps whose career in the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) dated back

to 1934, and who had even been a guard at the Esterwegen early camp in 1933, Sorge lived up to his nickname “Iron Gustav” (Eiserne Gustav). During the two years prior to taking command at Spilwe, he had been Arbeitseinsatzführer at the Herzogenbusch main concentration camp [aka Vught] in the Netherlands and served in the summer of 1943 on a “bandit”-hunting (antipartisan) detail for the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Ostland. At Spilwe, Sorge had already imposed a severe regime along IKL lines. On January 31, 1944, he was transferred from Spilwe and HKP to the massive Kaiserwald subcamp at Dondangen. At HKP, Sorge’s replacement was SS-Hauptscharführer Ludwig Blatterspiel (called in some survivor testimonies “Platterspiel”). After the September–October 1944 evacuation of Kaiserwald, Sorge assumed command of SS-Baubrigade XII (Construction Brigade XII) in November 1944, which was organized at Sachsenhausen. U.S. troops captured him on April 28, 1945, and held him in the SS internment camp at Bad Kreuznach.<sup>3</sup>

Prisoners at HKP repaired vehicles for the German army. Although the ITS listed HKP as a men’s camp, there were some Jewish women held there as well, according to survivor Josef Katz. Katz was a German Jew from Lübeck who entered HKP in the late spring or early summer of 1944. At Kaiserwald, Katz was assigned to a gardening detail to be established at HKP, but upon arrival at HKP, he was arbitrarily dispatched to Spilwe, where he worked on airstrips. After repeated entreaties, he finally gained admittance to HKP’s gardening detail, where he worked with another Jewish man and five Jewish women. The Kommando raised vegetables, fruit, and flowers. As Katz recalled, the Red Army Air Force bombed HKP in July 1944. Unlike other concentration camps inside and outside the Reich, the prisoners were able to enter an air-raid shelter during the attack.<sup>4</sup>

According to Katz, Kaiserwald’s SS medic (Sanitätsdienstgrad), SS-Oberscharführer Heinz Günther Wisner (misspelled “Wiesner” in Katz’s account), carried out a mass selection at HKP in June 1944. During this “operation” (*Aktion*), the euphemism used at Riga for selections for murder, Wisner ordered 40 men and 30 women to board trucks, which took them, in another Riga euphemism, to the “base command” (Stützpunktkommando), the nearby forests where they were murdered. Born Heinz von Wisotzky, Wisner had served since 1939 as an SS orderly at Stutthof and Flossenbürg. Promoted to Unterscharführer in the summer of 1943, Wisner joined the Kaiserwald staff on November 1, 1943, where he subsequently advanced in rank to Oberscharführer. Known to the prisoners as “Dr. Wisner,” he was sentenced in 1985 to five years’ imprisonment by a Düsseldorf court, in connection with the selections committed at Riga *Kasernierungen*, as well as homicides committed in the Riga-Kaiserwald main camp. The prosecution did not charge him in connection with selections at HKP, however. By the time of his arrest in 1979, Wisner had retired from a mechanical engineering firm located in Düsseldorf.<sup>5</sup>

HKP was closed on August 6, 1944, and the prisoners were marched to the port of Riga, where they boarded the

*Bremerhaven* with almost 6,400 other prisoners. After three days below decks in overcrowded and filthy conditions, the *Bremerhaven's* prisoners were sent via barges on the Vistula River to Stutthof.

In 1959, the Bonn Landgericht (Regional Court) sentenced Spilwe's former Lagerführer, Sorge, to life imprisonment plus 15 years for the murder of 67 prisoners and for 20 additional attempted murders. Inexplicably, the charges against him did not involve his service in Riga.

**SOURCES** The Heereskraftfahrzeugpark Kasernierung of Riga-Kaiserwald is described in Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn, intro. by Steven Springfield (1947; repr., Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1999), pp. 373–381, and from his personal testimony about Hirtenstrasse, in pp. 382–393. It is listed as a men's camp in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 251. The Wisner case (Lfd. Nr. 896) will be included in a forthcoming volume of *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* but is listed cursorily on the publication's Web site at [www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv](http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv). The author would like to thank Dick de Mildt for furnishing supplementary biographical information on Wisner. Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004), p. 411, reports that 6,382 boarded the *Bremerhaven*.

Primary sources for Riga (Heereskraftfahrzeugpark) begin with the document collection by Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces the Riga Stadtkommissar's memorandum on the Riga-Kaiserwald Kasernierungen of August 18, 1943, and copied from NARA. Investigation files for Wisner are available at ZLNW-K under the heading 130 Js 2/78 (Z). The case of Gustav Sorge (8 Ks 1/58) is found in Lfd. Nr. 473, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 15: 399–658 (Amsterdam, 1976). A published testimony of HKP is Josef Katz, *One Who Came Back: The Diary of a Jewish Survivor*, trans. Hilda Reach (New York: Herzl Press and Bergen-Belsen Memorial Press, 1973).

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## NOTES

1. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. "Umsetzung" von Juden in Konzentrationslager [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, p. 266.

2. Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn, intro. by Steven Springfield (1947; repr., Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1999), p. 387.

3. Sorge Urteil, 8 Ks 1/58, Lfd. Nr. 473, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 15: 415–421 (Amsterdam, 1976); Josef Katz, *One Who Came Back: The Diary of a Jewish Survivor*, trans. Hilda

Reach (New York: Herzl Press and Bergen-Belsen Memorial Press, 1973), pp. 159–160.

4. Katz, *One Who Came Back*, pp. 159–163.

5. Ibid., pp. 168–169.

## RIGA (LENTA) (SD-WERKSTÄTTE)

On August 18, 1943, the Stadtkommissar for Riga listed the Lenta Security Service (Sicherheitsdienst [SD]) Workshop (Werkstätte) as 1 of 13 quartering sites (*Kasernierungen*) established or absorbed by the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp. On that date, this Kasernierung held 1,083 Jews, with a planned capacity of 2,000.<sup>1</sup> Named after the Latvian word for "ribbon," Lenta was located in the Dūna area, near the Dünawerke Kasernierung, but originated as an old Kasernierung at Washington Platz and Peter-Holm-Strasse in downtown Riga. Lenta consisted of three separate sites: the textile workshop at Washington Platz; a small SS clothing depot at Peter-Hohn-Strasse; and Lenta, which was formed only in July–August 1943 and which by itself held over 900 prisoners. The camp had bathing facilities and an infirmary. The International Tracing Service (ITS) erroneously listed Lenta as a men's camp, but according to historian and journalist Anita Kugler, it held women prisoners as well.

Under the commandant, SS-Untersturmführer Fritz Scherwitz, Lenta consisted of a multifaceted complex of lucrative workshops. Although its core mission was to supply high-quality tailored uniforms for the SS, the Kasernierung also held furriers, bookbinders, photo developers, gold- and silversmiths, automobile repairmen, and skilled construction workers. Scherwitz, a police official before his promotion to Untersturmführer in August 1943, deployed skilled artisans from the Riga ghetto. For two weeks in August 1943, he participated in Operation Heinrich, an antipartisan campaign in Minsk organized by the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Ostland, SS-Obergruppenführer Friedrich Jeckeln, serving as a supply officer and bringing with him a detail of 20 Lenta prisoners for assistance.<sup>2</sup> Inside Lenta, he often protected Jewish forced laborers and their families in order to raise productivity. Scherwitz "aryanized" his Jewish girlfriend, Tamara Sherman, with false identity papers and did the same for Boris Rudow, although not for Rudow's brothers. Rudow managed the Washington Platz workshop. These incidents and the generally lax discipline prompted the Riga SD allegedly to call him the "King of the Jews" (*Judenkönig*).<sup>3</sup> Although Riga-Kaiserwald rarely interfered with the running of the Lenta camp, which most closely fit the SD model of quasi-autonomous small concentration camps, not an Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) camp, Scherwitz's perceived softness and devotion to productivity led to the appointment of harsh co-commandants, called "guard officers" (*Bewachungsoffizieren*).<sup>4</sup> These appointments took place at the behest of Chief of the Sicherheitspolizei (Sipo) and SD in Riga Dr. Rudolf Lange, who had overseen Einsatzgruppen killings in Latvia, was an attendee at the Wannsee Conference on January 20, 1942, and was Scherwitz's superior.<sup>5</sup>

From August 1943 until April 1944, Sipo official SS-Untersturmführer Eduard Roschmann directed the camp along with Scherwitz. A Jewish affairs specialist, Roschmann exercised little influence at Lenta until the completion of the Riga ghetto's liquidation on November 2, 1943, and the departure of Scherwitz on a business trip to France, in December 1943, for the procurement of luxury goods. In Scherwitz's absence, Roschmann arrested Tamara Sherman. After his return in January 1944, Scherwitz reportedly offered a bribe of 20,000 Reichsmark (RM) to secure her release. Imposing a harsh regime, Roschmann instituted the IKL practice of 25 cane blows for punishment and construed work accidents as sabotage. Dismissing two Latvian Jews from the subcamp's ghetto-like prisoner police force (Jewish ghetto police, Ordnungsdienst), he appointed a German Jew, named Levi or Levy, from Cologne as its head. As Roschmann's factotum, Levi instituted a search for so-called organizers (thieves), seizing stolen goods and punishing the offenders, in some cases, resulting in their torture. Roschmann transferred 250 less productive prisoners to the SS factory (*Betrieb*) at Strasdenhof on the orders of Kaiserwald commandant SS-Sturmbannführer Albert Sauer. According to Kugler, Lenta's population declined to 550 by January 1944. In light of these conditions, 4 male prisoners, Hirschberg, Schnaider, Juter, and Juter's son, escaped and reached the home of Janis and Johanna Lipke. The Lipkes sheltered almost 40 Jews, nearly two-fifths of the 103 Jews rescued in Latvia. In 1989, Yad Vashem honored them with the Righteous among the Nations medal.

According to Kugler, the combination of mismanagement and escapes led to Roschmann's removal in April 1944. Roschmann's successor as co-commandant was the lower-ranking SS-Hauptscharführer Robert Nickel, whom Roschmann had appointed as a guard in February 1944 on the strength of Nickel's performance at the Salaspils police camp. More pragmatic than Roschmann, Nickel cooperated with Scherwitz and the prisoner staff in the improvement of production and somewhat relaxed his predecessor's regime. According to prisoner Werner Sauer, Scherwitz and Nickel even organized tennis and European football matches for the prisoners. Sauer's building Kommando team wore red-trimmed black pants with red shirts with a mason's trowel as team symbol, while the furriers had blue-and-white-striped shirts emblazoned with a fox symbol.<sup>6</sup>

In June 1944, Scherwitz returned to France for another procurement trip. After his return, as other Kasernierungen prepared for evacuation, Scherwitz marched nearly all of Lenta's prisoners to the police camp at Salaspils on July 31, 1944. At Salaspils the Lenta inmates were segregated by gender but housed in a separate part of the camp. They were not generally subjected to Salaspils's harsh regime. As Kaiserwald's camp doctor (Lagerarzt) Sturmbannführer Eduard Krebsbach and SS medic (Sanitätsdienstgrad) SS-Oberscharführer Heinz Günther Wisner undertook mass selections in the various Kasernierungen for the killing of Jews no longer capable of working, called *Aktionen*, it is pos-

sible that Scherwitz sought by this abrupt move to forestall a selection. If this were the case, then he only delayed it, because after the prisoners' return to Lenta, on August 8 or 9, 1944, 110 prisoners by Kugler's estimate were dispatched to the "base command" (Stützpunktkommando), the Kaiserwald euphemism for murder in the neighboring forests. Scherwitz used his influence to spare at least one family. Some 300 of the surviving Lenta prisoners boarded the *Kanonier* on August 24 or 25, 1944, in a transport that totaled 3,155 prisoners. After crossing the Baltic, the prisoners disembarked at Danzig, where barges then took them to the Stutthof concentration camp. Separately, Scherwitz took a smaller group of prisoners with him to Libau (Liepāja).

During the U.S. occupation of Bavaria, Scherwitz posed as a Lithuanian Jewish refugee named Eleke Scherwitz and claimed to be a Riga camp victim. As he worked for a survivors' association, former Lenta prisoners identified him to the Americans. Transferred from U.S. to Bavarian custody, where he called himself Erika (Eleken) Sirewitz, a Jew who joined the SS in 1943, Scherwitz was tried for murdering three escapees in August 1944. Listed in the case under a variant spelling of one of his aliases, "Elke S.," the court described him as a "full Jew" (*Volljude*).<sup>7</sup> Kugler argues that the Bavarians eagerly tried him because of his alleged Jewishness. As discovered by investigator Christel Paulsen in 1950 at the Berlin Document Center (BDC), then run by the U.S. Department of State, Scherwitz's Nazi Party card revealed his date of birth as August 21, 1903, not August 8, 1910. While the BDC card listed his SS number as 51561, which indicated entrance into the SS before the Nazi takeover, his SS autobiography (*Lebenslauf*) showed an SS number of 241935 with entry into the SS in 1933.<sup>8</sup> After a complicated series of legal proceedings, Scherwitz was sentenced to six years' imprisonment with credit for two years of time served. He died in 1962.

**SOURCES** The most important source for the Lenta Kasernierung of the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp and its commandant is the provocatively titled book by Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004). For a less sympathetic interpretation of Scherwitz, see Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die "Endlösung" in Riga: Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–1944* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006). This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 251. A short biography of Janis Lipke may be found at [www1.yad-vashem.org/righteous/index-righteous.html](http://www1.yad-vashem.org/righteous/index-righteous.html).

Primary sources for this subcamp begin with the documents compiled by Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces the Riga Stadtkommissar's memorandum on the Riga-Kaiserwald Kasernierungen of August 18, 1943. Scherwitz's trials are summarized in Lfd. Nr. 227, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 7: 137–146, Amsterdam, 1971, but the excerpts



contain little useful information on Lenta and reproduce Scherwitz's false identity. The Scherwitz cases are listed as LG München 1 Ks 26/49, OLG München 1 Ss 70/49, and Bayerischen OLG I, III 16/50. Kugler makes extensive use of the original prosecution and trial records, which include testimonies and Scherwitz's scanty personnel records. The trial records are held at BHStA-(M), Sta. München, Sirewitz Verfahren, 17434; and Gsta. OLG München Nr. 207 (Sirewitz). Scherwitz's personnel card is available in the SSO collection at BA-B. Kugler reproduces his Lebenslauf in the photographic section. As cited by Kugler, two unpublished survivors' accounts for this camp are Werner Sauer's "Mensch unter Menschen" (unpub. MSS, n.d., YVA 033/4126); and Abraham Bloch's letters and memoirs in Russian and Yiddish, which are available at MEL. Lange's listing as a participant in the Wannsee Conference may be found in John Mendelssohn, ed., *The Holocaust: Selected Documents in Eighteen Volumes*, vol. 11, *The Wannsee Protocol and a 1944 Report on Auschwitz by the Office of Strategic Services*, intro. Robert Wolfe (New York: Garland, 1982).

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## NOTES

1. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. "Umsetzung" von Juden in Konzentrationslager [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland: Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944"* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, p. 265.

2. Scherwitz statement, StA-M, Sta. München, Sirewitz Verfahren, 17434, as cited in Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004), p. 371.

3. Scherwitz statement, August 1, 1950, Sta. I München, in *ibid.*, p. 384.

4. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 354.

5. NG-2586, Wannsee Protocol, January 20, 1942, in John Mendelssohn, ed., *The Holocaust: Selected Documents in Eighteen Volumes*, vol. 11, *The Wannsee Protocol and a 1944 Report on Auschwitz by the Office of Strategic Services*, intro. Robert Wolfe (New York: Garland, 1982), p. 2.

6. Werner Sauer, "Mensch unter Menschen" (unpub. MSS, n.d., YVA 033/4126), n.p., cited in Kugler, *Scherwitz*, pp. 395–396.

7. As quoted in Schwurgericht Urteil, OLG München, July 13, 1949, 1 Ss 70/49, Lfd. Nr. 227, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 7: 141, Amsterdam, 1971.

8. BDCPF Scherwitz, BA-B, cited in Kugler, *Scherwitz*, p. 342.

## RIGA (MÜHLGRABEN) [AKA ULTRA]

On July 7, 1943, Chief of the Sicherheitspolizei (Sipo) und Sicherheitsdienst (SD) in Riga Dr. Rudolf Lange designated Mühlgraben (Milgravis) a quarterming site (*Kasernierungen*) for the deployment of at least 1,000 Jewish inhabitants from the Riga ghetto, which was then in the process of being liqui-

dated.<sup>1</sup> On August 18, 1943, the Stadtkommissar Riga confirmed Mühlgraben's inclusion among the *Kasernierungen* absorbed or established by the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp. Although the site was supposed to hold 1,300 prisoners, it had 737 at the time.<sup>2</sup> Other accounts place the camp's total population at 1,500 Jewish prisoners.<sup>3</sup> The Mühlgraben inmates worked for the Army Clothing Office 701 (Armeebekleidungsamt [ABA]), which sorted and repaired soiled and damaged uniforms for the German army. The camp was situated inside a former Latvian chemical factory called Lēverkūzi Ultramarina fabrics, which once had commercial ties to the German IG Farbenindustrie AG chemical concern. Called "Ultra" by some prisoners, the camp betrayed signs of its original purpose, as everything inside the complex had been painted blue, according to survivor Hilde Sherman-Zander, and the main sorting operations and roll calls took place in the former "gas hall" (*Gasballe*). Segregated by gender, the prisoners lived in two "community rooms" (*Gemeinschaftsräumen*). The camp population originally included children as well as adults.<sup>4</sup>

The camp administration belonged exclusively to the German army. Unteroffizier Heinz Müller was the camp leader (Lagerführer), and his deputy was Obergefreiter Franz Schwellenberg (or Schwellenbach). It is possible that Schwellenberg may have been an SD or police member.<sup>5</sup> The soldiers mistreated and harassed the prisoners. Former Mühlgraben prisoners attested to the brutality, recalling that Schwellenberg threatened to beat "black and blue" anyone caught stealing military uniforms.<sup>6</sup> Jakov Galanter remembered that punishments included 25 blows with a cane. The work pace imposed upon the prisoners, he reported, was frenetic.<sup>7</sup>

Mühlgraben had a penal column (Strafkommando), which held prisoners deemed guilty of minor infractions or whose work pace was too slow. Hilde Sherman-Zander was assigned to the penal detachment on two occasions, respectively, for three and four weeks. In one instance her work performance was judged inadequate, and in the second, she was caught with books in her possession and thus punished for holding contraband.<sup>8</sup> Another prisoner in the penal detachment, Erwin Sekules, hauled wagons filled with wood at the double for six hours straight, which resulted in his being brought to the camp infirmary in a state of utter exhaustion. The prisoner doctor, Dr. Josef (called "Dr. Joseph" in some survivors' accounts), a Jewish physician from Vienna, warned that additional labor would kill him. Nevertheless, Sekules was dispatched on yet another penal detail shortly afterward.<sup>9</sup>

As was the case at the Riga (Lenta) quartering site, Mühlgraben had a Jewish Ordnungsdienst (OD) that kept internal order. From Zander's testimony, which named some of the Jewish "police," the army displayed a degree of favoritism toward German over Latvian Jews in the appointment of OD members.<sup>10</sup>

In May 1944, the ABA opened a second *Kasernierung* at Krottingen, on behalf of ABA 709. For this camp, the army dispatched approximately 200 Mühlgraben inmates to form this subcamp.<sup>11</sup>

According to Max Kaufmann, who produced the earliest chronicle of the Holocaust in Latvia, Kaiserwald camp doctor (Lagerarzt) SS-Sturmbannführer Eduard Krebsbach and SS medic (Sanitätsdienstgrad) Heinz Günther Wisner selected children at Mühlgraben. The selections, called “operations” (*Aktionen*) at Kaiserwald, involved the removal by truck of weakened and youthful prisoners who were then shot in the forest. In the Kaiserwald euphemism, the unknown destination of these victims was the “base camp command” (Stützpunktkommando). Although Mühlgraben was not cited in Wisner’s indictment, Kaufmann’s claim accorded with the pattern of the *Aktionen* that took place in other Kaiserwald subcamps in the Riga area, for which Wisner was held responsible at his 1985 trial in Düsseldorf. Survivor testimony further underscored Kaufmann’s charge. According to Sherman-Zander, three major selections occurred at Mühlgraben: the first was the “January [1944] Aktion,” during which 24 children and about half the adult population were selected for murder. The second selection occurred while Sherman-Zander was kept in the infirmary. The timely intervention of Dr. Josef prevented her selection, but most of the patients were taken away. The third Aktion occurred on or around August 6, 1944, shortly before the camp was evacuated.<sup>12</sup>

Most of the remaining Mühlgraben prisoners were evacuated by sea on a harrowing three-day journey aboard the *Bremerhaven* to Danzig. From the port of Danzig, the survivors proceeded via barges on the Vistula River to Stutthof. Although the International Tracing Service (ITS) listed the official closure date for the Mühlgraben men’s and women’s camps as August 6, 1944, Sherman-Zander recalled that a small detachment of prisoners, including herself, remained behind to operate the clothing depot, until shortly before the Germans abandoned Riga to the Soviets. Sherman-Zander dated her evacuation, aboard the *Sanga*, to late October 1944. The prisoners in her transport were dispatched to Libau (Liepāja).<sup>13</sup>

**SOURCES** The earliest mention of the Mühlgraben Kasernierung of the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp appears in Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn, intro. Steven Springfield (1947; repr., Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1999), pp. 402–403, where Kaufmann accused Krebsbach and Wisner (misspelled Kressbach and Wiesner) of conducting selections at Mühlgraben. The subcamp is briefly mentioned in Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die “Endlösung” in Riga: Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–1944* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), pp. 400, 403; and Margers Vestermanis, *Juden in Riga: Auf den Spuren des Lebens und Wirkens einer ermordeten Minderheit; ein historischer Wegweiser* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1995), pp. 70–71. Mühlgraben is listed as men’s and women’s subcamps in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 252. The Wisner case (Lfd. Nr. 896) will be included in a forthcoming volume of *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* but is listed cursorily on the publication’s Web site at [www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv](http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv). The author would like to thank Dick de Mildt for furnishing supplementary biographical information on Wisner.

Primary sources for Mühlgraben begin with its listing in the documents compiled by Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im “Reichskommissariat Ostland”: Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces the Riga Stadtkommissar’s memorandum on the Riga-Kaiserwald Kasernierungen of August 18, 1943, and copied from NARA. As cited by Angrick and Klein, Lange’s conference discussing Mühlgraben can be found in BA-B, R 91 (Gebietskommissare im Geschäftsbereich des Reichskommissars für das Ostland)/164. Investigation files for Wisner are available at ZLNW-K under heading 130 Js 2/78 (Z). Unpublished testimony may be found in P III h. No. 1034, Erwin Sekules (and 11 others), Evidence against “Unteroffizier” Franz Schwellenberg, August 17, 1947, in *Testaments to the Holocaust*, originally WL, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>. The survivors listed in this testimony are Erwin Sekules, Else Sekules, Rosa Federmann, Malli Federmann, Sofi Billig, Karl Schneider, Heinz Rosenhain, Cläre Rosenhain, Hilde Lehmann, Erika Manne, Martin Manne, and Ilse Herzberg. In the same collection may be found P III h. no. 1034a, Statement of Karl Schneider, Evidence against “Unteroffizier” Franz Schwellenberg, August 17, 1947; and P III h. No. 1034 c, Statement of Jakov Galanter, Evidence against “Unteroffizier” Franz Schwellenbach, September 3, 1947. Two testimonies by the same witness on the subcamps at Mühlgraben and Krottingen are also found in *Testaments*: P III h. No. 283 (Riga), Statement of Mrs. Johanna Rosenthal, n.d.; and P III h. No. 538 (Riga), Statement of Mrs. Johanna Rosenthal, June 26, 1945. Also see the detailed published testimony by Hilde Sherman-Zander, *Zwischen Tag und Dunkel: Mädchenjahre im Ghetto* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1993).

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## NOTES

1. BA-B, R 91/164, n.p., Der Geb.-Komm. Riga, Judeinsatz, Bericht betr.: “Umsetzung der Juden in Lager nicht unter 1000 Mann,” July 8, 1943, cited in Andrej Angrick and Peter Klein, *Die “Endlösung” in Riga: Ausbeutung und Vernichtung 1941–1944* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006), p. 403.

2. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. “Umsetzung” von Juden in Konzentrationslager [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im “Reichskommissariat Ostland”: Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, p. 266.

3. P III h. No. 1034, Erwin Sekules (and 11 others), Evidence against “Unteroffizier” Franz Schwellenberg, August 17, 1947, p. 2, in *Testaments to the Holocaust*, orig. WL, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>.

4. Hilde Sherman-Zander, *Zwischen Tag und Dunkel: Mädchenjahre im Ghetto* (Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1993), pp. 90–91; P III h. No. 1034, Erwin Sekules (and 11 others), Evidence against “Unteroffizier” Franz Schwellenberg, August 17, 1947, p. 2.

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5. P III h. No. 1034a, Karl Schneider, Evidence against “Unteroffizier” Franz Schwellenberg, August 17, 1947, in *Testaments to the Holocaust*, pp. 1–2.

6. Quoted in P III h. No. 1034, Erwin Sekules (and 11 others), Evidence against “Unteroffizier” Franz Schwellenberg, August 17, 1947, p. 3.

7. P III h. No. 1034c, Statement of Jakov Galanter, Evidence against “Unteroffizier” Franz Schwellenberg, September 3, 1947, p. 1.

8. Sherman-Zander, *Zwischen Tag und Dunkel*, p. 94.

9. P III h. No. 1034, Erwin Sekules (and 11 others), Evidence against “Unteroffizier” Franz Schwellenberg, August 17, 1947, pp. 3–4.

10. Sherman-Zander, *Zwischen Tag und Dunkel*, p. 92.

11. P III h. No. 538 (Riga), Statement of Mrs. Johanna Rosenthal, June 26, 1945, p. 4.

12. Sherman-Zander, *Zwischen Tag und Dunkel*, pp. 91, 95–96, 99–100.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 101–103.

## RIGA (REICHSBAHN)

The SS established a quartering site (*Kasernierung*) for 600 male and female Jewish prisoners on August 18, 1943, to work for the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways). This *Kasernierung* was 1 of the original 13 absorbed from the Riga ghetto, then in the process of liquidation, or established by the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp. On the date of its first mention, in a memorandum from the Stadtkommissar of Riga concerning the reorganization of the ghetto's *Kasernierungen*, the Reichsbahn camp held 192 Jewish prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

According to Riga ghetto and Kaiserwald survivor Alfred Winter, who has compiled prisoner testimonies on this camp, the inmates were mostly skilled workers who repaired railway equipment under the direction of Reichsbahn personnel. The work pace was unrelenting, but the prisoners had marginally better living conditions, including weekly showers, than in other *Kasernierungen*. Some overseers took care of their work detachments in the name of improving performance. The work day began with a scramble for usable tools, which were in perennially short supply. As was common elsewhere in the Riga camps, the imposition of concentration camp uniforms and haircuts, including the cropping of women's hair, began only shortly before the camp's dissolution.

In preparation for the evacuation, the Kaiserwald medical staff conducted a selection, or *Aktion*, as Riga prisoners called it, at the Reichsbahn camp on July 27, 1944. Present were Kaiserwald's camp doctor (*Lagerarzt*) Dr. Eduard Krebsbach and the SS medic (*Sanitätsdienstgrad*) Heinz Günther Wisner. Forcing the male and then the female prisoners to run naked past a reviewing area, Krebsbach and Wisner dispatched the weakest by truck to the “base camp command” (*Stützpunktkommando*), a Kaiserwald euphemism for murder in the nearby forests. Krebsbach was previously the *Lagerarzt* at Mauthausen, where, in a play on his name, he was called “The Needle” (*Spritzbach*). Born Heinz von Wisotzky, Wis-

ner had served since 1939 as an SS orderly at Stutthof and Flossenbürg. Promoted to *Unterscharführer* in the summer of 1943, Wisner joined the Kaiserwald staff on November 1, 1943, where he subsequently advanced in rank to *Oberscharführer*. Known to the prisoners as “Dr. Wisner,” he was sentenced in 1985 to five years' imprisonment by a Düsseldorf court, in connection with the selections committed at this and other Riga *Kasernierungen*, as well as homicides committed in the Kaiserwald main camp. By the time of his arrest in 1979, Wisner had retired from a mechanical engineering firm located in Düsseldorf.

On August 6, 1944, as the Red Army closed on Riga, the SS conducted the remaining Reichsbahn prisoners to the port of Riga, where they boarded the *Bremerhaven* with almost 6,400 other prisoners from Riga's *Kasernierungen*. This departure marked the first stage in the evacuation of the Kaiserwald camps. After a harrowing three-day journey aboard ship, they arrived in Danzig and proceeded by barge to the Stutthof concentration camp.

**SOURCES** This subcamp is discussed at some length in Alfred Winter, *The Ghetto of Riga and Continuance* (Monroe, CT: Self-published, 1998), pp. 114–115. This account must be used with caution, as the author does not cite his sources and often employs the first-person plural, making it difficult to separate his personal testimony from other accounts. The Reichsbahn subcamp is listed as separate men's and women's camps in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 242. The Wisner case (Lfd. Nr. 896) will be included in a forthcoming volume of *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* but is listed cursorily on the publication's Web site at [www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv](http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv). The author would like to thank Dick de Mildt for furnishing supplementary biographical information on Wisner. Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004), p. 411, reports that 6,382 boarded the *Bremerhaven*.

Primary sources for this subcamp begin with its listing in the document collection by Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im “Reichskommissariat Ostland”: Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces the Riga Stadtkommissar's memorandum on the Riga-Kaiserwald *Kasernierungen* of August 18, 1943, and copied from NARA. Investigation files for Wisner are available at ZLNW-K under heading 130 Js 2/78 (Z).

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## NOTE

1. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. “Umsetzung” von Juden in Konzentrationslager [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im “Reichskommissariat Ostland”: Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, p. 266.



## RIGA (TRUPPENWIRTSCHAFTSLAGER)

According to the Stadtkommissar of Riga, the Troop Supply Camp (Truppenwirtschaftslager, TWL) was one of the quarantining sites (*Kasernierungen*) established or absorbed by the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp during the liquidation of the Riga ghetto. First mentioned on August 18, 1943, the subcamp was intended to hold 700 prisoners, of whom 419 were already quartered at TWL on that date.<sup>1</sup> Located only a few miles from the Kaiserwald main camp at Mežaparks, some of its prisoners originated from the old Kasernierung for the Reichskommissariat Ostland (RKO). According to survivor and Riga chronicler Max Kaufmann, some 350 men, women, and children entered TWL from the Reichskommissariat's quarantining site during the reorganization. TWL's prisoners sorted clothing and other supplies for the German army.

Among the TWL prisoners was Steven Springfield, who volunteered to work in this subcamp in order to escape the vicious conditions inside Kaiserwald. After learning that his older brother and father had been dispatched from the ghetto to Kaiserwald, Springfield attempted to get word to them to volunteer for TWL as well. Regular exchanges of prisoners resulted in the establishment of tenuous lines of communication between prisoners in the TWL and Kaiserwald camps. In particular, TWL prisoners having dental problems had to report to Kaiserwald for treatment, which created opportunities for communications and smuggling. Feigning a toothache, Springfield reported for one such transport, bringing with him contraband socks stolen from the warehouse, in order to contact his family. Upon realizing that the prisoners faced a close search at the Kaiserwald gate, Springfield surreptitiously handed over the socks to a Latvian SS man. His move was too late, however, as another prisoner who had also tried to sneak socks into the main camp panicked and dropped his contraband on the ground. As Springfield's fellow prisoners knew he was carrying ill-gotten goods, and had not seen him hand them over to the Latvian guard, they pressured him into confessing to the SS, lest the remainder face retaliation. Springfield did so in the knowledge that someone else had committed the offense. Tortured in the Kaiserwald bunker, Springfield credited the TWL camp elder, David Kagan, who accompanied two infuriated German guards, with saving his life:

[A]s they entered the bunker, before the Germans had a chance to draw their guns, the camp *Ältester* [elder] started beating me, saying you lousy son of a gun. . . . How dare you . . . steal from the Germans, and kicked me and beat me and kicked me and beat me. I started bleeding profusely from all over my body and he beat me into unconsciousness. But somehow, ironically, that saved my life. He beat me so much that the Germans assumed that I was dead or close to dead. They just turned around and walked out, which I was told later because I was uncon-

scious. I was laying in this bunker for another two or three days and then finally the camp elder came and got me and took me back to [the TWL] camp and it is something which I have never forgotten. Mr. Kagan who did not have a very good reputation from everybody because a lot of people felt that he was too strict and sometimes too merciless, but I must, if I want to be honest, I really have to admit that if not for him I wouldn't be alive today.<sup>2</sup>

Just prior to the camp's evacuation in the summer of 1944, the Kaiserwald medical staff conducted a mass selection of weakened prisoners at TWL. Present were Kaiserwald's camp doctor (Lagerarzt) Dr. Eduard Krebsbach and the SS medic (Sanitätsdienstgrad) Heinz Günther Wisner. Krebsbach and Wisner dispatched the victims by truck to the "base camp command" (Stützpunktkommando), a Kaiserwald euphemism for murder in the nearby forests. Krebsbach was previously the Lagerarzt at Mauthausen, where, in a play on his name, he was called "The Needle" (Spritzbach). Born Heinz von Wisotzky, Wisner had served since 1939 as an SS orderly at Stutthof and Flossenbürg. Promoted to Unterscharführer in the summer of 1943, Wisner joined the Kaiserwald staff on November 1, 1943, where he subsequently advanced in rank to Oberscharführer. Known to the prisoners as "Dr. Wisner," he was sentenced in 1985 to five years' imprisonment by a Düsseldorf court, in connection with the selections committed at this and other Riga Kasernierungen, as well as homicides committed in the Kaiserwald main camp. By the time of his arrest in 1979, Wisner had retired from a mechanical engineering firm located in Düsseldorf.

After succeeding in getting his father and older brother to transfer into TWL, Springfield witnessed the selections that took place in the camp. As his account makes clear, he had to protect his father against the selections:

In the meantime, periodically the Germans would come into our camp, line everybody up in front of a table where one of the Germans would sit. Everybody had to undress naked and walk in front of him, and if there was something he would not like on your body, any scar or anything like that, you went to the left, and left meant certain death. And my father who was an invalid and who was with us at that time yet still on many occasions he would have been doomed if . . . we're [un]able to save him by not letting him go into the line, by sneaking him out. When once I remember my father was taken out and sent to the left, and he was still standing there and waiting [for] the truck to take him away, and the German guard was walking back and forth, and as he turned his back I snuck in. I grabbed my father and pulled him out of there which at that time saved his life.<sup>3</sup>

Springfield's father subsequently perished at Stutthof concentration camp.

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), the TWL men's camp was dissolved on June 28, 1944, and the women's camp closed in October 1944. According to Springfield, however, the men did not evacuate the TWL subcamp until the fall of 1944. After the sea evacuation, which took them first to Stutthof near Danzig, some of the survivors were moved to one of the Magdeburg subcamps near Buchenwald, according to Kaufmann.

**SOURCES** The Riga (TWL) Kasernierung of Kaiserwald is briefly mentioned in Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn, intro. Steven Springfield (1947; repr., Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1999), pp. 412, 424. TWL is listed as men's and women's subcamps in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 254. The Wisner case (Lfd. Nr. 896) will be included in a forthcoming volume of *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* but is listed cursorily on the publication's Web site at [www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv](http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv). The author would like to thank Dick de Mildt for furnishing supplementary biographical information on Wisner.

Primary sources for this subcamp begin with its listing in the document collection by Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces the Riga Stadtkommissar's memorandum on the Riga-Kaiserwald Kasernierungen of August 18, 1943, and copied from NARA. Investigation files for Wisner are available at ZLNW-K under heading 130 Js 2/78 (Z). Steven Springfield provided an oral history of his ordeal in the Riga ghetto, Kaiserwald, and TWL, which is available in video and transcript form in USHMMA, RG-50.030\*0220, March 30, 1990. Born in Riga in 1923, Springfield is the former president of the Jewish Survivors of Latvia.

Joseph Robert White

## NOTES

1. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. "Umsetzung" von Juden in Konzentrationslager [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, p. 266.

2. USHMMA, RG-50.030\*0220, Steven Springfield interview (transcript), March 30, 1990, pp. 7–9.

3. Ibid., p. 9.

## RIGA-SPILWE

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), the SS established a quartering site (*Kasernierung*) for Jewish women at the Spilwe (Spilva) airport on July 5, 1943. On August 5, 1943, a men's camp also opened at the same site. The Luft-

waffe deployed the prisoners on construction and repair details at the airport, whose military significance increased with the Red Army's approach. On August 18, 1943, the Stadtkommissar of Riga reported that Spilwe's planned capacity was 1,500 prisoners, of which 775 were already on-site. Spilwe was 1 of the 13 original Kasernierungen absorbed or established by Kaiserwald.<sup>1</sup> The constant turnover due to horrific working conditions, mistreatment, selections, and epidemics has led one chronicler, Riga ghetto and Kaiserwald survivor Alfred Winter, to estimate that as many as 3,000 Jews passed through this camp.

Before the establishment of the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp in March 1943, a small Kasernierung of the Kovno ghetto existed at this site but worked only in support services for the Luftwaffe, not construction. Situated in the Ilgezener Brewery adjacent to the airport, this structure subsequently served as living quarters for the much-larger Spilwe Kasernierung under Kaiserwald's jurisdiction. Its limited space produced catastrophic overcrowding.

On December 1, 1943, SS-Hauptscharführer Gustav Sorge became Spilwe's camp leader (*Lagerführer*). A staff member at the Esterwegen and Sachsenhausen concentration camps whose career in the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) dated back to 1934, and who had even been a guard at the Esterwegen early camp in 1933, Sorge lived up to his nickname "Iron Gustav" (*Eiserne Gustav*). During the two years prior to taking command at Spilwe, he had been *Arbeits-einsatzführer* at Vught, the Herzogenbusch main camp, in the Netherlands and served in the summer of 1943 on a "bandit"-hunting (antipartisan) detail for the Higher SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Ostland. At Spilwe, the new *Lagerführer* imposed a harsh regime along IKL lines, in a departure from many of Kaiserwald's other Kasernierungen.<sup>2</sup> According to Winter, in one incident Sorge emptied the men's barracks one night and forced the prisoners, already weakened by hunger and exhaustion, to perform penal exercises and endure beatings. One former prisoner called this ordeal the "witches' dance," which was similar to collective punishments practiced in the early Emsland camps.<sup>3</sup> On December 15, 1943, Sorge also assumed command of the neighboring camp for army vehicle repair, the Heereskraftfahrzeugpark (HKP). Sorge's deputy at Spilwe was a Luftwaffe Gefreiter, Schuhmacher, who had already been an administrator at the Spilwe Kasernierung before its absorption by Kaiserwald. Schuhmacher enjoyed setting dogs upon the prisoners and otherwise complemented Sorge's brutality. Worsening the situation for the prisoners was the second camp elder (*Lagerältester*), "Mr. X," the nickname of Xavier Abel, the notorious camp elder and German criminal prisoner at Kaiserwald. After replacing the first camp elder, a German Jew named Kohn, Mr. X beat and otherwise harassed the Spilwe prisoners. On January 31, 1944, Sorge was transferred from Spilwe to the Kasernierung at Dondangen. After the September–October 1944 evacuation of Kaiserwald, Sorge assumed command of SS-Baubrigade (Construction Brigade) XII in November 1944, which was organized at Sachsenhausen.

U.S. troops captured him on April 28, 1945, and held him in the SS internment camp at Bad Kreuznach. Sorge's replacement at Spilwe was Dondangen's erstwhile camp leader SS-Oberscharführer Gröschel. Gröschel lost his post at Dondangen because of chronic alcoholism and mismanagement. At Spilwe, he proved susceptible to bribery and drink, in the form of alcohol pilfered by a prisoner, which somewhat tempered his violent behavior.<sup>4</sup>

Spilwe's male and female prisoners worked for the construction firms of Wolf und Döring, Firma Müller, and Organisation Todt (OT), which repaired and maintained the Spilwe airport. The work consisted of laying steel matting on airstrips, hauling heavy construction materials, and other hard labor. Some of the women were transferred to the Kauen/Schaulen subcamp in the spring of 1944, but the ITS erred in claiming that the women's camp closed in April of that year, because Hungarian Jewish women were dispatched to Spilwe from Auschwitz II-Birkenau in June 1944. According to Winter, these women brought the Spilwe prisoners the first reports about gas chambers and crematories.

Josef Katz, a German Jew from Lübeck, was held at both the Spilwe and HKP camps in the spring of 1944. Although he was originally dispatched to work in a garden at HKP, the SS on-site arbitrarily transferred him to Spilwe, where he worked on airfield repair under OT supervision. The Hungarian women at Spilwe, reported Katz, were worked to death. After repeated importuning, Katz succeeded in gaining a place in the garden Kommando at HKP.<sup>5</sup>

The infirmary at Spilwe was little more than a place to die or to be selected for murder. In the spring of 1944, Emil Würth-Tscherne entered Spilwe as a prisoner orderly (Sanitäter). A political prisoner who held the same post at Dachau until late 1943, Würth had no medical experience. During his time at Spilwe, many Jewish women suffered from typhoid fever, which led to numerous selections.<sup>6</sup>

Just prior to the camp's evacuation in the summer of 1944, the Kaiserwald medical staff conducted a mass selection of Spilwe's weakened prisoners. Present were Kaiserwald's camp doctor (Lagerarzt) Dr. Eduard Krebsbach and medic (Sanitätsdienstgrad) Heinz Günther Wisner. Krebsbach and Wisner dispatched the victims by truck to the "base command" (Stützpunktkommando), a Kaiserwald euphemism for murder in the nearby forests. Krebsbach was previously the Lagerarzt at Mauthausen, where, in a play on his name, he was called "The Needle" (Spritzbach). Born Heinz von Wisotzky, Wisner had served since 1939 as an SS orderly at Stutthof and Flossenbürg. Promoted to Unterscharführer in the summer of 1943, Wisner joined the Kaiserwald staff on November 1, 1943, where he subsequently advanced in rank to Oberscharführer. Known to the prisoners as "Dr. Wisner," he was sentenced in 1985 to five years' imprisonment by a Düsseldorf court, in connection with the selections committed at this and other Riga Kasernierungen, as well as homicides committed in the Kaiserwald main camp. By the time of his arrest in 1979, Wisner had retired from a mechanical engineering firm located in Düsseldorf.

Spilwe was closed on August 6, 1944, when the surviving prisoners were marched to the port of Riga, where they boarded the *Bremerhaven* en route to the Stutthof concentration camp in Poland. The conditions aboard ship, which held about 6,400 Jews for three days, were lethal. According to ITS, a small group of Jewish men were retained at Spilwe after the closure, to undertake "clearance work" (*Aufräumungsarbeiten*).<sup>7</sup>

In 1959, the Bonn Landgericht (Regional Court) sentenced Spilwe's former Lagerführer Sorge to life imprisonment plus 15 years for the murder of 67 prisoners and for 20 additional attempted murders. The charges included homicides committed at Esterwegen as early as 1934 and included cases at Sachsenhausen as late as 1942, but the prosecution inexplicably did not charge him with causing any deaths at Spilwe, HKP, or Dondangen.

**SOURCES** This subcamp is discussed at some length in Alfred Winter, *The Ghetto of Riga and Continuance* (Monroe, CT: Self-published, 1998), pp. 97–102. This account must be used with caution, as the author does not cite his sources and often employs the first-person plural, making it difficult to separate his personal testimony from other accounts. The Spilwe subcamp is listed as separate men's and women's camps in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 253. The Wisner case (Lfd. Nr. 896) will be included in a forthcoming volume of *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* but is listed cursorily on the publication's Web site at [www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv](http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv). The author would like to thank Dick de Mildt for furnishing supplementary biographical information on Wisner. Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004), p. 411, reports that 6,382 boarded the *Bremerhaven*.

Primary sources for this subcamp begin with its listing in the document collection by Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces the Riga Stadtkommissar's memorandum on the Riga-Kaiserwald Kasernierungen of August 18, 1943, and copied from NARA. Investigation files for Wisner are available at ZLNW-K under heading 130 Js 2/78 (Z). The case of Gustav Sorge (8 Ks 1/58) is found in Lfd. Nr. 473, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* 15:399–658 (Amsterdam, 1976). The testimony of Emil Würth-Tscherne can be found in P III h No. 1007 (Riga-Kaiserwald, Spilwe), "Report of an 'Aryan' Political Prisoner," in *Testaments to the Holocaust*, orig. WL, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>. A published testimony of Spilwe is Josef Katz, *One Who Came Back: The Diary of a Jewish Survivor*, trans. Hilda Reach (New York: Herzl Press and Bergen-Belsen Memorial Press, 1973).

Joseph Robert White

## NOTES

1. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. "Umsetzung" von Juden in Konzentrationslager [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum*



und in *Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, p. 266.

2. Sorge Urteil, 8 Ks 1/58, Lfd. Nr. 473, *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam, 1976) 15: 415–421.

3. As quoted in Alfred Winter, *The Ghetto of Riga and Continuance* (Monroe, CT: Self-published, 1998), p. 100.

4. P III h No. 1007 (Riga-Kaiserwald, Spilve), Emil Würth-Tscherne, “Report of an ‘Aryan’ Political Prisoner,” in *Testaments to the Holocaust*, orig. WL, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>, p. 2.

5. Josef Katz, *One Who Came Back: The Diary of a Jewish Survivor*, trans. Hilda Reach (New York: Herzl Press and Bergen-Belsen Memorial Press, 1973), pp. 159–163.

6. Würth-Tscherne, “Report of an ‘Aryan’ Political Prisoner,” pp. 1–2.

7. Quoted in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:253.

## RIGA-STRASDENHOF (AEG/VEF)

In 1942, the second-largest German electronics enterprise the Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) took over the Latvian state-owned electronics factory Valsts Elektrotehniska Fabrika (VEF) in Riga-Strasdenhof (Strazdumīva). Between 1943 and 1944, around 800 female Jewish prisoners from the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp worked as forced laborers for the AEG, manufacturing cables.

In 1941, after the German occupation of Latvia, the AEG established a sales office in Riga to promote its products mostly produced in Berlin with the Reichskommissariat Ostland (RKO). Products such as plugs, heating elements, cook tops, and electric ovens, which the AEG sent to Riga until October 1941, could only be sold in compliance with the Reich Economics Ministry (RWM) to the Wehrmacht for its winter quarters, workshops, and accommodations.

In the same period, the AEG prepared to take over the VEF, which had been compulsorily acquired by the German Military Administration. The VEF was the largest Latvian industrial enterprise. One of the best-known VEF products was a small camera, the Minox, which had been mass-produced in Riga beginning in 1938.

When the Wehrmacht took over the factory in the summer of 1941, it appointed an AEG representative as temporary director. Factory production valued at approximately 7 million Reichsmark (RM) was set with the production almost exclusively for the Wehrmacht. The factory was to supply the needs of the army, Luftwaffe, and navy, producing radios, batteries for flashlights, hand held microphones, head microphones, transmitting and receiving devices, as well as other electrical equipment.<sup>1</sup> The AEG continued producing these items even after it leased the VEF factory in 1942. “The new factory,” as it was referred to in an AEG directive in October 1942, “shall supply primarily the Wehrmacht, so that for the time being there shall be no supplies for civilian requirements.”<sup>2</sup> The factory was formally operated by the AEG through a new company, AEG Ostlandwerk GmbH, but from a technical and production point of view, it was ad-

ministered by the AEG-owned Apparatewerk Treptow in Berlin. Berlin supplied all the employees for the management of the Riga factory. The majority continued with their careers after the war in management positions in the AEG concern.

The VEF factory was the largest AEG production site in occupied Eastern Europe, even larger than the Krakau Kabelwerk, if measured by the number of employees. In May 1943, it had 4,800 Latvian employees both on the production floor and in offices.

In the late summer of 1943, the AEG began to use female Jewish prisoners from the Kaiserwald concentration camp in the production process. The decision to use a large number of concentration camp prisoners arose probably as the result of a decline in the number of Latvian employees from 4,600 to 3,350. Additionally, Jews, beginning July 1943, could only be used outside the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp in large enterprises vital for the war effort that had their sub-camps (called “quartering sites,” or *Kasernierungen*) to accommodate the prisoners.<sup>3</sup>

In August or September 1943, around 200 mostly young women were used in the factory to test their suitability. The numbers were eventually increased to approximately 800.<sup>4</sup> Among them were Latvian Jewish women from Riga and Libau as well as German, Lithuanian, Czech, Polish, and Hungarian Jewish women.<sup>5</sup>

The women were taken by truck from the Kaiserwald concentration camp to factory grounds opposite the main VEF factory building on the then Grosse Freiheitsstrasse. Here they were accommodated in a factory building equipped with three-tiered wooden bunk beds. Hygiene was better in the subcamp than in the Kaiserwald concentration camp.

Each day the women had to assemble for roll call, before and after work in the factory. From the end of 1943, the women working in the factory wore prisoner uniforms and wooden shoes. They worked alternatively in three eight-hour shifts in different departments without protective clothing, producing lightbulbs, cables, and batteries.<sup>6</sup> They worked under the supervision of Latvian foremen.<sup>7</sup>

“The people were afraid,” according to Eugenia Borvoskaja, a survivor from Riga born in 1922. “They tried to work good [so] they [would] not to be shot or punished.”<sup>8</sup>

The food from the Kaiserwald concentration camp was always inadequate.<sup>9</sup> Sometimes the women were secretly given food while working by Latvian workers.<sup>10</sup> The survivor, Paula Zaltzman-Frankel, states that they could secretly roast potatoes in the factory.<sup>11</sup>

According to Else Schwarz-Katz, technical director of the factory Herbert Dallmann declined to make additional food available.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, he intervened for the return of Zaltzman-Frankel and four other concentration camp prisoners after they had been transported by the SS to the Kaiserwald main camp because they were “good workers.”<sup>13</sup>

The use of prisoners ceased in the summer of 1944 in Riga, and the factory was evacuated in the face of the Red Army advance. The AEG transported raw materials such as

copper, lead, and iron from Riga to the Apparatefabrik Trep-tow in Berlin, where some of it was distributed to other AEG factories.<sup>14</sup> Preparations were made to relocate part of the production process to Thorn in Poland, where production would recommence in a 900-square-meter (1,076-square-yard) cellar in the air-raid-safe fortress called Fort XIII. Fort XIII was the most southern part of a defense ring established in the city of Thorn in the nineteenth century.

The concentration camps for women were also to be relocated from Riga to Thorn. On August 9, 1944, approximately 450 women were taken in goods train cars from the Riga factory grounds to the Thorn central railway station, and they were initially held in Fort XIII.

The female concentration camp prisoners were to work in Thorn on the machines also transported from Riga, but the machines would not work. Wehrmacht soldiers were to be quartered in the cellars of Fort XIII in October 1944. As a result, the women were transferred to a newly erected wooden barrack camp on the Vistula. It had three accommodation barracks. The Thorn-Winkenau subcamp was under the control of the Stutthof concentration camp.<sup>15</sup> The SS camp commander was SS-Hauptscharführer Ludwig Blatterspiel, who had been the leader of Kaiserwald's AEG, Strasdenhof (SS-Betriebe), and Heereskraftfahrzeugpark (HKP) subcamps in Riga.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the first transport of female prisoners at the beginning of August 1944, there were other transports until mid-October 1944 of female prisoners from Riga in the direction of Thorn.<sup>17</sup> The SS did not transport these women in a train to Thorn but by ship via Danzig to the Stutthof concentration camp.<sup>18</sup> From there, at the direction of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) in Oranienburg, 250 female concentration camp prisoners were transported on September 13, 1944, most likely to Thorn.<sup>19</sup> On October 30, 1944, another 280 women were transported from the Stutthof concentration camp to Thorn. They were to replace 230 women also transported from Riga to Thorn, who were to be sent by the SS to Stutthof.<sup>20</sup> A Stutthof concentration camp strength report from January 1945 puts the number of female concentration camp prisoners in the Thorn subcamp at 510.<sup>21</sup>

The women in the AEG production process in Thorn put rubber around the cables and probably produced weapons, grenades, and munitions. They also built the barracks for the subcamp.<sup>22</sup>

In January 1945, again in the face of the Red Army advance, it was planned to relocate the AEG assembly line from Thorn. The Thorn subcamp was dissolved at the end of January 1945.<sup>23</sup> The remaining female concentration camp prisoners were forced to march by the SS for 50 kilometers (31 miles) to the city of Bromberg (Bydgoszcz). Shortly before Bromberg, the women were freed when the SS guards fled the Red Army.<sup>24</sup>

**SOURCES** The principal secondary sources that discuss the Riga-Strasdenhof (AEG) subcamp are Max Kaufmann,

*Chubn Lettland: Zur Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn (Konstanz: Hartung-Corre Verlag, 1999), p. 404; and Benjamin B. Ferencz, *Lohn des Grauens: Die verweigerte Entschädigung für jüdische Zwangsarbeiter* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1981), p. 152. Background on the Minox camera may be found in Hubert E. Heckmann, *Minox—Variationen in 8x11: Die autorisierte Geschichte der Kleinbildkamera*, foreword by Walter Zapp (Hückelhoven: Wittig, 1992), p. 31. On the Thorn subcamp, see Marek Orski, *Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Danzig: Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutwie, 1992); Danuta Drywa, *Zagada Zydów w obozie koncentracyjnym Stutthof 1939–1945* (Danzig: Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutwie, 2001), pp. 215–216. The Riga-Strasdenhof (AEG) is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:254.

The archival sources on the history of the VEF and the AEG are held in LVVA, the BA-B, LA-B, and BA-MA. Individual documents in the AEG-Firmenarchiv in DTM contain few details on the use of the forced labor. Unpublished survivors' accounts may be found in USHMM in RG-12.004.02 \*02 and \*04, Benjamin Ferencz Collection, Claims against German Industrial Firms Records, 1952–1994, AEG Correspondence. Published memoirs on the AEG subcamp include Paula Zaltzman-Frankel, *Häftling No. 94771*, ed. M. M. Shafir (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Jewish Studies and Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Right Studies, 2003); Hartmut Schmidt, *Zwischen Riga und Locarno: Bericht über Hilde Schneider, Christin jüdischer Herkunft, Diakonisse, Ghetto- und KZ-Häftling, Gefängnis-pfarrerin* (Berlin: Wichern, 2001); and Vanessa Schwarz, "My Great Grandmother [Else Schwarz-Katz]," *EI 7* (June 1999): 35–38.

Thomas Irmer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Rüstungsinspektion Ostland, KTB, September 1–December 31, 1941, entry September 30, 1941, BA-MA, RW 30/1, p. 9.

2. AEG-Direktion, Rundschreiben Nr. 13/42, October 21, 1942, Betr.: "Gesellschaftsgründung im Ostland," DTM, I.2.060 A, Nr. 5989, p. 1.

3. Wehrwirtschaftsinspektion Ostland, KTB Nr. 8, July 1–September 30, 1943, entry July 26, 1943, BA-MA, RW 30/8, p. 8RS.

4. Wehrwirtschaftsinspektion Ostland, KTB, Nr. 8, July 1–September 30, 1943, Vierteljahresbericht für die Zeit vom 17-30.9.43, BA-MA, RW 30/8, p. 35RS.

5. Interview of the author with Eugenia Borovskaja, March 26, 2000; Paula Zaltzman-Frankel, *Häftling No. 94771* ed. M.M. Shafir (Montreal: Concordia University Chair in Jewish Studies and Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies, 2003); as well as Hartmut Schmidt, *Zwischen Riga und Locarno: Bericht über Hilde Schneider, Christin jüdischer Herkunft, Diakonisse, Ghetto- und KZ-Häftling, Gefängnis-pfarrerin* (Berlin: Wichern, 2001), p. 163.

6. Vanessa Schwarz, "My Great Grandmother [Else Schwarz-Katz]," *EI 7* (June 1999): 35–38; Borovskaja interview.

7. Borovskaja interview; and Schmidt, *Zwischen Riga und Locarno*, p. 163.
8. Borovskaja interview.
9. Schwarz, "My Great Grandmother [Else Schwarz-Katz]"; Schmidt, *Zwischen Riga und Locarno*, p. 164.
10. Schwarz, "My Great Grandmother [Else Schwarz-Katz]."
11. Zaltzman-Frankel, *Häftling No. 94771*.
12. Schwarz, "My Great Grandmother [Else Schwarz-Katz]."
13. Zaltzman-Frankel, *Häftling No. 94771*.
14. Aufstellungen, LA-B, A Rep. 227-05, Nr. 175.
15. Schmidt, *Zwischen Riga und Locarno*, p. 168.
16. Kommandanturbefehl Nr. 73 der Kommandantur des KL Stutthof, October 30, 1944, AMS, I-II3-3.
17. Schwarz, "My Great Grandmother [Else Schwarz-Katz]."
18. Zaltzman-Frankel, *Häftling No. 94771*; Schmidt, *Zwischen Riga und Locarno*, p. 273.
19. Kommandanturbefehl Nr. 61, September 12, 1944, AMS, I-IB-3.
20. Zaltzman-Frankel, *Häftling No. 94771*; Schmidt, *Zwischen Riga und Locarno*, p. 272.
21. Stärkemeldung, January 24, 1945, AMS, I-IIIB-6.
22. Schwarz, "My Great Grandmother [Else Schwarz-Katz]."
23. Zaltzman-Frankel, *Häftling No. 94771*.
24. Schmidt, *Zwischen Riga und Locarno*, p. 175; Borovskaja interview.

## **RIGA-STRASDENHOF [AKA SS-BETRIEBE, STRAZDENHOF]**

Situated near the Widzemer-Chaussee Bridge on the Jugla River, the SS factory (*Betriebe*) at Strasdenhof (Strazdumviža) was one of the original quartering sites (*Kasernierungen*) absorbed or established by the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp with the dissolution of the Riga ghetto. According to the Stadtkommissar of Riga, the subcamp, misspelled Strazdenhof, held 820 Jewish prisoners on August 18, 1943, with a planned deployment of 3,000 male and female prisoners.<sup>1</sup> After the final liquidation of the Riga ghetto on November 2, 1943, the *Kasernierung* held approximately 2,000 inmates, including many children and elderly. While most prisoners manufactured SS uniforms on-site at the SS-owned textile factory, other detachments performed street construction. This *Kasernierung* is not to be confused with the Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) subcamp at Strasdenhof, which fell under separate administration.

Under the camp leader (Lagerführer), SS-Unterscharführer Hermann "Usche" Dering, the guards consisted of ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) from Transylvania. Some prisoner accounts also listed Dering's rank as Untersturmführer. Dering's deputy was Hans Hoffmann. According to survivors, Dering and Hoffmann were responsible for Strasdenhof's harsh conditions. Prisoners were routinely forced to perform "sport," an SS euphemism for penal exercises de-

signed to exhaust, humiliate, and kill; roll calls were used for beatings and humiliation; and the food conditions were completely inadequate for the camp population.<sup>2</sup>

Compounding Dering's and Hoffmann's brutal rule was the first of three successive camp elders, Hans Bruhn. A German "green" prisoner who was at Sachsenhausen and then a Kaiserwald block elder, Bruhn imposed a vicious regime at Strasdenhof. In 1949, survivor Jacob Efrat described Bruhn:

I was later transferred to Strasdenhof where, to my misfortune, Bruhn [misspelled Bruns] was put in charge at the same time, so that I had to remain under his control for a longer period. He saw to it that the conditions in the camp were so bad that many died daily of starvation and ill-treatment. He supervised any possible attempts at smuggling food into the camp so strictly by examining all incomers at the gates, that it was impossible to supplement the hopelessly inadequate ration. Besides this he instituted the custom of awaiting the prisoners on their return from work in the evening, when they were tired to exhaustion and then forcing them to take part in various exercises, marching in the grounds and generally sapping their last remaining energies. His brutality rose to such heights at the camp that he beat 2 men to death with his own hands and buried them on the banks of the Jugle [*sic*].<sup>3</sup>

Bruhn's successors were Reinhold Rosenmeyer and Rago. According to Efrat, conditions somewhat improved after Bruhn's transfer.

The conditions in this subcamp prompted many escape attempts. According to the first chronicler of the Latvian Holocaust, Max Kaufmann, the following prisoners attempted to flee: Rachil Bermann, Brudner, Luba Drujan, Liolia Gittelson, the Keile sisters, Raja (a female prisoner), Salgaller, the Seidemann brothers, and the column leader (Kolonnenführer) Morein. According to Samuel Atlas, 10 prisoners caught hiding in the factory incurred severe beatings from Hoffmann after their discovery.<sup>4</sup>

Eyewitness accounts and West German trial reports document two major selections or "operations" (*Aktionen*) at Strasdenhof, as the roundups of weakened Jews were termed at Kaiserwald. Survivor Bella Gepen Mirkin accused Hoffmann of overseeing the "Children's Operation" (*Kinderaktion*) in March 1944, which resulted in the removal of between 60 and 90 young prisoners.<sup>5</sup> Taken to "base camp command" (Stützpunktkommando), the Kaiserwald euphemism for a shooting site in the forest, the children's selection was part of an overall targeting of Jewish children in the Riga *Kasernierungen* in the spring of 1944. The second, much larger Aktion occurred in early August 1944, shortly before the camp's evacuation. Estimates place the number of victims in this selection at around two-thirds of the camp's population, as all Jews over 30 and under 18 were boarded on trucks and taken to the forests. Efrat estimated that the SS removed some 1,300 prison-



ers during this Aktion, leaving only 500 in the camp. Hoffmann allegedly coaxed the victims to cooperate by promising their imminent evacuation from Riga aboard ship.<sup>6</sup>

The SS participants in the second selection included Kaiserwald's Sanitätsdienstgrad Heinz Günther Wisner. If this selection followed the pattern found in other Riga Kasernierungen preparing for evacuation in the summer of 1944, then it is likely that Kaiserwald Lagerarzt Dr. Eduard Krebsbach was present as well. Born Heinz von Wisotzky, Wisner had served since 1939 as an SS orderly at Stutthof and Flossenbürg. Promoted to Unterscharführer in the summer of 1943, Wisner joined the Kaiserwald staff on November 1, 1943, where he subsequently advanced in rank to Oberscharführer. Known to the prisoners as "Dr. Wisner," he was sentenced in 1985 to five years' imprisonment by a Düsseldorf court, in connection with the selections committed at this and other Riga Kasernierungen, as well as homicides committed in the Kaiserwald main camp. By the time of his arrest in 1979, Wisner had retired from a mechanical engineering firm located in Düsseldorf.

When Strasdenhof (SS-Betriebe) was evacuated on August 6, 1944, the camp population stood at approximately 700. The survivors boarded the *Bremerhaven* at the port of Riga for a harrowing three-day journey to Danzig, where barges then took them to Stutthof, via the Vistula River.

**SOURCES** The Strasdenhof (SS-Betriebe) Kasernierung of Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp is described in Max Kaufmann, *Churbn Lettland: Die Vernichtung der Juden Lettlands*, ed. Erhard Roy Wiehn, intro. by Steven Springfield (1947; repr., Konstanz: Hartung-Gorre Verlag, 1999), pp. 408–411. Kaufmann recounts the escape attempts and brutal treatment and places the estimate of the camp population at the time of the evacuation. The subcamp is briefly mentioned in Anita Kugler, *Scherwitz: Der jüdische SS-Offizier* (Cologne: Kiepenhauer & Witsch, 2004), p. 354; and in Margers Vestermanis, *Juden in Riga: Auf den Spuren des Lebens und Wirkens einer ermordeten Minderheit; ein historischer Wegweiser* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1995), pp. 70–71. Strasdenhof (SS-Betriebe) is listed as separate men's and women's camps in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1:255. The Wisner case (Lfd. Nr. 896) will be included in a forthcoming volume of *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* but is listed cursorily on the publication's Web site at [www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv](http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv). The author would like to thank Dick de Mildt for furnishing supplementary biographical information on Wisner.

Primary sources for Strasdenhof (SS-Betriebe) begin with its listing in the documents compiled by Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, pp. 265–266, which reproduces the Riga Stadtkommissar's memorandum on the Riga-Kaiserwald Kasernierung

of August 18, 1943, and copied from NARA. Investigation files for Wisner are available at ZLNW-K under heading 130 Js 2/78 (Z). Unpublished testimonies on Strasdenhof (SS-Betriebe) may be found in *Testaments to the Holocaust*, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>, and are based upon the collection of WL. The testimonies are P III h. No. 1019 (Strasdenhof), Statement of Ida Atlas, "The Activities of 'Sturmführer' Hans Hoffmann and Hermann Dehring at the Strassenhof [sic] Camp," August 8, 1949; P III i. No. 1003 (Latvia), Jacob Efrat, Letter to H. Michaelson, May 11, 1949; P III i. No. 1003 (Latvia), Translated letter of Jacob Efrat to H. Michaelson, July 9, 1949; P III h. No. 1025 (Strassenhof near Riga), Samuel Atlas, "Evidence against Hans Hoffmann and Hermann Dehring [sic]," October 5, 1949; P III h. No. 1019a (Strasdenhof), Bella Mirkin, née Gepen, "'Kinderaktion' (Selection of Children) by SS man Hoffmann," February 29, 1950. A published testimony on Strasdenhof, by a survivor of Vilna ghetto, is Mascha Rolnikaite, *Ich muss erzählen: Mein Tagebuch 1941–1945*, trans. Dorothea Greve, foreword by Marianna Butenschön (Berlin: Kindler, 2002).

Joseph Robert White

## NOTES

1. Auszüge aus einem Schreiben des Stadtkommissars Riga an den Generalkommissar, Abt. III, August 18, 1943, Betr. "Umsetzung" von Juden in Konzentrationslager [reproduced from NARA, T-459 Reel 19, fr. 503], in Wolfgang Benz, Konrad Kwiet, and Jürgen Matthäus, eds., *Einsatz im "Reichskommissariat Ostland": Dokumente zum Völkermord im Baltikum und in Weissrussland, 1941–1944* (Berlin: Metropol, 1998), Doc. 254, p. 266.

2. *Testaments to the Holocaust*, <http://159.104.6.6/testaments/en/t3h.asp>; P III h. No. 1019 (Strasdenhof), Statement of Ida Atlas, "The Activities of 'Sturmführer' Hans Hoffmann and Hermann Dehring at the Strassenhof [sic] Camp," August 8, 1949, p. 1; P III i. No. 1003 (Latvia), Jacob Efrat, Letter to H. Michaelson, May 11, 1949, p. 1; P III h. No. 1025 (Strassenhof near Riga), Samuel Atlas, "Evidence against Hans Hoffmann and Hermann Dehring [sic]," October 5, 1949; P III h. No. 1019 a (Strasdenhof), Bella Mirkin, née Gepen, "'Kinderaktion' (Selection of Children) by SS man Hoffmann," February 29, 1950, p. 1.

3. P III i. No. 1003 (Latvia), Translated letter of Efrat to Michaelson, July 9, 1949, p. 1.

4. P III h. No. 1025 (Strassenhof near Riga), Atlas, "Evidence against Hans Hoffmann and Hermann Dehring [sic]," October 5, 1949.

5. Mirkin, "'Kinderaktion,'" February 29, 1950, p. 1; see also P III i. No. 1003 (Latvia), Efrat, Letter to Michaelson, May 11, 1949, p. 1.

6. P III i. No. 1003 (Latvia), Efrat to Michaelson, May 11, 1949, p. 2; P III h. No. 1019 (Strasdenhof), Statement of Ida Atlas, "The Activities of 'Sturmführer' Hans Hoffmann," August 8, 1949, p. 2.



## SACHSENHAUSEN



Undated photograph of the "roller detachment" marching to work.  
USHMM WS#82927, COURTESY OF AG-S



## SACHSENHAUSEN MAIN CAMP

Situated next to the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL, later Office Group D of the SS-Business Administration Main Office, or WVHA) at Oranienburg, just north of Berlin, Sachsenhausen stood at the center of the Nazi concentration camp system. Begun in the summer of 1936, just before the Berlin Olympics, it was the first new concentration camp built after Hitler gave full control of that system to the SS in 1934. As such, Sachsenhausen was intended to be a model facility; indeed, the Nazi press corps toured it for propaganda purposes in March 1938. Nevertheless, the camp's striking triangular layout—an unwieldy blend of art deco and Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon—proved ill-suited to expansion, and subsequent camps would follow more conventional patterns.

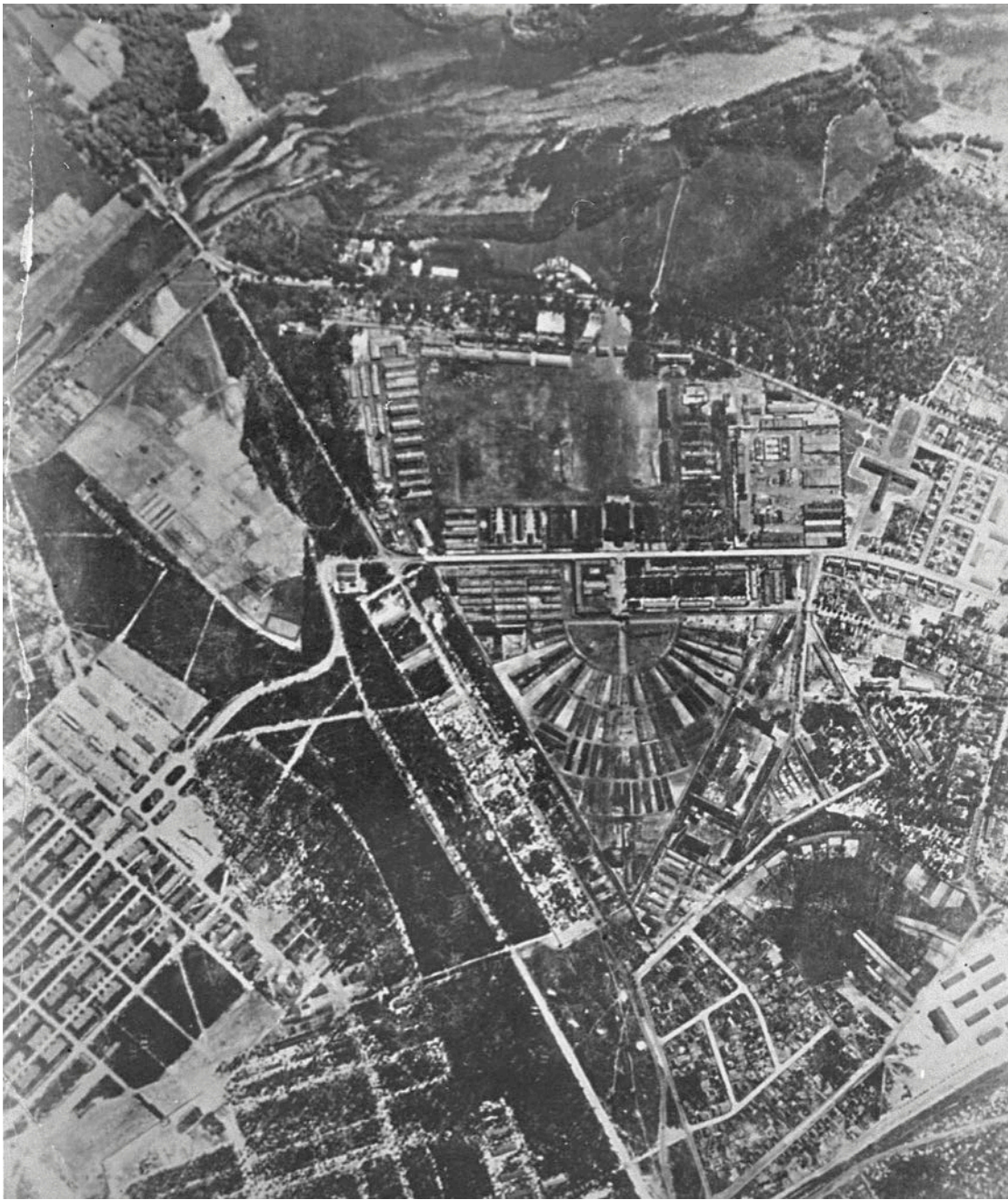
The SS brought the first 50 prisoners to the proposed site from Esterwegen in July 1936, followed by another 200 before the month was out. Construction began immediately. The protective detention camp, where the prisoners would be housed, took the shape of an isosceles triangle, with a narrow, rectangular headquarters area superimposed over the left side of the triangle's base. Entrance to the camp was through an imposing gatehouse, topped by a guard tower. With the camp barracks laid out below in a radial, fanlike pattern, guards in this tower had an unobstructed line of sight virtually throughout the camp. Additional towers punctuated the camp's stone perimeter wall, inside of which ran an electrified barbed-wire fence. Just inside the main gate was the camp's sprawling, semicircular roll-call area. Painted on the ends of the barracks abutting it was one of the implausibly exhortative slogans favored in the 1930s-era camps: "There is one path to freedom! Its milestones are: diligence, obedience, honesty, order, cleanliness, sobriety, truthfulness, spirit of sacrifice, and love of the Fatherland!"

At the beginning of 1937, the number of prisoners at Sachsenhausen stood at about 1,650.<sup>1</sup> Many were former inmates of Esterwegen, who had arrived when that camp closed in September 1936. By early 1938, Sachsenhausen's population had grown to over 2,500. Most inmates were either political prisoners under "protective" detention (47 percent) or criminal prisoners under "preventive" detention (40 percent). The next largest group comprised Jehovah's Witnesses (9 percent), followed by homosexuals (1 percent).<sup>2</sup> These proportions changed dramatically in June, when the arrival of 6,232 "asocial" or "work-shy" prisoners almost tripled the camp's population, pushing it above 9,200.<sup>3</sup> This number gradually receded over the next few months, until November, when the temporary presence of at least 6,000 Jewish prisoners after *Kristallnacht* caused the total to surge briefly above 14,000.<sup>4</sup> By the year's end, this number had retreated to about 8,300, with the asocials constituting an absolute majority (62 percent), the political prisoners a strong minority (32 percent), and the criminals only a relative handful (5 percent).<sup>5</sup>

With the construction of additional barracks in 1939, Sachsenhausen attained a design capacity of approximately 10,000 prisoners. The war, however, soon led to renewed overcrowding. More than 2,500 Polish prisoners arrived during the first six months of the conflict, as did some 1,200 Czech students following anti-German demonstrations in Prague in November 1939. By mid-February 1940, the total number of prisoners had reached nearly 11,900, while Sachsenhausen's first two subcamps, at Wewelsburg and Berlin-Lichterfelde, held over 300 more.<sup>6</sup> In May 1940, another 1,200 Polish prisoners arrived from the Pawiak Prison in Warsaw. Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) began to arrive in August 1941, only to be shot by the thousands. As of early December, some 1,500 remained alive. Not counting the POWs, the number of prisoners at the main camp had fallen to about 8,000 by that time, while the population of the subcamps, which now numbered eight, had risen to around 2,350. The wartime internationalization of the camp continued apace, with Poles reaching 30 percent of the civilian prisoners, and Czechs, 12 percent.<sup>7</sup>

Together with its subcamps, Sachsenhausen began 1943 with more than 16,500 prisoners and ended the year with more than 28,000.<sup>8</sup> At the conclusion of the year, 35 percent were designated as "protective custody" detainees, now a thoroughly heterogeneous, multinational category. Counted separately, Soviet civilian prisoners constituted nearly as large a group, at 32 percent (with the surviving 761 Soviet POWs another 3 percent). Polish prisoners, also counted separately, formed another significant block at 20 percent. The next largest group, amounting to 6 percent, comprised the common criminals in "preventive detention" (as distinct from an additional 1 percent who were actual convicts from the German penitentiary system being held in "security custody"). Asocials constituted another 3 percent; Jehovah's Witnesses, less than 1 percent. Other categories of prisoners were present at Sachsenhausen only in small numbers at this time.<sup>9</sup>

The year 1944 saw explosive growth in the number of subcamps throughout the concentration camp system, and Sachsenhausen was no exception. Most of its new subcamps were located either in Berlin or within the province of Brandenburg. Some of them, including several taken over from Ravensbrück late in the year, held female prisoners. The main camp, however, remained restricted to men, with the exception of the handful of inmates at the camp brothel, opened in mid-1943. Effective January 1, 1945, Sachsenhausen expanded further by taking over responsibility from Mittelbau for the SS-Baubrigaden (Construction Brigades), a group of mobile subcamps assigned to repair bomb damage. As of that date, the entire Sachsenhausen system encompassed nearly 61,000 prisoners, including over 13,200 women. Two weeks later, the total had risen to more than 66,000.<sup>10</sup> In the final months of the war, this number would swell further, with the evacuation of camps closer to the front.



An aerial view of Sachsenhausen concentration camp, revealing its distinctive triangular shape, May 19, 1944.  
USHMM WS #32064, COURTESY OF YVA

At Sachsenhausen, as at other Nazi camps, Jewish prisoners were singled out for harsh treatment. Their numbers, however, fluctuated considerably over time. On January 3, 1937, there were only 21 Jewish prisoners at Sachsenhausen.<sup>11</sup> The number remained small until the campaign against the work-shy in June 1938 brought over 800 Jews to the camp.<sup>12</sup> Of these, 457 remained by the time Kristallnacht flooded the camp with Jewish prisoners in November, creating nightmarish conditions. Releases began almost immediately in exchange for commitments to emi-

grate. As of December 31, 1938, Sachsenhausen had 1,345 Jews, some 16 percent of the camp's total population: 958 were classified as protective custody prisoners, 386 as asocials, and 1 as a homosexual.<sup>13</sup> By February 18, 1940, the number had dropped to 1,218; by December 5, 1941, to 559.<sup>14</sup> In October 1942, most of the remaining Jewish prisoners were sent to Auschwitz, after Heinrich Himmler ordered the expulsion of Jews from the concentration camps within Germany's prewar borders. Sachsenhausen retained only a few with specialized skills needed either for the se-





Sachsenhausen prisoners assemble in columns, 1938. Note the enlarged triangles symbolizing reasons for arrest. The triangle system was only standardized during the previous year.  
USHMM WS #76278, COURTESY OF NARA

cret Operation Bernhard, which counterfeited foreign banknotes, or for the so-called clock detail, which processed watches stolen from the Jews murdered at Auschwitz. The number of these prisoners grew gradually from 45 at the end of January 1943 to 159 at the end of December.<sup>15</sup> There was no large-scale return of Jews to Sachsenhausen until the second half of 1944, when labor shortages forced Himmler to bring thousands of mostly Hungarian and Polish Jews to concentration camps in Germany. Additional Jewish prisoners arrived as a result of camp evacuations.

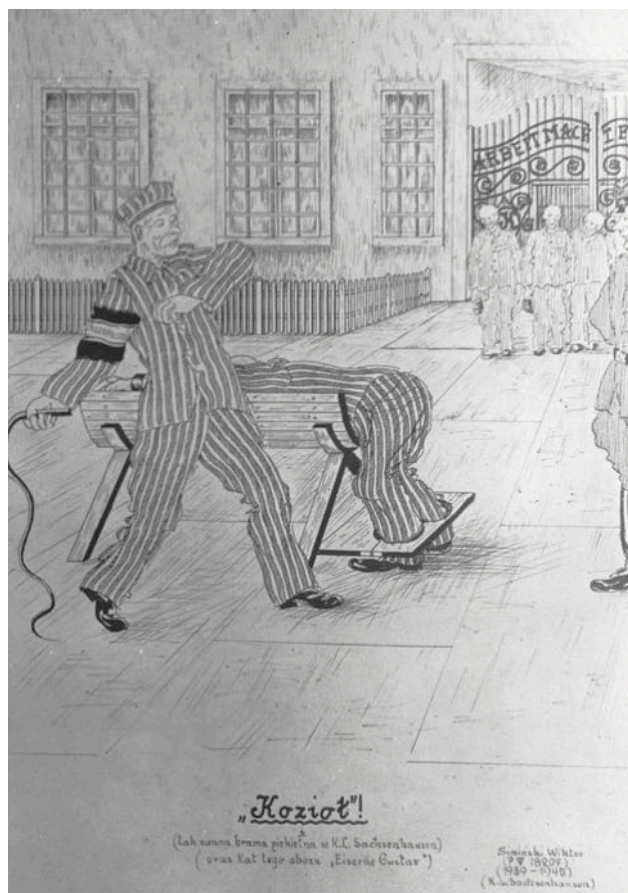
Sachsenhausen maintained special facilities to segregate politically prominent prisoners, such as the former Austrian chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg and the anti-Nazi pastor Martin Niemöller. Many of those seized in connection with the attempt on Hitler's life on July 20, 1944, also passed through Sachsenhausen. Politically significant POWs were held there as well, including Joseph Stalin's eldest son, who was killed by a guard in April 1943.

Early in Sachsenhausen's existence, the focus of prisoner work assignments was the construction of the camp and other facilities in the immediate vicinity, such as the large industrial and construction yards nearby. By the beginning of 1938, roughly half the prisoners were assigned inside the camp and roughly half in 47 work details outside.<sup>16</sup> In the late summer of 1938, after the SS founded the German Earth and Stone Works, Ltd. (DESt) as a moneymaking enterprise, the prisoners began construction of what was intended to be the largest brickworks in the world, the Klinkerwerk in nearby Lehnitz. Some 1,500 prisoners marched to and from the site each day until 1941, when the camp administration decided to house the prisoners there and turn the Klinkerwerk into a subcamp.

The war inevitably brought about changes in the work done by concentration camp prisoners. In March 1942, plans

were made to increase the use of the camps for armaments production, and 6,000 Sachsenhausen prisoners were designated for that work initially. By the end of the year, the camp was heavily involved in war production, manufacturing everything from fighter planes to gas masks. The prisoners at the Klinkerwerk, for example, began to produce shells instead of bricks, while an unfinished stone-processing plant was converted into a facility for recycling military wreckage. The push for increased production continued, feeding the proliferation of subcamps in 1944, as the SS increasingly hired out the prisoners to private firms.

When there was work to be done in the concentration camps, the SS generally had the prisoners do it. This principle extended to much of the organizational work within the camp, which fell largely to privileged prisoners, who carried out such important functions as determining work assignments. They were also in a favorable position to monitor the activities of the headquarters staff and in some cases to obstruct the implementation of harmful policies. At the head of the prisoner self-administration was the camp elder (Lagerältester), who answered directly to the SS officer in



"Kozioł!" (Stocks!), by Sachsenhausen prisoner, Wiktor Siminski, shows a prisoner enduring a lashing by a Kapo with the slogan of the camp gate, "Work Will Make You Free" (*Arbeit macht Frei*) in the background, nd.  
USHMM WS #26852, COURTESY OF ALEKSANDER KULISIEWICZ



charge of the protective custody camp. This difficult and dangerous post often changed hands, as different groups of prisoners schemed to obtain it for themselves. The political prisoner Harry Naujoks, who was camp elder from April 1939 to October 1942, is generally regarded, at least among his fellow politicals, as having acted with integrity and courage. Some other camp elders had less honorable records, particularly those selected from among the criminals and asocials.

Sachsenhausen had six commandants in less than nine years. The first was Karl Koch, who established the camp and then left in July 1937 to make his reputation at Buchenwald. The incompetent Hans Helwig became Sachsenhausen's second commandant, serving for one year before entering a forced retirement. The hard-driving Hermann Baranowski succeeded him, running the camp with a heavy hand from July 1938 until his death in February 1940. Taking Baranowski's place was the hapless Walter Eisfeld, who immediately fumbled a visit by Himmler, and was removed in March. His replacement, Hans Loritz, came to grief in the great concentration camp corruption scandal of 1942, which brought down the commandants of Dachau, Lublin-Majdanek, Gross-Rosen, and Flossenbürg as well. Anton Kaindl, a grimly efficient administrator, took charge thereafter, shaking up the camp headquarters staff upon his arrival in August 1942 and remaining firmly in power until the end.

Sachsenhausen's earliest guards were members of the Death's Head guard unit SS-Ostfriesland, who accompanied the first prisoners from Esterwegen. When Esterwegen closed in September 1936, the rest of that camp's guards came to Sachsenhausen as well, followed by guards from SS-Brandenburg after the closure of Columbia-Haus in November. In September 1937, the existing SS-Death's Head Units were consolidated, organized by camp, and renamed, with the one at Sachsenhausen becoming the SS-Totenkopfstandarte

II "Brandenburg." The autumn of 1939 saw a tremendous turnover in personnel, as SS reservists were called up to release active-duty guards for service in the nascent SS-Death's Head Division. The guard unit was renamed the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann Sachsenhausen in about September 1940, then renamed again the SS-Totenkopfwachbataillon Sachsenhausen in January 1943.

Gustav Wegner commanded the guard force from December 1940 until April 1945. He rebuilt the unit from the ground up, paying special attention to the military and ideological training of new recruits. By November 1941, there were 9 companies of guards, numbering over 1,400 men.<sup>17</sup> By December 1944, there were 13 companies, with nearly 2,700 guards, while the camp headquarters staff numbered another 277.<sup>18</sup> As of January 1, 1945, the total number of SS guard personnel assigned to Sachsenhausen was 3,356, including 351 female guards at the subcamps for women prisoners.<sup>19</sup>

The SS-Death's Head guards at Sachsenhausen were little different from those at other concentration camps. The war quickly mingled the prewar cadres, who had specifically volunteered for service as camp guards, with Waffen-SS personnel of every kind. Hundreds of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe received their initial Waffen-SS training at Sachsenhausen in 1942 and 1943; others arrived already trained from different camps or from combat units. In November and December 1943, several hundred mostly Ukrainian guards came to Sachsenhausen from the Trawniki training camp near Lublin, Poland, after the WVHA took control of it and began to siphon off its personnel for use in the Reich. Sachsenhausen acted as the hub in a distribution system that fed these men to camps throughout the WVHA system. In 1944, large numbers of Wehrmacht soldiers were absorbed into the Waffen-SS and assigned to guard duty at Sachsenhausen, as at other camps. Finally, in early 1945, many middle-aged men from around Berlin were called up for guard service at Sachsenhausen.

Prisoners at Sachsenhausen were tormented and killed in many different ways. A gallows in the roll-call area was used for hangings. Shootings were more common and often took place in a special pit in the industrial yard. This shooting pit was next to the so-called Station Z, a killing facility built in 1942 to replace a wooden structure used during the shooting of Soviet POWs the previous year. Station Z held a gas chamber (built in 1943), the camp crematorium, and a room where prisoners who believed they were having their height measured were shot in the nape of the neck through a hole in the wall. Although Kaindl later testified that he ordered the gas chamber built because other killing methods were insufficient, it does not appear to have seen heavy use. Random killings, meanwhile, could take place virtually anywhere in the camp, and no prisoner was ever safe. Sachsenhausen also provided unwilling subjects for often fatal medical experiments.

Nazi concentration camps were noted for their sadistic punishments. In addition to standard techniques such as



"Lorry Fatigue-Party," by Sachsenhausen prisoner Odd Nansen, c. 1944; the sign on the barracks reads, "For freedom."  
USHMM WS #73557, COURTESY OF AGS

whipping or close confinement, Sachsenhausen had specializations of its own, most notably the “Saxon salute” (*Sachsen-gruss*), in which prisoners had to squat over a bayonet for hours with their arms outstretched. Sachsenhausen also had a special punishment detail. Initially assigned to the Klinkerwerk, its luckless prisoners later tested artificial shoe leather on grueling forced marches around a special track, an ordeal few survived.

Disease, malnutrition, and exhaustion claimed the majority of lives lost at Sachsenhausen. As bad as conditions were, however, they did not become so dire as at many other camps until late in the war. Thus, the death rate for Sachsenhausen was 0.7 percent in August 1943, compared to 2.1 percent for the concentration camp system as a whole during that month.<sup>20</sup> Sachsenhausen officially recorded 6,356 deaths from January 1, 1940, to June 30, 1942.<sup>21</sup> Another 3,807 deaths were recorded during 1943.<sup>22</sup> It was during the chaotic last months of the war, for which few statistics survive, that the death rate spiraled upward, while the final evacuation cost thousands of lives as well. When the Red Army arrived at the main camp on April 22, 1945, only about 3,000 incapacitated prisoners remained there. The rest were marching to the northwest, where those who survived were gradually liberated over the next two weeks.

It is impossible to determine the total number of dead for Sachsenhausen, but the figure of at least 100,000 reached by a Soviet Military Tribunal in 1947, and subsequently accepted by many, appears high. A more plausible estimate would be somewhere between 40,000 and 50,000.

**SOURCES** Far less secondary literature has been published on Sachsenhausen than its importance warrants, but some valuable recent studies include Hermann Kaienburg, *Der Militär- und Wirtschaftskomplex der SS im KZ-Standort Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg: Schnittpunkt von KZ-System, Waffen-SS und Judenmord* (Berlin: Metropol, 2006); and the essay in vol. 3 of *Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, ed. Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2006). Günter Morsch of the Sachsenhausen Memorial has also edited or coedited a number of useful volumes of collected articles for the series “Schriftenreihe der Stiftung Brandenburgische Gedenkstätten.” Full-length studies of a popular character include: *Sachsenhausen: Dokumente, Aussagen, Forschungsergebnisse und Erlebnisberichte über das ehemalige Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen*, 4th rev. ed. (Berlin: VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1982); AOS, *Sachso: Au coeur du système concentrationnaire nazi* (Paris: Minuit/Plon, 1982); Jean Bezaud, *Oranienbourg 1933–1935, Sachsenhausen 1936–1945: Étude* (Maulévrier: Hérault, 1989); Manuela R. Hrdlicka, *Alltag im KZ: Das Lager Sachsenhausen bei Berlin* (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1992).

A relatively large number of records from Sachsenhausen survived the war. Most were captured by the Red Army and are now held by the RGVA in fond 1367, a collection that has been selectively microfilmed by the USHMMA. A portion of the guards’ personnel records passed from Moscow to the East German security services and now reposes at the

BA-DH. Records of the guard unit’s 7th Company fell into American hands. Some now reside at BA-BL, as collection “NS4 Sa,” and are also available from NARA, as microfilm collection T580, roll 321, Ordner 88. The 7th Company’s personnel records, however, went to the BDC (now incorporated into the BA), where they were irretrievably broken up and cataloged by personal name. Some archival materials, mostly copies, are available at the Sachsenhausen Memorial in Oranienburg. Records from postwar Soviet trials of former Sachsenhausen personnel are held at the CAFSSRF, where they remain inaccessible to the general public, although copies of some materials are held by USHMMA. For information regarding West German trials, see C.F. Rüter and D.W. de Milde, comps., *Die westdeutschen Strafverfahren wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1997* (Amsterdam: APA—Holland University Press and K.G. Saur, 1998). The 573-page verdict in the case against Gustav Sorge and Wilhelm Schubert (Landgericht Bonn 8 Ks 1/58) provides detailed information about the camp. Survivor accounts include: Arnold Weiss-Rüthel, *Nacht und Nebel: Ein Sachsenhausenbuch* (Berlin: VVN-Verlag, 1949); Harry Naujoks, *Mein Leben im KZ Sachsenhausen 1936–1942: Erinnerungen des ehemaligen Lagerältesten* (Cologne: Röderberg, 1987); Albert Christel, *Apokalypse unserer Tage: Erinnerungen an das KZ Sachsenhausen* (Frankfurt am Main: Materialis, 1987); Jan Religa, *Wspomnienia o Sachsenhausen* (Warsaw: Spółdzielcze, 1990). The Sachsenhausen Memorial has published a CD-ROM featuring six hours of interviews with 20 survivors under the title *Gegen das Vergessen: Häftlingsalltag im KZ Sachsenhausen 1936–1945*, 2nd rev. ed. (Munich: United Soft Media, 2004).

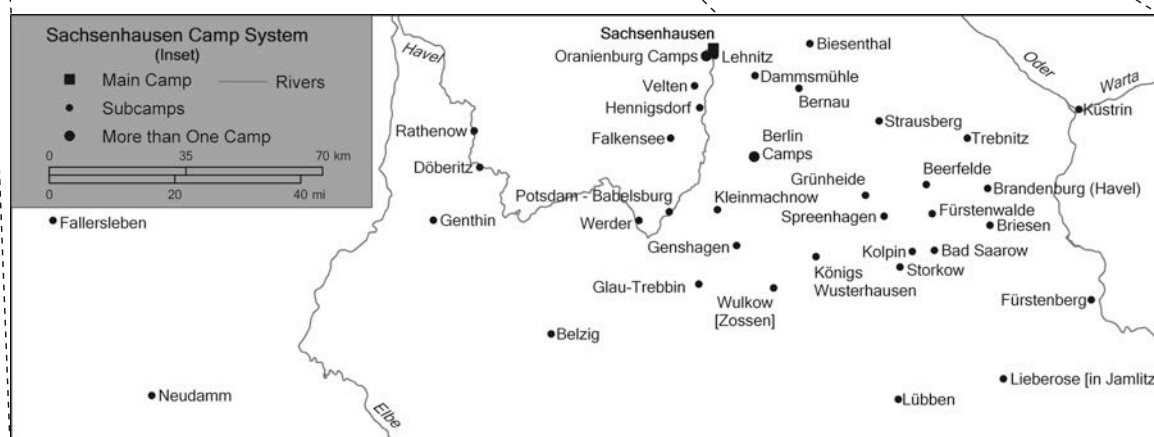
Todd Huebner

## NOTES

1. RGVA, fond 1367, opis’ 1, delo 17, fol. 362.
2. Ibid., delo 19, fol. 2.
3. Ibid., delo 20, fols. 279–398.
4. Ibid., fols. 134, 137. Records for the key period of November 11 to 20, 1938, are missing, making it impossible to determine either the full number of newly arrived Jews or the peak total the camp attained during that period.
5. Ibid., fol. 1.
6. Ibid., delo 4, fol. 6.
7. Ibid., delo 227, fol. 2.
8. AG-S, R 214/M58, prisoner strength figures for 1943, n.d.
9. Ibid., prisoner strength figures for 1943, by category, n.d.
10. NARA, T-580, roll 68, Ordner 329, list of camps with numbers of guards and prisoners as of January 1 and 15, 1945, n.d. These figures are unlikely to include the newly acquired SS-Baubrigaden, which were slow to report to their new command.
11. RGVA, fond 1367, opis’ 1, delo 17, fol. 362.
12. Ibid., delo 20, fols. 279–398.
13. Ibid., fols. 1–137. See note 4.
14. Ibid., delo 4, fol. 6; delo 227, fol. 2.
15. AG-S, R 214/M58, prisoner strength figures for 1943, by category, n.d.

16. RGVA, fond 1367, opis' 1, delo 19, fol. 2.
17. Ibid., delo 79, fols. 199–235.
18. Ibid., delo 60, fol. 8.
19. See note 10.
20. NARA, RG 238, Nuremburg Document 1469-PS.
21. Cited in the judgment against Gustav Sorge and Wilhelm Schubert (LG Bonn 8 Ks 1/58), p. 84. This figure excludes the unregistered slaughter of some 12,000 to 18,000 Soviet POWs in 1941.
22. AG-S, R 214/M58, prisoner strength figures for 1943, n.d.





## SACHSENHAUSEN SUBCAMP SYSTEM

The “concentration camp of the Reich capital city” (KZ der Reichshauptstadt) Sachsenhausen was established in 1936 as a model and main camp in Oranienburg to the north of Berlin. The first subcamps were established as bases for future main camps—Neuengamme (1938–1940), Ravensbrück (1938–1939), Gross-Rosen (1940–1941), and Wewelsburg (1940). With the beginning of the war against the Soviet Union, the first regular subcamps were established in Berlin (Kastanienallee and Lichterfelde), in Oranienburg (Heinkel and Klinkerwerk), as well as at SS bases (Prettin, Hohenlychen, Drögen, Brandenburg); 5 of the first 7 subcamps lasted until the end of the war. In 1942, a subcamp was established at an SS position (Glaw) and another for a future main camp in Kiev (Ukraine) and at a secret research station for the Reichspost (Kleinmachnow Hakeburg). The first Construction Brigade or Baubrigade (“West”) was attached to Sachsenhausen. In 1943, the number of subcamps increased to 26. The system now ex-



Prisoners perform forced labor at the Lehnitz (Klinkerwerk) subcamp of Sachsenhausen, nd.

USHMM WS #32063, COURTESY OF AGS

panded geographically. In the area around Berlin, many camps were established that were connected to backup quarters for the Nazi Party, SS, and Reich authorities. In the area of the SS bases or SS-Standorte Bad Saarow and Jamlitz (“Kurmark”) there were established in 1943 2 larger camps (Bad Saarow and Lieberose), and in the following year, 4 other subcamps. Beginning in 1943, 5 camps were established at private armaments firms, a direction that reached its climax in 1944 when there were 32 subcamps. In 1944, Sachsenhausen had 59 subcamps. Almost all of the subcamps, which ultimately held the majority of Sachsenhausen prisoners, were located in the immediate vicinity around Berlin or in Berlin itself.

In the early subcamps, there were mostly German criminal and political prisoners. Later, the number of foreign prisoners increased. Until 1942, with the exception of Drögen, there were no Jewish prisoners in any of the Sachsenhausen subcamps. From 1944, more and more subcamps were established with Jewish prisoners. The Sachsenhausen concentration camp system of subcamps is closely connected with the history of National Socialism in Berlin, the area around Brandenburg, and the genocide of the European Jews. There were in Berlin-Brandenburg around 90 Sachsenhausen camps holding between 1,000 and up to 10,000 prisoners. The largest camp, with almost 10,000 prisoners, was the Heinkelwerk in Oranienburg. Lieberose, the second largest, was also the largest Jewish subcamp. Camps established in 1944 were mostly located near Berlin armaments producers. From the summer of 1944, increasing numbers of Jewish prisoners were brought from Berlin/Brandenburg to Auschwitz. It is known that Jewish prisoners were in 26 camps. At the beginning of 1945, there were 11,079 Jewish prisoners, of whom one-third alone were held in the Lieberose subcamp. No new camps were formed in 1945. What is important is that at the end in 15 subcamps, mostly the so-called SS-Baubrigaden, there were more than 7,000 prisoners cleaning up rubble, mostly in southern areas of the Reich. Sachsenhausen was in charge of these subcamps. In the confusion of marches and dissolutions shortly before the end of the war, Pölitz near Stettin was transferred from Stutthof to Sachsenhausen. The Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) subcamps at the troop training grounds in Döberitz and Hermsdorf appear only briefly in SS statistics. The small camps completely disappear from the statistics. The current state of research indicates that there were 92 sites for Sachsenhausen subcamps.

There were 21 subcamps for females as part of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. All of them were either created or transferred in 1944 from the Ravensbrück concentration camp to Sachsenhausen. More than 13,000 women were held in the camps. On January 26, 1945, there were under the control of the Sachsenhausen concentration

camp 55,541 prisoners, of whom 32,347 were held in the subcamps, that is, almost 60 percent.

The degree of difficulty of labor in the camps varied according to the nature of the work. In the Berlin subcamps, the work was mostly in armaments and was performed under extremely difficult conditions. Noteworthy is that the majority of subcamps at SS sites from 1943, where mostly buildings and barracks were constructed (there were also heavy earthworks), were connected to backup quarters.

Until 1944, the majority of deaths in the subcamps were caused by mistreatment by the SS, and in many cases, the SS intentionally murdered the prisoners. Noteworthy of these camps is the Klinkerwerk subcamp, which also functioned as a punishment camp. From 1944, above all in the camps with Jewish prisoners, there were mass deaths, caused by intentionally insufficient food supplies, a lack of medical care, and the generally poor quality of the buildings. A good example is the Lieberose subcamp, where from the autumn of 1944 more than 60 percent of the prisoners died. During an extermination action at the beginning of February 1945, 1,242 prisoners were shot in this subcamp. Around 1,000 sick prisoners had already been taken to be killed in Auschwitz II-Birkenau before they could die from the work at Lieberose.

The SS camp personnel came mostly from the main camp's command office. That is, they had mostly served in the SS-Totenkopf-Wachbataillon Sachsenhausen in the main camp, from where after a certain period they were transferred to other duties within the camp. From there, mostly as block leaders (Blockführer), or in administration, they were transferred to the subcamps. A small number of camp leaders (Lagerführer) and block leaders in the subcamps were from the Security Service (SD), the Wehrmacht, or Luftwaffe. Almost all of these SS-Führer had served as SS soldiers at the front. A large number were wounded and were no longer fit for active service and for this reason served in the concentration camps. Many block and camp leaders served consecutively in different subcamps. Beginning in 1943–1944, more and more ethnic Germans from Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Romania were deployed as guards. The Lieberose subcamp had its own SS-Wachbataillon 4 “Kurmark,” consisting mostly of Yugoslavian and Romanian ethnic Germans, who answered not to the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) but directly to the SS-Leadership Main Office (FHA).

Prisoner solidarity was stronger when there were large national groups in a subcamp (such as the Norwegians in Bad

Saarow). Such solidarity could be instrumental in ensuring the survival of individual prisoners. Solidarity was weaker where the SS was able to prevent prisoner solidarity, such as by installing criminals as prisoner-functionaries. The effectiveness of the solidarity was also heavily affected by the degree of brutality by the camp personnel.

Although the source material is scant, escapes were made from all camps. Relatively little is known about sabotage in armaments firms. In Lieberose, Jewish prisoners who defended themselves during the mass murder of 1,300 prisoners by the camp leaders suffered life-threatening injuries.

Almost all of the 72 subcamps in 1945, for which there is documentary evidence, were dissolved between February and April 21, 1945, when they were pulled back into the main camp. The exceptions were Wulkow and Schwarzhöhe, which were evacuated in the direction of the Theresienstadt ghetto, or cases such as Königs Wusterhausen, Falkensee, and Belzig, which were liberated either in part or wholly by the Red Army.

**SOURCES** To date there has been no systematic research on the subcamps. The Sachsenhausen Memorial has sponsored a diploma thesis, which for the first time attempts to order known knowledge about the subcamps: Uwe Hofschläger, “Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen” (Diplomarbeit, Freien Universität Berlin, 1997), held under file listing AG-S, D.A. 5147. Each year, the memorial organizes workshops on the subcamps in which historians and local people take part, such as the Tagungsmappe Workshop, SBG, ed., “Die Aussenlager der Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen und Ravensbrück” (Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Ravensbrück, October 17–18, 2003). For most of the larger subcamps, essays and sometimes brochures and monographs have been published. Dissertations have been written on the Klinkerwerken Oranienburg and Lieberose. A short text was recently published that gives an overview of the Sachsenhausen subcamps in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, vol. 3, *Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2006).

Source material comes for the large part from the AG-S, research material from local sources, the BA-L, court archives, and local archives. There are scarcely any primary documents other than the Veränderungsmeldungen in the AG-S. Other important new sources are the increasing number of interviews held since the 1980s with camp survivors.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini



## BAD SAAROW

In the summer of 1943, the SS-Main Command Office (Führungshauptamt [FHA]) began to relocate its offices from the German capital Berlin. At the same, it began, in the area of Bad Saarow, a major construction program of building a subterranean Intelligence Center (Nachrichtenzentrale) in the Rauener Mountains to the south of Fürstenwalde.

Following the removal of Admiral Canaris as chief of the Abwehr (Counterintelligence), Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler ensured that the overflow subcamp for the SS, which had been in development from the autumn of 1943, was linked to the reorganization of the German secret service.

The project "Relocation of SS Offices" (*Verlagerung von SS Dienststellen*) from the capital, which was endangered by bombs, operated from the end of July 1943 under the code name "Siegfried."<sup>1</sup> Project SS-*Nachrichtenkaserne* (Intelligence Bunker) operated under the code names "Fuchsbau" (fox den) and "Dachsbau" (badger den).<sup>2</sup>

The areas administered by the SS garrison offices at Bad Saarow included, from 1943 on, these Sachsenhausen subcamps: Bad Saarow (also known, incorrectly, as Ketschendorf), Fürstenwalde, Storkow, Spreenhagen, and Kolpin.

The first record of the "SS-Branch Office Bad Saarow" is at the end of May 1943.<sup>3</sup> On August 4, 1943, the head of the SS-FHA, Jüttner, ordered the transfer of Amtsgruppe B (Office Group B) to location I in Radlow; Amtsgruppe C to location I in Radlow, Lindenberg, Glau, and Pieskow; and Amtsgruppe D to Sellendorf/Golsen. Amtsgruppe A had already been relocated.<sup>4</sup> Located in the overflow quarters were villas for Himmler's deputy Gürtler as well as Gestapo Chief Heinrich Müller and Sepp Dietrich, the commander of the Leibstandarte "Adolf Hitler." These buildings were also constructed by prisoners in the Bad Saarow area.<sup>5</sup>

Planning for the SS-Intelligence Project "Fuchsbau" began in July 1943. The SS-FHA negotiated with the State Forestry Administration over land for "Fuchsbau," including barracks in the Dubrow Mountains, to the south of Langewahl near Fürstenwalde. The subcamp would be named "Waldlager Führungsamt der Waffen-SS" (Forest Camp Waffen-SS Command Office). For the remainder of the war, the area was a restricted security zone.<sup>6</sup> In March 1944, the site became officially known as "SS-Führungs-Nachrichten-Abteilung, Ketschendorf" (Command Intelligence Section, Ketschendorf).

Construction was probably completed by the end of the war, with only the technical equipment not yet installed. According to the Military Information Office (Wehrmachtsauskunftsstelle [WASSt]), the site was known as "Führungs-Nachrichtenkaserne, Alt-Golm" (Command Intelligence Bunker, Alt-Golm).

From August 2, 1943, on, Bad Saarow functioned as the Construction Administration (Bauleitung) center. The Bad Saarow Central Construction Administration (Zentralbauleitung) was responsible for both the overflow quarters and the "Fuchsbau" intelligence center projects.

Officially, Bad Saarow, like Kurmark in Jamlitz, operated as a central Construction Administration within the Reich Nord Building Inspectorate. As of May 1944, the Bad Saarow Zentralbauleitung was in charge of the Bad Saarow, Fuchsbau, Storkow, Kolpin, and Trebnitz Construction Administrations.<sup>7</sup> The Spreenhagen construction site also reported to the Bad Saarow Zentralbauleitung. While the Building Administration of Bad Saarow, Storkow, Kolpin, and Trebnitz functioned as SS overflow quarters, the Fuchsbau Bauleitung was in the first instance responsible for the construction of the SS-Intelligence Bunker.

Beginning on January 2, 1944, the Bad Saarow SS-Zentralbauleitung in Bad Saarow was under the command of SS-Untersturmführer Hans-Gustav Bauer, who was born in Nürnberg in 1912.<sup>8</sup> SS-Oberscharführer Ernst Rapp, born in 1912 in Stuttgart,<sup>9</sup> was supervisor of the Bad Saarow Construction Administration. SS-Unterscharführer Paul Pörschmann,<sup>10</sup> SS-Rottenführer Heinrich Liese,<sup>11</sup> Meynke,<sup>12</sup> and SS-Sturmbannführer König have also been named as local construction superintendents in Bad Saarow who were also said to be in charge of the guards.<sup>13</sup>

The Bad Saarow subcamp was close to the site of the Intelligence Bunker "Fuchsbau." As early as October 1943, a detainee camp with three barracks,<sup>14</sup> in the immediate vicinity of Fürstenwalde in the Rauener Mountains south of the Berlin-Frankfurt (on the Oder) Autobahn, had been established for Fuchsbau.

The most important building site, however, was the SS-Intelligence Bunker, which was to be constructed in the Rauener Mountains.

By the end of October 1943, the prisoners had constructed 5 accommodation barracks for the SS and a building for the Intelligence Command Operation in the immediate vicinity of the camp. The construction of a further 18 buildings had been approved, and an additional 12 were planned for a later date. The subcamp was located right at the Frankfurt/Oder Autobahn in the area known as Ketschendorf.<sup>15</sup> It was constructed for 900 prisoners. The highest number of prisoners, 950, was recorded for October 1944.<sup>16</sup>

The subcamp commandant was SS-Sturmscharführer Willy Nurrek, born in 1898 in Scherpingen near Danzig. Nurrek's deputy was SS-Unterscharführer Willy Bonowski, born in 1911.<sup>17</sup> Other block leaders were SS-Rottenführer Heinrich Liese and SS-Unterscharführer Paul Pörschmann. Oberscharführer Karl Leukel, born in 1899 in Eiserfeld, was the supervisor of the guards.

In the end, the subcamp consisted of four barracks for prisoners. The prisoners came from 22 countries. There were Ukrainians, Serbs, Russians, Poles, Lithuanians, French, Norwegians, Danes, Germans, and others, including 100 young people and 200 Norwegians. It is said that there was also a half-Jewish Hungarian who had arrived as an "Aryan" at Bad Saarow via Auschwitz.<sup>18</sup>

The camp had four watchtowers and was enclosed in a charged double barbed-wire fence.<sup>19</sup> The SS daily deployed

100 SS men, who arrived each morning at the subcamp to guard the prisoners.

Survivors have reported several murders arising from the sadism of the guards and from attempts to escape. The Czech potter Fuchs, about 45 years of age, is said to have been shot because he washed himself at a spring after work.<sup>20</sup> A Ukrainian inmate is said to have fled in December 1944 and to have been hanged at the Bad Saarow subcamp, under the supervision of SS-Obersturmführer Höhn from Sachsenhausen.<sup>21</sup>

Sick prisoners were treated in barracks four by a Polish doctor and Polish dentist.<sup>22</sup> Each week 20 to 30 sick prisoners were returned to Sachsenhausen. The camp elder was reportedly Malchow;<sup>23</sup> the cook, the prisoner Wangelin, was from Hamburg.<sup>24</sup>

At the end of December 1944, there were 729 prisoners<sup>25</sup> in the Bad Saarow subcamp. On February 12, 1945, there were only 169 prisoners.<sup>26</sup> From January 1945 on, the guards at the subcamp gate were armed with hand grenades, which hung from their belts.<sup>27</sup>

The subcamp was dissolved on April 15, 1945, when the prisoners were evacuated on foot in the direction of the Erkner railway station. About one-third of the prisoners fled during a bombing raid upon their arrival at a Berlin station. This possibly occurred on April 16 and 17, 1945. According to prisoner reports, only about 70 prisoners from the Bad Saarow subcamp arrived at Sachsenhausen.<sup>28</sup>

In October 1945, the British Military Government investigated a probable member of the SS, Will Thormann, interned in the British occupation zone for the mistreatment of prisoners, especially Poles, in Bad Saarow between January 1944 and January 1945.<sup>29</sup> For unknown reasons, a former Bad Saarow prisoner, Franz Herich, was interned after the war in the British internment camp Esterwegen.<sup>30</sup> Also interned by the British was Adam Engelmann. It is not known whether he was an inmate or a member of the SS.<sup>31</sup>

Beginning in 1969, the Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes in Poland began investigating camps at Fürstenwalde and Bad Saarow.<sup>32</sup>

**SOURCES** The only published source on Bad Saarow is the memoirs of Lars To, *Vi Ventet—Wir warteten . . . Nachrichtenbunker "Fuchsbau"* (Fürstenwalde, 1996).

Details of the prehistory of the subcamp and the SS-FHA are located in the BA-B, Bestand NS 33 and NS 3; and BLHA. Memoirs are kept in the AG-S and in Potsdam BLHA. Individual documents about the subcamp and SS guards can be found in the PRO and in the AG-S. The original Veränderungsmeldungen are in the CAFSSRF. Copies of them can be accessed at the AG-S.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, NS 33/107, p. 224.
2. See Lars To, *Vi Ventet—Wir warteten . . . Nachrichtenbunker "Fuchsbau"* (Fürstenwalde, 1996).

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

3. BA-B, NS 33/107, p. 229, which deals with the transfer of SS members of the SS-Nachrichten-Ausbildungs-und-Ersatz-Regimentes from Nürnberg to Bad Saarow.

4. BA-B, NS 33/107, p. 223, Order of the SS-FHA dated August 4, 1943, "Verlegung des SS FHA in Ausweichunterkünften."

5. AG-S, P3 Possekehl, Gustav, Report from 1971.

6. BLHA, Pr. Br. Rep. 1, 2004, file note of the SS-FHA dated August 2, 1943.

7. BA-B, NS 3/1072, p. 139.

8. BA-B, NS 3/1130, pp. 12–14.

9. BA-B, NS 3/1130, p. 9.

10. To, *Vi Ventet—Wir warteten*, pp. 58, 59, 125. The author describes him as the building superintendent and camp commandant.

11. Ibid., p. 125. He is said to have survived the war.

12. Ibid., p. 85.

13. AG-S, LAG, XI/9, p. 15.

14. BLHA, Pr. Br. Rep. 1, 2004. Plan of the Fuchsbau Camp, Scale 1:2500, prepared by the Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Bad Saarow, October 26, 1943. The plan had been in preparation since September 24, 1943.

15. BLHA, Pr. Br. Rep. 1, 2004. Plan of the Fuchsbau camp dated October 26, 1943.

16. AG-S, Bestand CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 100.

17. BA-DH, ZM 1564, A.13, p. 8; former political prisoner Willy Kühne attested to Bonowski's "correct, human behavior." He attempted to obtain extra rations for the prisoners. AG-S, Bestand BLHA, Pr. Br. Rep. 35H, vol. 12/2, Collection D 30 A/12/2 B, p. 68; see also AG-S, LAG XI/9a, p. 3, Zeugenvernehmungsprotokoll of Józef Zientarski, Chojnice, Poland, August 20, 1969.

18. To, *Vi Ventet—Wir warteten*, p. 95.

19. AG-S, LAG XI/9a, p. 2, Zeugenvernehmungsprotokoll of Józef Zientarski, Chojnice, Poland, August 20, 1969.

20. Ibid., p. 4.

21. To, *Vi Ventet—Wir warteten*, p. 72.

22. AG-S, LAG XI/0, p. 15.

23. AG-S, Bestand BLHA, Pr. Br. Rep. 35H, vol. 10/2, Bestand D 30 A/10/2 B, p. 37, questionnaire of the former Bad Saarow subcamp prisoner Heinrich Deichmann.

24. AG-S, LAG XI/9, p. 15.

25. AG-S, Bestand CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 100.

26. AG-S, Bestand CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 101.

27. To, *Vi Ventet—Wir warteten*, p. 90.

28. AG-S, P3 Possekehl Gustav, Report from 1971.

29. PRO, WO 309/438 and WO 309/853.

30. List of former members of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp headquarters interned in the British CIC Esterwegen, probably from 1945, in different versions, but see AG-S, LAG X/3.

31. PRO, WO 353/1, Card Index.

32. AG-S, LAG XI/9a.

## BEERFELDE

The Beerfelde subcamp was located in the district of Lebus to the northeast of Berlin. It existed from the summer of 1943 and was connected with an SS duty station. There are said to have been about 50 male prisoners in the camp.<sup>1</sup>

Based on Belgian sources, the International Tracing Service (ITS) first made reference to this subcamp in its 1949 catalog.

The Committee of the Anti-Fascist Resistance Fighters in the German Democratic Republic (Komitee der Antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, KdAW-DDR) referred to Beerfelde in the list of work detachments and subcamps in its 1967 publication on Sachsenhausen.

Subsequent investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations, in Ludwigsburg in the Federal Republic of Germany did not reveal any other details about this camp.<sup>2</sup>

**SOURCES** Secondary source references for this camp begin with its entry in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 264; and DaW-DDR, ed., *Damals in Sachsenhausen* (Berlin, 1967), p. 60.

The primary sources for this subcamp begin with the ZdL investigation, now BA-L.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. According to the conference binder for the workshop, SBG, ed., “Die Aussenlager der Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen und Ravensbrück” (Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Ravensbrück, October 17–18, 2003).

2. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2702/66, pp. 12–13, Concluding Report, January 20, 1972.

## BELZIG

In 1934, the Treuenbrietzen metalware factory (Gebrüder Kopp, Berlin) began to build the Roederhof munitions factory in Belzig. From 1935 on, it manufactured infantry rifle munitions; from 1938 on, 2cm anti-aircraft munitions as well. The existence of the factory all but eliminated unemployment in the region, even before a two-shift system was introduced, and from 1937 on, involuntary workers from the Rhineland, and later from Austria and the Sudetenland, came to Belzig.

When World War II began in 1939, the demand for munitions rose, and so foreign workers were also ordered to Belzig. In 1942, 1,250 forced laborers and 150 prisoners of war (POWs) were put into a labor camp. Soon the camp next to the munitions factory was being expanded.

In late 1943, construction began on a new barracks camp next to the existing one; the two were separated by an electrified barbed-wire fence. In August 1944, approximately 750 women were transported 140 kilometers (87 miles) from the Ravensbrück concentration camp. They were housed in four wooden barracks. Within the fence there was also an infirmary, a working barracks with a punishment cell (known as

the death cell), and a combination latrine and washroom. The SS barracks stood outside the fence.

The roughly 750 prisoners included approximately 250 Poles, 200 Soviet citizens, 140 Belgians, 75 French, 7 Czechs, 6 Yugoslavs, 3 Germans, 2 each Italians and Hungarians, and 1 prisoner from Britain.<sup>1</sup>

The imprisoned women had to work 12-hour shifts every day except Sundays and holidays. The Roederhof factory paid the Ravensbrück administration 0.70 Reichsmark (RM) per prisoner per day. Under the supervision of female SS overseers and German master workers, the prisoners had to carry out all the work of munitions production. They received beatings and curses for trivial things, from the guards and the German factory personnel as well. The prisoners could only use the toilets after the SS overseer sounded a whistle.

The women reported that the German overseers, such as Otto Haseloff and Hermann Gericke, also found opportunities to supply the prisoners secretly with food, medicine, and information.

The SS leadership's goal was the systematic physical and psychological annihilation of the concentration camp prisoners. The prisoners experienced inhuman living conditions and hard labor for 12 hours per day in the munitions factory. They wore striped uniforms that they received in Ravensbrück. In the barracks they slept in extremely close quarters, on straw sacks on two-tiered bunks. The rations were meager to begin with, decreased steadily, and would be withdrawn as punishment. Other punishments could include beatings with whips, punishment assemblies that lasted until prisoners collapsed, and individual punishments of the most inhuman sorts; all of this served to terrorize the victims. If a prisoner collapsed under punishment, she would be revived with ice-cold water. In winter, prisoners were also punished by being made to stand for hours in the cold. The result of all this was emaciation to the point of appearing skeletal, sickness, and depression. There was seldom any medical treatment. Assignment to the infirmary usually meant death.

Bans were announced: The arrogance of the SS guards went so far that the prisoners were not allowed to look them in the face. If it happened anyway, the prisoner was immediately punished with blows of every kind. There was no information about the world outside, although every now and then the locals could secretly slip them a newspaper.

No exact count of deaths in Belzig is possible. The commandant, SS-Oberscharführer Gerhard Lehmann, said in his last interrogation on May 5, 1965, that 50 to 60 prisoners died of exhaustion and sickness.

The transport manager for the factory, Mrs. Zimmermann, could remember very well that from the autumn of 1944 until early 1945 a wagon would come from the Ravensbrück Fürstenberg subcamp every three weeks with new prisoners to replace those who had died. In Belzig the wagon would be loaded with the dead and sent to the crematorium at Brandenburg (Havel). There is no documentary evidence on this point, but one can assume that the number of dead was significantly higher than Lehmann indicated.



From the beginning of 1945 on, the deceased prisoners were buried in the Gertraudten cemetery in Belzig. For this point, too, there is no documentation.

The SS command at Sachsenhausen provided Belzig with its commandant, 6 SS men, and 20 female SS overseers.

On November 1, 1944, Lehmann, who had the nickname “Crooked Neck” (Schiefhals), arrived. Earlier he had been in the Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen, and Lieberose concentration camps, and he brought the necessary “experience” with him. His brutality in dealing with the prisoners is perceptible in the available event reports. Belgian prisoner Auguste Lambrecht, prisoner number 10218, reported that Lehmann shot six women during the death march.

In the book, . . . und Nachts Kartoffelschälen, SS overseer Margot Kunz maintained that Belzig was only an “education camp” and that there was no factory work, only labor in the forest. This was, however, only valid for the months of March and April 1945, when there was neither material nor power for armaments production in the factory. Marie Berthier (prisoner number 10025) contradicted Kunz’s statement that she had interacted affectionately with the prisoners and that “there was only one box on the ears.” Berthier stated that, among others, her comrade Madam Sudaqua, because she was Jewish, was beaten in the forest.

On April 24, 1945, at 11:30 A.M., the city commandant of Belzig gave the order that the camp was to be evacuated in the direction of Görzke, Ziesar, Plaue, and Görden (perhaps the psychiatric clinic). The day before, armored units of the Red Army had taken Treuenbrietzen, only 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) away, and so the alarm was raised in Belzig.

That afternoon, the prisoners were briefly informed that the punishment for attempting to escape was death. Some 600 women began the march under SS guard, while 72 ill prisoners were left to themselves in the camp. By the time darkness fell, the column had traveled only 9 kilometers (5.6 miles), to the town of Dangelndorf, short of Görzke. For 6 women, this was a death march; the SS commandant shot them and left them in the ditch.

On the second day the prisoner column reached the military exercise grounds in Altengrabow. They found emergency quarters in the old sheep farm. The SS guard force diminished little by little; several overseers put on prisoner clothing and left in the direction of the Elbe River.

On May 1, 1945, the prisoners, together with other female forced laborers and POWs, declared their self-liberation.

U.S. troops arrived in Altengrabow from Zerbst on May 3, cared for the prisoners, and took the first women away. Of the 72 women who remained in Belzig, 8 died, and a French woman was shot by the guards. The survivors were freed by the Red Army on May 3, following the peaceful surrender of the city of Belzig.

Preliminary proceedings against Commandant Lehmann led nowhere. No former prisoners were called as witnesses, and the German court released him.

Kunz was sentenced to death by a Soviet military court; later a German Democratic Republic (DDR) court sentenced

her to 10 years’ imprisonment. In the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), she was recognized as a “victim of Stalinism” in 1993 and received recompense for her imprisonment in the sum of 64,350 deutschemark (DM). Because of protests, however, especially in the media, the recognition was later canceled. The guard Frieda Werner was sentenced to 3 years’ imprisonment by the state court in Halle on April 27, 1948. Of the other guards, it is only known that they managed to get over the Elbe into western Germany before May 1, 1945, and so escaped any punishment in the East.

**SOURCES** Information on Belzig may be found in the following sources: Gerhard Dorbritz, *Schicksale—Dokumentation über das Zwangsarbeiterlager Roederhof in Belzig* (Belzig: 2001); the brochure by Dorbritz, *Rüstungsbetriebe Kopp & Co. (1924–1945)* (Belzig, 2003); Elfi Hartenstein, . . . und Nachts Kartoffelschälen: Verfolgt, Verschwiegen, Verdrängt; Frauen berichtet aus Nachkriegslagern; Annäherung an ein Kapitel DDR-Vergangeheit (Berg am Starnberger See: Verlagsgesellschaft Berg, 1992); and the brochure in Flemish by Rene Motmanns, “Mijn belevenissen tijdens de tweede wereldoorlo—Augusta Lambrecht” (n.p., n.d.).

Gerhard Dorbritz  
trans. Geoffrey Megargee

## NOTE

1. Figures compiled by the author from interviews with survivors. All figures are approximate.

## BERLIN (ARADO)

In the fall of 1944, a subcamp of Sachsenhausen was established at the main offices of the Arado-Flugzeugwerke (Arado Aircraft Works) company in Berlin. While there has been some analysis of the Arado-Flugzeugwerke and the Sachsenhausen subcamp in Wittenberg and elsewhere, sources on the Berlin branch of this firm and the camp slave laborers it employed are generally scarce.

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS) entry for Berlin (Arado), women prisoners were incarcerated in the camp.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Berlin (Arado) subcamp of Sachsenhausen. For a basic outline of the camp, on which this entry is primarily based, see the entry for Berlin (Arado) in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979). Although not always consistent with other sources, the ITS catalog provides brief statistical information about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, and so on.

Few relevant primary source materials were found. In the AG-S, there are some file groupings that mention an “Arado” camp, although the information provided in these documents is not necessarily related to the Berlin office, and it is rather vague. See especially file groups D 30 A/8/4 C; D 30

A/7/8, Teil 1; D 30 A 7/14; D 30 A 9/1, Teil 1. Sources that mention Arado at the USHMM primarily focus on the Wittenberg subcamp. There is one oral history with survivor Irene Fleming, who was taken from Ravensbrück to work at “Arado.” Her testimony does not specify which camp or “Arado” plant this was. However, late in the interview she speaks about being in the vicinity of the Elbe, which would place her most likely in the Wittenberg camp. A history of the Arado company was also consulted at the Library of Congress, and there was no mention of any use of labor from the camps. Most analyses of Arado focus on the history of the development of aircraft, and these focus on the plants in Wittenberg, Potsdam, and Warnemünde but rarely on the Berlin office.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## BERLIN (FRIEDRICH-KRAUSE-UFER)

The Friedrich-Krause-Ufer subcamp existed from the end of 1943 as a labor detachment of the Berlin-Lichterfelde subcamp. It was situated close to unused land owned by the Auer-Gesellschaft on the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer near the Moabiter Westhafen. Former prisoner Emil Kamke stated that he was held in Lichterfelde from the middle of 1942 to the end of 1943. In 1943 he was ordered to the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer subcamp.<sup>1</sup>

In the change reports (*Veränderungsmeldungen*), the camp is given a separate entry to that of the Lichterfelde camp for the first time on April 21, 1944, and is described as “external detachment Berlin” (Aussenkommando Berlin) with 300 prisoners. On May 20, it had 459 prisoners. The camp is mentioned for the last time on January 10, 1945, with 289 prisoners.<sup>2</sup>

The prisoners were accommodated in converted ships. The prisoners in the “Berlin” labor detachment removed rubble. The reclaimed building material was transported on the Spree River from the Müggelheim labor camp to Köpenick, where it was used to build emergency accommodations. There was therefore a direct functional connection between the Berlin labor detachment and the Müggelheim labor camp. Former prisoner Hans-Christian Witt stated that he worked not only at the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer but also with the SS-Baubrigade II (Construction Brigade II) in Berlin-Müggelheim, in the office for SS settlement policy (*Siedlungswesen*).<sup>3</sup>

According to the Sachsenhausen Veränderungsmeldungen, the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer subcamp with 278 prisoners was put under the control of the SS-Baubrigade II on January 11, 1945, as the sublabor detachment “IIa Berlin.” Shortly after that, it was relocated to southern Germany.<sup>4</sup> Eleven SS men from the detachment at Friedrich-Krause-Ufer remained, and their leader was probably SS-Sturmscharführer Otto Dittmar.<sup>5</sup>

The Veränderungsmeldungen refer once again to a Sachsenhausen subcamp on March 29, 1945. They refer to a subcamp on the abandoned grounds on the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer, the site of the Berlin labor detachment until the middle of January 1945. The Friedrich-Krause-Ufer subcamp with 100

prisoners existed for only a short time and is last mentioned on April 9, 1945, in the surviving Veränderungsmeldung.<sup>6</sup> It is not known when it was dissolved.

The prisoner numbers in the SS-Baubrigade II remained constant for the spring of 1945. This means that the second camp on the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer was not populated by the relocation of the Baubrigade IIa from southern Germany. The empty space on the Spree, the result of moving the Baubrigade detachment to southern Germany, was used again as a subcamp. It is not known what the prisoners were used for, but it is likely to have been to remove rubble.

According to prisoner statements, one SS-Hauptscharführer Skopnik was the camp leader (Lagerführer) of the Berlin labor detachment. It was thought that at Christmas he procured sweets for the prisoners in return for money, for which act SS block leader (Blockführer) Gustav Sorge wanted to denounce him to the camp command; Sorge had prisoners in Sachsenhausen questioned about the matter.<sup>7</sup> This could in fact have been SS-Oberscharführer Hermann Skopnik, who was camp leader in the Drögen subcamp and who was, in fact, convicted of assisting prisoners.

According to his own statements, SS-Oberscharführer Emil Rieder also claimed to have been camp leader in the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer subcamp. In 1941–1942, he had been stationed in the Glau subcamp and later in Schönefeld.<sup>8</sup> SS-Oberschütze Georg Schneider, among others, guarded the camp. He was captured by the Americans in 1945. He admitted the prisoners were guarded by police while they were working.<sup>9</sup> Other guards in the subcamp were SS-Schütze Hermann Kopfinger (September 25, 1944, to March 26, 1945) and SS-Oberscharführer Walter Schwank (September 15, 1944, to January 30, 1945); after the war, both were interned by the British in Esterwegen.<sup>10</sup>

**SOURCES** There is no secondary literature on the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer subcamp. Just about all sources are located in the AG-S and a few in the ZdL (now the BA-L).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-S, JD 21, Bd. 20, p. 16, Aussage Emil Kamke, July 13, 1961.
2. AG-S, JSU 1, Bd. 100 and 101.
3. AG-S, D 30 A/10/2B, p. 137.
4. AG-S, JSU 1, Bd. 99 and 101.
5. BA-L, UdSSR, 245 Ac, Bd. I, p. 148.
6. AG-S, JSU 1, Bd. 101.
7. AG-S, JD 2, Bd. 38, p. 166, Aussage Wilhelm Rehmsch, April 17, 1957.
8. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2488/66, pp. 82–103, Vernehmung Emil Rieder, March 15, 1961; see also AG-S, JD 7, Bd. 4, Bl. 132, Aussage Emil Rieder, August 17, 1961, in which he maintained that he had simply been a guard.
9. AG-S, LAG, XI/1, Schreiben der ZSSSta-K, May 29, 1970.
10. AG-S, D 30 A, Bd. 15, Esterwegenliste.

VOLUME I: PART B

## BERLIN (KASTANIENALLEE)

There is limited information about the subcamp of Sachsenhausen on the Kastanienallee in Berlin. A work commando was sent there to work for a police administration office from September 29 to December 31, 1941, but the work may have extended into April or June 1942.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have estimated that about 50 prisoners were sent to this commando.<sup>2</sup> Ludwig Herwig was a prisoner foreman in the camp from October 1941 until June 1942.<sup>3</sup>

**SOURCES** The main source of secondary information for this entry is an essay by Stefanie Endlich and Wolf Kaiser, “KZ-Häftlinge in der Reichshauptstadt: Aussenlager in Berlin,” *DaHe* 12 (1996), which provides an overview of subcamps in Berlin and its environs. Further information about the Kastanienallee commando of Sachsenhausen may be found in Klaus Drobisch et al., *Sachsenhausen. Mahnung und Verpflichtung* (Oranienburg: Nationalen Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Sachsenhausen, 1989). There is no record of the camp in the catalog of the ITS.

Further information about the origins of the prisoners, the kind of work they did for the police, life in the camp, or which police service employed the prisoners may be uncovered in the AG-S. Primary source material may be found at the archives of the AG-S, files D 30 A/2, 8–83; D 30 A/10/2 A, 22 A; D 30 A/10/ 2B, 5, 84–85; and D 30 A/7/4, 29–32.

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## NOTES

1. Fragebogen des Sachsenhausen-Komitees an alle Sachsenhausener (Richard Bräutigam), AG-S, D 30 A/10/2 A, 22 A. See also Zeugenaussage von Wilhelm Epting vor der Kriminalpolizei Frankfurt/Main, D 30 A/7/4, 29–32.

2. Stefanie Endlich and Wolf Kaiser, “KZ-Häftlinge in der Reichshauptstadt: Aussenlager in Berlin,” *DaHe* 12 (1996): 230n.21.

3. Fragebogen des Sachsenhausen-Komitees, D 30 A/10/2 A, 22 A.

## BERLIN (KOMMANDOAMT DER WAFFEN-SS)

From May 2 to December 31, 1941, a subcamp of Sachsenhausen was created in Berlin for the Kommandoamt der Waffen-SS, an office within the SS-Main Command Office (Führungshauptamt, FHA). The subcamp held male prisoners.

**SOURCES** There are virtually no sources that chronicle any information about the subcamp in the Berlin Kommandoamt. For brief information about the Berlin Kommandoamt subcamp, see ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979). Although not always consistent with other sources, the ITS catalog provides brief statistical infor-

mation about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, and so on.

Similarly, listings of Sachsenhausen subcamps and work commandos in the indexes at the AG-S—for example, file group I/4—provide no further information about this subcamp.

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## BERLIN-HAKENFELDE

The SS established Hakenfelde, a subcamp of Sachsenhausen, in the southern region of Berlin's Spandau district in July 1943. Its function was to house forced laborers. The barracks, which had the capacity to hold 1,000 inmates, stood on Streitstrasse 5–10 across from the Luftfahrtgerätewerk (Aircraft Equipment Works, LGW) firm, a subsidiary of Siemens-Schuckert-Werke (SSW) and Siemens & Halske (S&H).

Siemens, the largest electrical company in Europe, transitioned much of its business efforts to armaments production during World War II. After the Allies bombed and destroyed the major Siemens production plant in the fall of 1943, the company replaced output lost in the air raids by establishing factories near major concentration camps, such as Ravensbrück, to take advantage of forced labor from the camp inmates. Siemens also used laborers from various subcamps and outside work details (Aussenkommandos). Like other subsidiaries of Siemens, the Luftfahrtgerätewerk firm had its own personnel and organizational infrastructure. The factory used forced labor from the Hakenfelde camp, and it also employed outside work details in other sites in the Sudetenland.<sup>1</sup>

In the Berlin-Hakenfelde subcamp of Sachsenhausen, all of the inmates were women, and they worked at the nearby Luftfahrtgerätewerk factory. The prisoners assisted in producing aviation equipment for rearmament efforts. In the Siemens firms that employed prisoner workers, both civil personnel from the company and SS overseers generally supervised the inmates. In firms that used women as workers, female SS auxiliaries supervised the prisoners' work. This was most likely the case in the Luftfahrtgerätewerk factory. There are few, if any, accounts from former inmates about treatment by the guards at work or in the camp.

Further information about the subcamp in Hakenfelde is lacking. The camp was closed in April 1944. However, there is no information about the fate of the Hakenfelde inmates, especially with regard to possible survivors.

**SOURCES** For a general overview of the Sachsenhausen subcamp of Berlin-Hakenfelde, see Stefanie Endlich and Wolf Kaiser, “KZ-Häftlinge in der Reichshauptstadt: Aussenlager in Berlin,” *DaHe* 12 (1996); and Karl-Heinz Roth, “Zwangsarbeit im Siemens-Konzern (1938–1945): Fakten—Kontroversen—Probleme,” in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienberg (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1996). See also Hans-Rainer Sandvoss, *Widerstand in Spandau* (Berlin: Gedenkstätte Deutsche Wid-



erstand, 1988), for a brief description of the subcamp. The entry for the Berlin-Hakenfelde subcamp in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979), provides brief statistical information about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, types of prisoners, and so on. For similar information on Berlin-Hakenfelde (for example, its location and opening and closing dates), see Rainer Kubatzki, *Zwangsarbeiter- und Kriegsgefangenenlager: Standorte und Topographie in Berlin und im brandenburgischen Umland, 1939 bis 1945* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2001). *Siemens 1918–1945* by Wilfried Feldenkirchen, the former Siemens archivist, describes the economic history of Luftfahrtgerätekwerk in relation to Siemens & Halske, although there is no analysis of the use of forced labor specifically by Luftfahrtgerätekwerk. For a general overview of forced labor used by Siemens and its subsidiaries, as well as information about postwar compensation to former slave laborers, see Benjamin Ferencz, *Less Than Slaves: Jewish Forced Labor and the Quest for Compensation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); as well as the USHMM Benjamin B. Ferencz Collection, 1919–1994, RG 12.004.19\*14, “Report on the Employment of Slave Labor by the Siemens Concern during World War II, 1961 Feb. 24,” and RG 12.004.19\*16, “KZ-Häftlinge bei Siemens und Osram, 1983.”

There is scarce primary source material on the Berlin-Hakenfelde camp; however, testimony, official reports, and documentation are most likely contained at the AG-S (LAG, XI/4). See especially the research of Klaus Drobisch et al., “Sachsenhausen. Mahnung und Verpflichtung” (R 62/1.) According to Kubatzki, construction files for Berlin-Hakenfelde are stored at the BA, (R4606, 4006). Various oral history and survivor testimony repositories, such as YV or the VHF, may contain witness accounts that would provide additional information about the camp.

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## NOTE

1. USHMM, Benjamin B. Ferencz Collection, RG 12.004.19\*16: KZ-Häftlinge bei Siemens und Osram, 1983; by Klaus Drobisch for the Hauptkommission zur Untersuchung der Naziverbrechen in Polen Internationale Wissenschaftliche Session zum Thema: Naziverbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit in Polen und Europa, 1933–1945.

## BERLIN-KÖPENICK

The Berlin-Köpenick camp was established in August 1944 as a subcamp to Sachsenhausen. The SS created the camp to house women imprisoned in Ravensbrück who had been brought to the Berlin suburb of Köpenick to work in cable factories. Accounts from former inmates and other witnesses from Berlin-Köpenick vary, and many seem to have combined information about the men's and women's sections. Perhaps because it only existed for about eight months, there is little specific information about the Köpenick subcamp.

Two to four watchtowers as well as barbed wire or electrical fencing surrounded the Köpenick camp, which was located in a suburb of Berlin on the Spree River. There were five barracks in the camp complex altogether, although only the women's barracks were used for the Sachsenhausen subcamp. There is no information about exactly how many barracks were used for the female and the male prisoners. Regina Chmielecka-Zych was transferred to Köpenick from Ravensbrück. She was originally deported from Warsaw to Ravensbrück at age 23. In her testimony after the war, she emphasized that there was no contact between women and men.<sup>1</sup> Although witness reports on the use of the barracks vary, some witnesses have noted that there was a barracks for ill inmates and another for punishment.<sup>2</sup> According to one former inmate's testimony, men were sent on work commandos to remove unexploded shells and to clear rubble from the streets after air raids. However, some of the men's barracks may have been located in Müggelheim, a different slave labor camp in another area of the Köpenick district.<sup>3</sup>

In the late summer of 1944, women who were formerly prisoners in Ravensbrück were transported to the Köpenick camp. The women were mostly from Poland but also from Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, the Soviet Union, and Belgium. Roma and Sinti (Gypsies) women from various countries were also among the inmates. Although there is no specific demographic information about prisoners, including decreases, increases, and death rates, one study has found that the subcamp held as many as 500 women.<sup>4</sup> After the Berlin-Niederschöneweide subcamp of Sachsenhausen was destroyed during an air raid in late February 1945, some of those prisoners were absorbed into the Köpenick camp.<sup>5</sup> Henryk Cierznichowski, a former prisoner in the men's camp, has estimated that about 400 women were brought into the camp at this time; however, no further specific numbers were found.<sup>6</sup>

The women imprisoned in the Berlin-Köpenick subcamp were used as slave laborers by the Carl J. Vogel Draht- und Kabelwerke Company located at Friedrichshagener Strasse 11. Izabella Wotek, a former Polish inmate, has reported that some of the women from the subcamp were also sent to work at the large AEG-Kabelwerke Oberspree factory, which employed thousands of slave laborers from other camps in Köpenick.<sup>7</sup> Some women reported that they were taken to work on a small ship on the Spree. They generally worked in two 12-hour shifts.

There is little information about prisoner culture, such as coping mechanisms or daily life, or about key events in the history of the camp, such as resistance or escape attempts. Living conditions at the Köpenick subcamp were generally poor. The barracks were crowded, dirty, and infested with vermin. The inmates received little food with virtually no nutritional value, such as unsweetened black coffee, small portions of bread, thin soup (sometimes replete with worms), and sporadically, a bit of margarine. Their clothing was dirty (with no possibility of washing) and too thin for the cold weather, and they wore only wooden shoes without socks, even during the winter months. The inmates endured hunger

and daily beatings by the guards, and some were killed during air raids. Jadwiga Nowicka-Stankiewicz, a survivor transported to the camp at age 50, testified that she was forced to sleep out in the open, despite the freezing temperatures, because she had not made her bed to the satisfaction of the guards.<sup>8</sup>

The guard staff was composed of SS men and women hired as SS overseers (SS-Aufsehrinnen). The SS guard post leadership consisted of Oberscharführer Ernst Drews (Postenführer in Köpenick from January 1 to May 2, 1945), Oberscharführer Otto Wilke (in Köpenick from January 24 to April 18, 1945), Unterscharführer Richard Strahl (January to April 1945), and guard duty officer Unterscharführer Wilhelm Knitter (January 1 to May 2, 1945). Some of the guard staff included Rottenführer Otto Schwaz (December 7, 1944, to May 2, 1945), Rottenführer Michael Edling (September 1, 1944, to April 1, 1945), Sturmmann Hans Soremba (December 16, 1944, to April 1945), Schütze Wilhelm Bormann (January 12 to May 2, 1945), and Schütze Paul Donath (January 24 to May 2, 1945).<sup>9</sup> Witness protocols also named two other individuals associated with the guard staff, Wilhelm Fichtorn and Hermann Polz. There are no details about the names or origins of the female SS overseers.

Sources on the dissolution of the Köpenick subcamp vary. According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), the Berlin-Köpenick camp was closed in early April 1945. The Red Army occupied the area, including the C.J. Vogel Draht- und Kabelwerke Company, on April 23, 1945. Cierznia-chowski has recalled that the men were evacuated from the camp on April 21, 1945, and that the women remained and were evacuated separately. Chmielecka-Zych has noted that sometime in April the camp was bombed, and the women were transported to Sachsenhausen. They remained there for a few days and were then evacuated again. Driven out in columns of 500, American and Soviet troops liberated them on May 3, 1945. Nowicka-Stankiewicz's testimony supports this assertion: the women were transported to "a large camp" in April and were evacuated again before they were liberated on May 3. There is no further information about the number of survivors from the Köpenick subcamp.

**SOURCES** The most complete information on the Berlin-Köpenick subcamp in secondary sources can be found in Stefanie Endlich and Wolf Kaiser, "KZ-Häftlinge in der Reichshauptstadt: Aussenlager in Berlin," *DaHe* 12 (1996). The entry for the Berlin-Köpenick subcamp in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979), provides brief statistical information about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, types of prisoners, and so on (although these are not always consistent with other sources). For further information about the history of Carl J. Vogel Draht- und Kabelwerk, but not specifically the company's use of female slave laborers from the Sachsenhausen subcamp, see Bruno

Scholz and Ludwig Turek, *Es wächst die Kraft. Aus der Geschichte des Kabelwerkes Köpenick* (Berlin: Verlag Tribüne, 1964).

There is scant primary source material on the Berlin-Köpenick camp; however, testimony and official reports and documentation are stored at the AG-S (LAG, XI/4). See German translations of the testimony from the Hauptkommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen (Poland, Szczecin) in file XI/14 of Henryk Cierznia-chowski (Bezirkskommission in Gdańsk), Regenia Chmielecka-Zych, Jadwiga Nowicka-Stankiewicz, Stefania Rapkowska, as well as Izabella Wotek at the AG-S (R 47/8); she was a Polish slave laborer who reported on prisoners' labor in AEG-Kabelwerke Oberspree. See also file D30 A-15 Blatt 1–41: Liste mit Name von ca. 700 SS-Leuten und 8 Häftlingen aus dem KZ Sachsenhausen, Arbeitsstellen, Aussenlagern. According to Rainer Kubatzki's *Zwangsarbeiter- und Kriegsgefangenenlager: Standorte und Topographie in Berlin und im brandenburgischen Umland 1939 bis 1945* (Berlin Verlag, 2001), documents and official reports on the Berlin-Köpenick camp can be found in the BA (R4606, 4020).

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## NOTES

1. Regina Chmielecka-Zych, testimony to the Hauptkommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Polen (24.11.1968), AG-S, LAG XI/14. "Chmielecka-Zych" represents Chmielecka née Zych.

2. Regina Chmielecka-Zych, Jadwiga Nowicka-Stankiewicz, Stefania Rapkowska, testimony to the Hauptkommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Polen (1968), AG-S, LAG XI/14.

3. See the testimony of Henryk Cierznia-chowski, German translation of the witness protocol to the Bezirkskommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Gdańsk (29.7.1968), AG-S, LAG XI/14. See also Stefanie Endlich and Wolf Kaiser, "KZ-Häftlinge in der Reichshauptstadt: Aussenlager in Berlin," *DaHe* 12 (1996): 250.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 250.

5. Gabriele Layer-Jung and Cord Pagenstecher, "Vom vergessenen Lager zum Dokumentationszentrum? Das ehemalige NS-Zwangsarbeiterlager in Berlin-Schöneweide," *GeRu* 111 (March 2003): 3–13.

6. Cierznia-chowski, testimony, AG-S.

7. Izabella Wotek, Bericht (Archiv Sachsenhausen, R 47/8). As cited in Endlich and Kaiser, "KZ-Häftlinge," p. 250.

8. Jadwiga Nowicka-Stankiewicz, AG-S.

9. Blatt 1–41: Liste mit Name von ca. 700 SS-Leuten und 8 Häftlingen aus dem KZ Sachsenhausen, Arbeitsstellen, Aussenlagern, AG-S, D 30 A-15.

## BERLIN-LICHTENRADE

The Berlin-Lichtenrade camp was established in August 1943 as a subcamp to Sachsenhausen. Like other subcamps, the Berlin-Lichtenrade camp was formed in part to spare the cost and time it would take to transport prisoners to and from various work details outside the main camps. The Lichten-

rade camp barracks structure had already been in use from 1941 to incarcerate Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) from the Ukraine. Until the SS took over the administration of the camp in August 1943, it was not so strictly guarded. Soviet POWs circulated among the population, as they were forced to work on farms and in factories; in turn, they sometimes earned a small amount of extra food.

When the SS took over Lichtenrade, the structure absorbed inmates from the Berlin-Marienfelde subcamp of Sachsenhausen who had survived the British bombing of Marienfelde on August 21 and 22, 1943. Because Marienfelde had been totally destroyed, a new holding facility was needed for the surviving prisoners. The Lichtenrade camp consisted of six or seven wooden barracks and one additional barracks that served as living quarters for the camp guards and housed the camp kitchen.<sup>1</sup> Lichtenrade became 1 of 21 subcamps in the Berlin area. It is unclear if the Soviet POWs remained at the Lichtenrade camp with this new addition of prisoners.

Before the arrival of the 400 to 450 Marienfelde prisoners, a triple-thick barbed-wire fence was erected around the Lichtenrade camp. Watchtowers were also constructed along the camp's perimeter, and their spotlights illuminated the grounds, except during air raids when they were shut off. Most of the prisoners who were transferred from Marienfelde to Lichtenrade in August 1943 were political prisoners from Germany, the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Norway, the Netherlands, France, Spain, and Luxembourg. There are few sources that list the exact number, names, and origins of the inmates. Most sources indicate that the prisoners were men; and testimony files indicate that they ranged in ages from 18 to 51.<sup>2</sup>

Living conditions at the Lichtenrade camp were poor, and neither the inmates' meager diet—which consisted of ersatz coffee, bread, and beet soup—nor their thin clothing prepared them for the grueling and dangerous work they had to perform.<sup>3</sup> Lichtenrade was not a killing center; however, many inmates died from starvation, exhaustion, maltreatment from the guards, and the otherwise harsh living conditions. No exact number of prisoner deaths is available. The prisoners suffered daily cruel treatment, including long roll calls outside in inclement weather and verbal and physical abuse from the camp guards. Many inmates were sent for punishment for any slight reason to the Sachsenhausen main camp, where they were jailed, sentenced to punishment details (*Strafkompanies*), beaten with whips or sticks, or hanged.<sup>4</sup>

The prisoners in Lichtenrade were forced to work in detachments that performed various kinds of hard labor throughout the Berlin area. According to one former prisoner, work details, always supervised by camp guards, reached their destinations in trucks or streetcars.<sup>5</sup> Work detachments constructed air-raid shelters in Berlin, and they were sent to Mahlow, a village just south of Lichtenrade, to rebuild a destroyed military hospital. After air raids, Lichtenrade inmates were forced to clear rubble from the streets, and special details were sent to dismantle unexploded bombs.<sup>6</sup> Prisoners were also deployed to help residents who lived on the out-

skirts of the camp and who needed laborers to reconstruct and repair parts of their homes damaged by bombing attacks. Although it was forbidden, witnesses have asserted that some members of the Nazi administration used prisoners in their private gardens or to construct private residences.

The camp administration was under the jurisdiction of the SS, and the camp commandant, who arrived from his post at Sachsenhausen, was Oberscharführer Daida. His deputy in Lichtenrade was Unterscharführer Hans Zöllner, who came to Lichtenrade in February 1945 from the Lieberose subcamp. Both men not only supervised the administration of the camp but also assisted in punishments and conducted executions, especially of escapees. The officer in charge (*Lagerführer*) of the camp who directly oversaw the prisoners was Hauptscharführer Höhn, and the block leaders (*Blockführers*) were SS men Meierhofer, Meier, and another nicknamed "the Bone Breaker."<sup>7</sup> The Kommandoführer, who directed prisoner work details, was Hauptscharführer Theodor Mussmann. One of the SS guards on staff was Schütze Hans Bitto.<sup>8</sup>

While the SS directed the camp, the guard companies in charge of daily surveillance and supervision of work commandos consisted of reserve police battalions from Berlin-Spandau. The guards who oversaw the work commandos that were sent outside the camp were reported to have been less stringent and brutal toward the prisoners than their colleagues within the camp. Two notable officers were Richard Henneberg and Rudolf Liedtke, who allegedly had antifascist sympathies (Henneberg was a member of the German Social Democratic Party [SPD] prior to 1933).<sup>9</sup> As in other camps, some inmates, called *Kapos*, were selected to act as security police and carry out punishments; one particularly relentless and cruel *Kapo* was Johannes Puhlmann. Other prisoners who held administrative roles in the camp were camp elder (*Lagerältester*) Franz Szymalla (or Schimalla), who had worked in the Sachsenhausen crematorium; Alfred Bringmann, a political prisoner and foreman from the fall of 1943 on; Johann Baudisch, a political prisoner and kitchen foreman; and Martin Kuhnert, who worked in the infirmary office.<sup>10</sup>

There is little information about postwar trials of any of these individuals. Henneberg was active in local government, and Liedtke eventually ran a business after the war. In accounts of the 1947 trial of the Sachsenhausen camp administration conducted by the military tribunal of the Soviet Military Administration in Germany (SMAD) Daida does not appear on lists of accused individuals.<sup>11</sup> Zöllner was tried by the Düsseldorf Regional Court (*Landgericht*), although no information about the outcome of that trial could be found.<sup>12</sup>

Presumably due to the camp's close proximity to Berlin-Lichtenrade residential areas, as well as the opportunities presented by forced labor conducted outside the camp, several inmates attempted to escape. Two Polish prisoners fled from a work commando in the fall of 1943 and were later caught and executed in Sachsenhausen.<sup>13</sup> Fritz Reuter, a German political prisoner active in the Communist underground,



and another inmate, Herbert Tschäpe, fled the camp in June 1944. Tschäpe was caught in July and executed in the Gestapo prison at Prinz-Albrecht-Strasse in Berlin.<sup>14</sup> Three other prisoners attempted to escape in October 1944. Soon after, they were caught, brought back to the Lichtenrade camp, and executed by hanging in front of the rest of the inmates.<sup>15</sup>

The circumstances and timing of the dissolution of the Lichtenrade camp vary according to former prisoners' testimony. In April 1945, as enemy troops closed in, about 350 prisoners were forced to march to Sachsenhausen. About 50 to 80 prisoners remained behind. The evacuated group was sent on a death march from Sachsenhausen to Schwerin, where the SS shot many of the prisoners.<sup>16</sup> Other witnesses contend that the camp began to evacuate prisoners in early 1945 and that many were transferred to another camp at Muggelheim in Köpenick.<sup>17</sup> It is unclear if the Red Army liberated Lichtenrade or if the camp was already evacuated by the time they arrived in late April 1945.

**SOURCES** Most of the information for this entry comes from Ruth Zantow's essay "‘Das sind doch Verbrecher . . .’ Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen Aussenlager Lichtenrade," in *Direkt vor der Haustür: Berlin-Lichtenrade im Nationalsozialismus*, by Andreas Bräutigam et al. (Berlin: Aktion Sühnezeichen/Friedensdienste, 1990). Zantow provides a concise overview of the Lichtenrade subcamp, as well as reproductions of testimony from former prisoners archived at the Sachsenhausen Memorial (see below). For further information about slave laborers—including Soviet, Czechoslovakian, and other prisoners—in Berlin-Lichtenrade, see "Die waren doch nicht freiwillig hier! Zwangsarbeiter in Lichtenrade," by Thomas Quilitzsch, in the same volume.

The most extensive primary source material is located in the AG-S. See especially file XI/15, which contains testimony from former prisoners gathered by the Hauptkommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Polen, the Bezirkskommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Szczecin, the Bezirkskommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Gdańsk, and the Öffentliche Sitzung der Strafkammer des Kreisgerichts Magdeburg; these provide broad information, details on daily camp life, and personal histories of prisoners in Berlin-Lichtenrade. The AG-S also contains general reports on the subcamps in LAG, FB 653, "Sachsenhausensammlung der 'Lagerarbeitsgemeinschaft Sachsenhausen,'" as well as letters from former prisoners sent to family members. It is unclear what kinds of reports or to which camps these reports correspond; research on-site is most likely needed to clarify this. For further information on the service record of SS officers Daida and Zöllner, see the NARA holdings of the BDC, SS Officer Personnel files, series SSO.

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## NOTES

1. Wladyslaw Walczak, testimony to Hauptkommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Polen, AKT.Z.: II Ds 63/68/ZR, 30 September 1968, AG-S, XI/15.

2. See Sachsenhausen file XI/15, AG-S.

3. Ibid.

4. Fritz Reuter, written testimony to Staatsanwalt Wieland, June 1969, AG-S, XI/15.

5. Eugeniusz Dulęba, testimony to the Bezirkskommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Szczecin, 19 October 1968, AG-S, XI/15.

6. Henryk Cierzniachowski, testimony to Bezirkskommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Gdańsk, AKT.Z.: IIDs 63/68/ZR, 16 October 1968, AG-S, XI/15.

7. Wilhelm Hollein, testimony to the Öffentliche Sitzung der Strafkammer des Kreisgerichts Magdeburg, Stadtbezirk Nord, 31 October 1969, AG-S, XI/15. Hollein does not specify whether Hauptscharführer Höhn is the same August Höhn who was the second Lagerführer in Sachsenhausen and who was tried and sentenced to life imprisonment by the Soviet Military Tribunal.

8. "Liste mit Namen von ca. 700 SS-Leuten und 8 Häftlingen aus dem KZ Sachsenhausen, Arbeitsstellen, Aussenlagern," AG-S, Bestand D 30 A/15, Blatt 1–41.

9. Reuter, to Staatsanwalt Wieland, June 1969.

10. Letter from Staatsanwalt Pfeufer to Staatsanwalt Wieland, Zentralstelle für die Bearbeitung von NS-Verbrechen bei dem Generalstaatsanwalt der DDR, 15 July 1969, AG-S, XI/15, pp. 2–3.

11. If "Höhn" is the same August Höhn who was the second Lagerführer in Sachsenhausen, then he was tried by the Soviet Military Tribunal and sentenced to life imprisonment.

12. Vernehmungsniederschrift vor Untersuchungsrichter Landgericht Düsseldorf für Hans Zöllner, AG-S, Bestand D 30 A 4/5, pp. 65–66.

13. Reuter to Wieland, June 1969.

14. Ibid.

15. Cziernakowski, in Ruth Zantow, "‘Das sind doch Verbrecher . . .’ Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen Aussenlager Lichtenrade," in *Direkt vor der Haustür: Berlin-Lichtenrade im Nationalsozialismus*, by Andreas Bräutigam et al. (Berlin: Aktion Sühnezeichen/Friedensdienste, 1990), p. 344.

16. Wilhelm Hollein, testimony to the Öffentliche Sitzung der Strafkammer des Kreisgerichts Magdeburg, Stadtbezirk Nord, 31 October 1969, AG-S, XI/15. See also Vernehmungsniederschrift vor Untersuchungsrichter Landgericht Düsseldorf für Hans Zöllner, AG-S, Bestand D 30 A #4/5, pp. 65–66.

17. Reuter, to Staatsanwalt Wieland, June 1969.

## BERLIN-LICHTERFELDE

The SS established the first Sachsenhausen subcamp in Berlin in 1942, in the suburb of Lichterfelde. Until its liberation, it housed over 1,400 prisoners. The prisoners had to work in more than 40 work detachments for the SS-Building Administration "Reich Nord." They mainly had to perform forced labor at SS stations, including the administration buildings for the centers for terror and persecution. The prisoners regarded Lichterfelde as a relatively "privileged subcamp" because of the living and working conditions.<sup>1</sup> The numerous work detachments gave the prisoners contact to the outside world, and some were able to escape with the help of civilians.

In 1941, what was then the SS-Main Office for Budget and Buildings (Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten, HHB), under the command of SS-Oberführer Hans Kammler, began planning a subcamp for Lichterfelde that was on the Teltow Canal.<sup>2</sup> An SS construction site, housing for SS guards, and a service barracks for the Berlin Waffen-SS Building Administration were all located outside the subcamp. A residential estate for members of the “SS-Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler” was located very close to the subcamp. A number of SS leaders lived on the estate.<sup>3</sup>

The first prisoners were most likely transported from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp to Berlin-Lichterfelde by the SS on June 23, 1942.<sup>4</sup> Initially, the SS wanted to transfer only German prisoners to the subcamp who did not come from Berlin and who were skilled tradesmen. By 1943, Lichterfelde held about 40 percent Germans and 40 percent Poles. The remaining inmates were Belgians, French, Greeks, Luxembourgers, Norwegians, Austrians, Russians, Czechs, and Ukrainians. There are also said to have been German Sinti and Roma (Gypsies) among the prisoners,<sup>5</sup> as well as seven Russian youths between about 14 and 18 years of age.<sup>6</sup> The subcamp was expanded in March 1943. Until that expansion, according to the SS, there were between 500 and 700 prisoners there. At the beginning of April 1945, there were 1,414 prisoners in the camp.

Punishment was meted out in the subcamp. The forms of punishment included penal standing, the so-called *Sachsen Gruss* (Saxon greeting; squatting for hours with the arms crossed at the back of the head or with the arms stretched out in front), and beatings.<sup>7</sup> There was one execution. Several prisoners died from consuming drinks that the SS contaminated by adding methyl alcohol.<sup>8</sup>

There were seven known escape attempts. Two failed. The first escape attempt from the Lichterfelde subcamp took place at the beginning of July 1942.<sup>9</sup> Austrian Communist Franz Primus was able to escape in May 1944 with the help of civilians.<sup>10</sup> Rudi Wunderlich succeeded in escaping in June 1944 from the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). On the other hand, the escape attempt by 22-year-old Wilhelm Novak from the Spinnstoffwerke (Spinning Mill) work detachment failed. Novak was hanged in front of the other subcamp prisoners in August 1944. In 1943, in the inner courtyard of the WVHA, two prisoners were hanged for “looting.”

In August 1943, two camp barracks caught on fire during a bombing raid, threatening to incinerate the prisoners who had sought shelter in a shrapnel trench. The SS guards cut the barbed wire, enabling the prisoners to escape the fire.<sup>11</sup>

The subcamp inmates were taken daily by truck, special trams, or the city railway, or marched, to the work detachment sites where work was to be done.<sup>12</sup> The detainees had to construct and maintain SS buildings,<sup>13</sup> construct bunkers for the SS, and increasingly, clean up after air raids.

They worked at the WVHA in Berlin-Lichterfelde; the SS-Main Command Office (Führungshauptamt, FHA) in Berlin-Wilmersdorf; the SS-Main Hospital (Sanitätshaupt-

lager) in Berlin-Lichtenberg; a number of different Waffen-SS food depots in the districts of Wedding, Spandau, and Steglitz; the SS-Race and Settlement Main Office (Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt); the Reich Criminal Police Office (Reichskriminalpolizeiamt); and the SS-Leibstandarte “Adolf Hitler” located in the former Prussian Main Cadet Academy. They also worked in the Nazi Party Chancellery Office, the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt, RSHA) and its Foreign Espionage Department (Auslandsspionage), which was located in a Jewish old-age home that had been confiscated after the deportation of the inhabitants and their nursing staff in 1941, as well as in the “Neue Reichskanzlei” (New Reichs Chancellery), Hitler’s base.<sup>14</sup>

During a bombing raid on May 7, 1944, on the “terror center,” the offices of the RSHA, where they were working as forced labor, 29 prisoners from Lichterfelde died.<sup>15</sup>

Subcamp inmates had to renovate the private apartments of senior SS commanders such as Ernst Kaltenbrunner, the head of the RSHA, who had moved into an apartment in Berlin-Charlottenburg previously occupied by a Jewish person who had been deported.<sup>16</sup> They also had to construct air-raid shelters for Oswald Pohl, Hans Kammler, and Gustav Lörner.

The Alexanderplatz and Cicerostrasse detachments installed the electrical wiring and connections in the air-raid bunker on the Kurfürstendamm. The Spanische Allee detachment converted a former Jewish sanatorium in Berlin-Zehlendorf into an apartment for “ethnic Germans.”<sup>17</sup>

Prisoners from Lichterfelde were also used by private companies and research institutes: for example, in construction work at the Spinnstoffwerken Zehlendorf, which, among other things, produced parachutes and uniforms for the Wehrmacht.<sup>18</sup> Some 300 female subcamp inmates worked to produce these items. They had been transported to Zehlendorf from Ravensbrück at the end of August and the beginning of September 1944.<sup>19</sup> In November 1944, the women were transferred to Berlin-Niederschöneweide, where they were forced to work at Pertrix, a manufacturer of batteries. There is no other known case of such a transfer of a subcamp of Sachsenhausen.

Lichterfelde subcamp prisoners constructed barracks for Lankwitz, a company in Berlin.<sup>20</sup> They were also said to have worked on construction projects for the electronics company Telefunken<sup>21</sup> as well as in the Reich Mail Research Institute (Forschungsanstalt der Reichspost) at Kleinmachnow, which was developing night-vision devices for military purposes.<sup>22</sup> For the Hotel Adlon, near the Brandenburg Gate, they had to remove rubble.<sup>23</sup> The Under den Linden detachment transported exhibits out of Berlin museums.<sup>24</sup>

An open area for research is the role of other work detachments, such as Jungfernstieg in Berlin-Lichterfelde,<sup>25</sup> where inmates probably did construction work for an RSHA branch office.<sup>26</sup> Another open research topic is the use of inmates for the German Reichsbank in Berlin-Mitte.<sup>27</sup>

SS-Hauptscharführer Gustav Sorge was one of the subcamp commandants. He was known as Eiserner (Iron) Gustav

for his countless sadistic excesses also on prisoners in the main camp, for example, beating them with iron bars.<sup>28</sup> Sorge was dismissed for suspicion of corruption and returned to the Sachsenhausen main camp. He was later transferred to Latvia. He was replaced by SS-Untersturmführer August Höhn, who led the camp until August 1943. Höhn later advanced to become commander of the Labor Deployment Administration (Arbeitseinsatz-Verwaltung) at Sachsenhausen. He administered the total deployment of prisoners in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

SS-Untersturmbannführer Alfred Sorge, commandant of SS-Bauleitung (Building Administration) "Reich-Nord," is alleged to have beaten subcamp inmates when inspecting construction sites.<sup>29</sup> Sorge had previously led the construction of the "Small Crematorium," the "Shooting Barracks," and "Station Z" in Sachsenhausen concentration camp's industrial area.<sup>30</sup>

At the beginning of 1945, some of the Lichterfelde prisoners were combined with concentration camp prisoners transferred from Hamburg to Berlin to the SS-Baubrigade II to form the Eisenbahnbaubrigade. Upon dissolution of the camp between April 16 and April 21, 1945, the remaining prisoners were transported by the SS from the city railway station at Lichterfelde-West to Oranienburg. Lichterfelde subcamp prisoners were still arriving in Oranienburg on April 21, and they were probably the last of the prisoners who were sent on the death march toward the Baltic.<sup>31</sup>

**SOURCES** Important details on the history of the Lichterfelde subcamp have been published since the 1980s by local historians and the VVN as well as by Christan Simon, Doris Fürstenberg, and Dieter Fitterling. In 1985, Hans-Peter Sandvoss published "Widerstand in Steglitz und Zehlendorf," a contemporaneous photo that shows the barracks and possibly Rudi Wunderlich. In 1992, the Berlin-Steglitz Bezirksamt published the collection *Steglitz im Dritten Reich. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus in Steglitz* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1992). Klaus Leutner published the brochure *Die Geschichte der Wismarer Strasse 26/36 oder das Aussenlager Berlin-Lichterfelde des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen: Mit einem Vorwort des ehemaligen Regierenden Bürgermeisters Klaus Schütz* (Steglitz, 2001). Through the auspices of the AG-S, Rainer Potratz has published a biography of Rudi Wunderlich as part of the permanent exhibition *Die Baracke 39* and on CD, "Gegen das Vergessen." This subcamp is also listed in ITS, *Vorläufigen Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1: 211.

The LA-B and private archives, like Leutner's, hold files on the history of the Lichterfelde subcamp. The AG-S holds reports by former prisoners as well as the bequest of Wunderlich. In 1957, in the GDR, author Liselotte Welskopf-Henrich published a novel, *Jan und Jutta* (Berlin [East]: Tribüne, 1957), which was based on her own life. It depicts the relationship between a young woman and an inmate from the Lichterfelde subcamp who was able to escape with the help of the woman, who later became his wife. The following

memoirs were published in East Berlin: *Zwischen Karneval und Aschermittwoch*, by the artist Hans Grundig (Berlin [East]: Deitz, 1957); and Karl Pioch's *Nie im Abseits* (Berlin [East], 1978). Franz Primus's memoirs are included in the volume published under the title *Niemand und nichts vergessen: Ehemalige Häftlinge aus verschiedenen Ländern berichten über das KZ Sachsenhausen* (Berlin: Elefanten Press, 1984). Wunderlich's memoirs, part of which were prepared underground, were published in 1997 by Joachim Hohmann and Günther Wieland under the title *Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen bei Oranienburg 1939 bis 1944—Die Aufzeichnungen des KZ-Häftlings Rudolf Wunderlich* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1997).

Thomas Irmer and Klaus Leutner  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. See Report by Rudi Wunderlich, "Flucht aus dem KZ," p. 39, AG-S, LAG XXXV 13; Statement by Gustav Klingbeil, July 31, 1961, AG-S, Kaiser-Verfahren (Kaiser Proceedings), vol. 20.
2. Lichterfelde Camp Plan (Sketch) 1:1000, LA-B, B Rep. 212, Acc. 2568, Nr. 4532.
3. Armin A. Woy, "Die Siedlung der 'Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler,'" in *Steglitz im Dritten Reich. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus in Steglitz* (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1992), pp. 105–112.
4. Joachim Hohmann and Günther Wieland, *Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen bei Oranienburg 1939 bis 1944—Die Aufzeichnungen des KZ-Häftlings Rudolf Wunderlich* (Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 1997), p. 43.
5. Details by Gerard de Ruiter (the Netherlands), April 2000, and Rene Kerschen (Luxembourg), March 2001, in Private Archive of Klaus Leutner, Berlin.
6. Letter from the commandant of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp to SS-WVHA of February 17, 1944. Anzahl und Einsatz der jugendlichen Russen im KL Sh., USHMM, RG 006.025\*26, File 1732.
7. Statement by Franz Schramm from December 18, 1946, in BStU (Branch Halle), MfS BV Halle Ast Nr. 6632, 81.
8. Letter by Rene Kerschen, January 8, 2001, in Private Archive of Klaus Leutner, Berlin.
9. Veränderungsmeldung Sachsenhausen concentration camp, from July 10, 1942.
10. Franz Primus, "Meine Flucht aus dem KZ," in *Niemand und nichts vergessen: Ehemalige Häftlinge aus verschiedenen Ländern berichten über das KZ Sachsenhausen* (Berlin: Elefanten Press, 1984), pp. 129–133.
11. Karl Pioch, *Nie im Abseits* (Berlin [East], 1978), p. 138.
12. Letter from ITS to the Steglitz Abteilung Bauwesen des Bezirksamt Steglitz in Berlin, January 23, 1984, Re.: Bauungsplanverfahren für die Grundstücke Wismarer Str. 20 und 36, AG-S, Slg. Irmer, File Lichterfelde.
13. ITS, *Vorläufigen Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1: 211.
14. Rudi Wunderlich, "Flucht aus dem KZ," AG-S, LAG XXXV 13.



15. Sachsenhausen Stärke- und Veränderungsmeldungen, May 7, 1944, and May 8, 1944, AG-S, Stärke- und Veränderungsmeldungen; Pioch, *Nie im Abseits*; AG-S, R 57/35.

16. Liselotte Welskopf-Henrich, *Jan und Jutta* (Berlin [East]: Tribüne, 1957).

17. Letter from ITS Arolsen to the Abteilung Bauwesen des Bezirksamt Steglitz Berlin, January 23, 1984, Re.: Bebauungsplanverfahren für die Grundstücke Wismarer Str. 20 und 36, AG-S, Slg. Irmer, File Lichterfelde.

18. Statement by former prisoner Jan Religa, August 12, 1966, Sta. Bonn 8 Ks 1/58 (Sorge/Schubert), AG-S, JD 2/58.

19. The strength report from September 5, 1944, refers to 301 women, AG-S, Stärke- und Veränderungsmeldungen.

20. Details from Juliusz Brniak (Poland), February 2001, in Private Archive of Klaus Leutner, Berlin.

21. Letter from ITS Arolsen to the Abteilung Bauwesen des Bezirksamt Steglitz in Berlin, January 23, 1984, Re.: Bebauungsplanverfahren für die Grundstücke Wismarer Str. 20 und 36, AG-S, Slg. Irmer, File Lichterfelde.

22. Karl Höfer, "Aussenlager Lichterfelde, Aussenkommando Reichspostforschungsanstalt Klein-Machnow," AG-S, LAG XIII 6.

23. Details from Gerard de Ruiter (Netherlands), April 2000, in Private Archive of Klaus Leutner, Berlin.

24. Christian Simon, "Ein Gefangenenlager in Lichterfelde-Süd," *StegL-A*, no. 24/25 (1984); as well as Letter from ITS Arolsen to the Abteilung Bauwesen des Bezirksamt Steglitz in Berlin, January 23, 1984, Re.: Bebauungsplanverfahren für die Grundstücke Wismarer Str. 20 und 36, in AG-S, Slg. Irmer, File Lichterfelde.

25. Statement of the former prisoner Franz Jäckel, April 9, 1957, Sta. Bonn 8 Ks 1/58 (Sorge/Schubert), AG-S, JD2/58; as well as Pioch, *Nie im Abseits*, p. 140.

26. On RSHA offices, see Christoph Ernst: "Unsere Ehre heisst Treue"—die 'Schutz-Staffel' in Steglitz," in *Zeitsplitter: Steglitz im Dritten Reich*, ed. Kulturamt Berlin-Steglitz (Berlin, 1992), p. 34.

27. Forderungsnachweis Nr. Shn. 02646 of April 1, 1945, about the use of detainees by the German Oberwallstrasse, March 1–31, 1945, in AG-S, Slg. Thomas Irmer, Aussenlager Lichterfelde.

28. For Lichterfelde, see statement by Paul Waldhorst from May 5, 1956, Sta. Bonn 8 Ks 1/58 (Sorge/Schubert), in AG-S, JD 2/16, p. 196; and see statement by Gustav Klingbeil from July 31, 1961, in AG-S, Kaiser-Verfahren, vol. 20.

29. Hans-Eberhard Schultz, "150 KZ-Häftlinge bauten den Bunker: Zeuge der Arbeiten am Fichtenberg berichtet," *BM*, November 26, 1967; statement Ernst Gartlgruber, November 3, 1965, AG-S, Kaiser-Verfahren, Bd. XLIII.

30. Thomas Irmer, "'Die Station Z'—Zur Bau- und Funktionsgeschichte der Vernichtungsanlagen auf dem Industriebhof des KZ Sachsenhausen 1939–1945," in *Auslobung Realisierungswettbewerb Zentraler Gedenkort "Station Z,"* ed. SBG (Oranienburg, 1998).

31. Pioch, *Nie im Abseits*, p. 153.

## BERLIN-MARIENFELDE

Berlin-Marienfelde was established as a subcamp of Sachsenhausen in late 1942 or early 1943.<sup>1</sup> The SS opened the camp as

a satellite from which to dispatch inmates to various work details in the immediate Berlin area. One former prisoner noted that the Marienfelde subcamp was previously used as a slave labor camp for the Telefunken Company and was reconstructed as a concentration camp in mid-1943.<sup>2</sup>

According to testimony from surviving inmates, the camp was situated about 4 kilometers (about 2.5 miles) from Berlin-Lichtenrade (see Sachsenhausen/Berlin-Lichtenrade) and about 500 to 800 meters (about 0.3 to 0.5 miles) from the Lichtenrade train station.<sup>3</sup> The camp consisted of six or seven wooden barracks surrounded by barbed wire. Watchtowers stood at the perimeter of the camp. An SS barracks with an underground bunker was located near the gated entrance.

The 500 to 600 prisoners in Berlin-Marienfelde came from various countries, including the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Norway, the Netherlands, France, Spain, and Luxembourg, as well as German political prisoners. Some were transferred from Sachsenhausen or its other subcamps, including Berlin-Lichterfelde. A group of about 150 mainly Polish and Soviet prisoners were transferred from Sachsenhausen in the summer of 1943.<sup>4</sup> This number was augmented by 450 prisoners from Lublin-Majdanek shortly thereafter.<sup>5</sup> Most secondary sources and primary accounts have noted that all of the inmates were men.

The prisoners were sent to work in the surrounding Berlin area, clearing the streets and retiling roofs after air raids, building air-raid shelters, removing unexploded bombs, and constructing artificial ponds that were used to extinguish fires (*Feuerlöschbassins*). They were brought to their work details in automobiles or streetcars under the surveillance of reserve police battalions from Berlin-Spandau (see Sachsenhausen/Berlin-Spandau).

The prisoners were generally starved. They were fed 0.75 liters (3.2 cups) of beet soup and 250 grams (8.8 ounces) of bread daily. The Berlin city administration, rather than the Sachsenhausen main camp, provided food for the camp. The inmates endured long roll calls, and there were many incidents of abuse and beatings from the guards. Some prisoners were sent for punishment to Sachsenhausen; many of them died in the main camp.

SS men oversaw the daily administration of the camp. It is unclear who the commander of the Berlin-Marienfelde camp was, but one former inmate, Fritz Reuter, recalled that this commander was a master baker who had his private residence near the camp. Reuter also noted that the commander used materials collected by prisoners from their missions to clear bombed-out Berlin streets to build a new home for himself.<sup>6</sup> One member of the SS staff was Oberscharführer Daida, who later became the commander of the Berlin-Lichtenrade camp. An especially cruel SS officer, Unterscharführer Otto Keiser, who came from a post at Sachsenhausen, constantly abused the prisoners and hit them with the end of his pistol. The guard staff of the camp and work commandos were reserve policemen from Berlin-Spandau. Two notable officers, said to have had antifascist sympathies, were Richard Henneberg,

who had been a member of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) prior to 1933, and Rudolf Liedtke.<sup>7</sup>

A few months after it opened, on August 21 or 22, 1943, the Berlin-Marienfelde camp was evacuated because of an Allied bombing that completely destroyed the camp. According to Henryk Cierzniachowski, a former inmate, the air raid set many of the camp buildings in flames. The prisoners panicked and ran to find shelter beyond the gates of the camp. The guard staff took shelter in their underground bunkers. The SS men, including Keiser and another guard, Unterscharführer Karl Meier, prevented the prisoners from reaching shelter by shooting at the group. One witness estimates that nearly 36 inmates were killed during the air raid, most from the shootings.<sup>8</sup> At least 4 died in the fires that ensued after the bombing, and many others were wounded with severe burns.<sup>9</sup>

After the air raid, the surviving prisoners were driven into an open field, where they stayed until the early morning of the following day. The SS block leader (Blockführer) from Sachsenhausen, Seifert, came to oversee the situation and ordered one part of the group to be transferred to the Berlin-Lichtenrade camp. The prisoners were marched there under police surveillance. Much of the police and SS staff was transferred to Lichtenrade, including SS-Oberscharführer Daida.<sup>10</sup> The other prisoners from Marienfelde, mainly Polish inmates, were transported to a work camp on Greifswalderstrasse.

There is little or no information about postwar trials of any of the SS administration or police guard staff. After the war, Henneberg was active in local government, and Liedtke eventually ran a business. In accounts of the 1947 trial of the Sachsenhausen camp administration conducted by the Military Tribunal of the Soviet Military Administration (SMAD), Daida, Keiser, and Meier do not appear on lists of accused or tried individuals.

**SOURCES** Both primary and secondary sources that describe the history of the Berlin-Marienfelde camp are scarce, most likely due to the camp's relatively short-lived existence. Most information for this entry comes from Ruth Zantow's essay "Das sind doch Verbrecher . . ." Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen Aussenlager Lichtenrade," in *Direkt vor der Haustür: Berlin-Lichtenrade im Nationalsozialismus*, by Andreas Bräutigam et al. (Berlin: Aktion Sühnezeichen/Friedensdienste, 1990). Although Zantow focuses predominantly on Berlin-Lichtenrade, she has reproduced several written testimonies from former prisoners of both the Lichtenrade and Marienfelde subcamps of Sachsenhausen in the appendix. For a concise overview of the Marienfelde camp and a broad examination of the subcamps in Berlin (of both Sachsenhausen and Ravensbrück), see Stefanie Endlich and Wolf Kaiser, "KZ-Häftlinge in der Reichshauptstadt: Aussenlager in Berlin," *DaHe* 12 (1996). For brief statistical information, such as opening and closing dates and type of prisoner work, see the entry for Berlin-Marienfelde in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland*

*und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979), although it is not always consistent with other sources.

Primary source material on the Berlin-Marienfelde subcamp is stored at the AG-S. Testimony from former prisoners gathered by the Hauptkommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Polen, the Bezirkskommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Szczecin, the Bezirkskommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Gdańsk, and the Öffentliche Sitzung der Strafkammer des Kreisgerichts Magdeburg, which provide some information, details on daily camp life, and personal history of prisoners in Berlin-Marienfelde, can be found in file XI/15, "Ermittlungsverfahren über das Aussenlager Berlin Marienfelde bzw. Berlin-Lichtenrade." (They are also published in Ruth Zantow's essay.) See also AG-S, file D 30 A/10/2 A, 131, for a letter from former prisoner Wilhelm Hollein, which details his experience in the camp. The AG-S also contains general reports on the subcamps in LAG, FB 653, "Sachsenhausensammlung der 'Lagerarbeitsgemeinschaft Sachsenhausen,'" as well as letters from former prisoners sent to family members. More information on the SS officers Daida, Keiser, and Meier may be located in service records in the NARA holdings of the BDC, SS Officer Personnel files, series SSO.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. Ermittlungen wegen NS-Verbrechen im Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen, Nebenlager Berlin-Marienfelde und Lichtenrade, from Staatsanwalt Pfeufer to Staatsanwalt Wieland, Zentralestelle für die Bearbeitung von NS-Verbrechen, 15.7.1968, AG-S, XI/15.

2. Fritz Reuter, written testimony to Staatsanwalt Wieland, June 1969, AG-S, XI/15.

3. Władysław Walczak, testimony to Hauptkommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Polen, AKT.Z.: II Ds 63/68/ZR, 30 September 1968, AG-S, XI/15.

4. Reuter, to Staatsanwalt Wieland.

5. Rainer Venke, "Aussenlager des KZ Sachsenhausen auf dem heutigen Territorium von Berlin (West)," in *Niemand und nichts vergessen. Ehemalige Häftlinge aus verschiedenen Ländern berichten über das KZ Sachsenhausen* (Verlag für Ausbildung und Studium in der Elefant Press, 1984).

6. Ibid.

7. Reuter, to Staatsanwalt Wieland, June 1969.

8. Henryk Cierzniachowski, testimony to Bezirkskommission zur Untersuchung von Hitlerverbrechen in Gdańsk, AKT.Z.: IIDs 63/68/ZR, 16 October 1968, AG-S, XI/15.

9. Wilhelm Hollein, testimony to the Öffentliche Sitzung der Strafkammer des Kreisgerichts Magdeburg, Stadtbezirk Nord, 31 October 1969, AG-S, (H) AS 71/69. Reproduced in Ruth Zantow's essay "Das sind doch Verbrecher . . ." Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen Aussenlager Lichtenrade," in *Direkt vor der Haustür: Berlin-Lichtenrade im Nationalsozialismus*, by Andreas Bräutigam et al. (Berlin: Aktion Sühnezeichen/Friedensdienste, 1990), pp. 349–351.

10. Wilhelm Hollein, testimony to Kreisgerichts Magdeburg, AG-S D 30 A/10/2A, p. 131.

## **BERLIN-NEUKÖLLN ("KRUPP")**

### **[AKA BRAUNAUERSTRASSE]**

A subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp existed in the Berlin district of Neukölln from late August or September 1944 to April 1945. It held around 500 female prisoners, the majority of whom were Polish Jews. They worked as forced laborers in the armaments factory of the National-Krupp-Registrierkassen GmbH (National Krupp Cash Registers, NCR).

Most of the inmates at Neukölln had been detainees in the Litzmannstadt (Łódź) ghetto. Five or six of them were from Prague, and there were others from Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, Romania, France, the Soviet Union, the Netherlands, and Germany. German Romanies were also held in the camp. Most of the women were between 18 and 42 years of age.

After the dissolution of the ghetto, the detainees were transported to Auschwitz II-Birkenau, where most of them were murdered. Those who ended up in Neukölln remained only a few days in Auschwitz before they were transported directly to Berlin, arriving there possibly on August 26, 1944, but more likely on September 1.<sup>1</sup> On their arrival in Neukölln, they were assigned three-digit numbers.

The SS operated the subcamp under the name "Krupp." Sachsenhausen's Berlin-Lichterfelde subcamp assumed responsibility for the Neukölln subcamp. SS members from Lichterfelde occasionally inspected the Neukölln camp.<sup>2</sup> A few organizational matters, such as food for the SS, were done through Lichterfelde.

The barracks camp was located at 181–189 Braunastrasse (later known as Sonnenallee). Until 1944, it held foreign forced laborers. It was surrounded by a fence, interwoven with thin, pliable cane, which according to some prisoners was electrified. The camp was visible from nearby apartment buildings. The prisoners were housed in three barracks, each of which was divided into separate rooms. They were awakened and called to roll each morning at 4:00 A.M. A 10-minute march took them to the factory, the entrance of which had above it a sign with the word "Krupp."

NCR used the inmates for heavy labor in the armaments industry. They had to work two shifts a day, each 12 hours long, electro-galvanizing aircraft parts. The workers suffered from the heat and burns from flying sparks. On several occasions, there were work accidents in which women lost fingers from the presses. Civilian personnel supervised the forced laborers. The prisoners recall in particular the brutal supervision of one German foreman.

No work was done on Sundays, but the women were required to work in the camp. Some of them worked in the camp administration. These women were mostly from Czechoslovakia.

The prisoners were guarded by a group of around 20 female German guards. Some had worked at the Dräger factories in Lübeck where they had been recruited by the SS. Several women had volunteered. Some said that they had been forced to work at the camp by the Government Employment

Office (Arbeitsamt) or by their employers. After a training course at Ravensbrück, the majority of them were sent at first to the Berlin-Zehlendorf subcamp. After its dissolution in September 1944, they were transferred to Neukölln. The average age of the known female SS guards was 28 years. The female guards were housed outside the camp in Krupp's former sports building. The female senior guard at the Neukölln subcamp was 39-year-old former factory worker Margarete Trampenau. Several survivors have stated that Oberaufseherin Trampenau treated the prisoners properly and took steps to prevent the female guards from mistreating them.<sup>3</sup>

The camp commandant was SS-Unterscharführer Bruno Kreibich. He had been a member of the Sachsenhausen Totenkopf-Wachbataillon (Death's Head Guard Battalion) from 1940 to 1944. Two of the women who worked in the camp office stated that he was not particularly interested in the camp and was just glad not to be at the front.<sup>4</sup> He was in charge of four or five SS men, three of whom were ethnic Germans from Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The SS men were housed in barracks close to the camp entrance.

Daily life for the prisoners in Neukölln was marked by hunger and inhumane living conditions. One of the barracks was equipped with washing facilities, and the women were allowed to shower once a week using cold water. Breakfast consisted solely of bread that was taken from their previous day's bread ration of 125 grams (4.4 ounces). The food was collected from a kitchen barracks outside the camp grounds by the inmates under the supervision of the female guards. Female civilian forced laborers worked in the kitchen. Additional rations were available for the women in the factory. In rare cases, local inhabitants are said to have thrown food over the subcamp's fence.<sup>5</sup> The detainees were dressed in work overalls and also wore pieces of clothing that had been handed out in Auschwitz.

Two women prisoner doctors worked in the barracks' infirmary, which was used for less serious illnesses. Sick and weakened inmates were transported to a medical station for forced laborers at Berlin-Siemensstadt or transported back to Ravensbrück.<sup>6</sup> Twice there were selections by the SS for larger prisoner transports. The survivor Helen G. stated that one night "nine sick women were selected who were in physically poor condition. . . . These detainees were transported away. I can remember to this day their terrible screams. They knew, just as we did, that they were going to be gassed."<sup>7</sup> The 9 prisoners were transferred on March 3, 1945, from Neukölln to Ravensbrück.<sup>8</sup> Another selection of 26 women followed, but it was not completed because the camp was dissolved. At least 1 inmate died from tuberculosis in the camp.<sup>9</sup>

During air raids prisoners were injured and probably several were killed.<sup>10</sup> Prisoners who were in the camp during an air raid could only seek shelter in the trenches. The cellars in the factory served as air-raid shelters.

During the last weeks of the war, the barrack camp was destroyed during bombardments, and the prisoners were held in the nearby cinema. After this was destroyed by bombs,



they were held in a cellar on the factory grounds. The order to evacuate the camp was given by the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL). On April 18, the prisoners had to walk to a nearby S-Bahn (metro railway) station where a train took them to Oranienburg. They remained one night in Sachsenhausen and were taken the following day by goods train to Ravensbrück. The prisoners remained there for a week. The Polish women, who formed the largest group, were under the care of the Swedish Red Cross and arrived on April 29, 1945, in Sweden. The non-Polish Jewish women left Ravensbrück at the end of April and were driven by the SS in a northwesterly direction. Two prisoners were able to escape.<sup>11</sup>

The commandant of the Neukölln subcamp, Kreibich, was held after the war by the British as a prisoner of war (POW) and remained interned until April 1948. Frieda Schweinhardt was the only female SS guard to be taken prisoner—she was taken by Soviet troops in Berlin and held in a Soviet internment camp until 1950. The Chemnitz State Court (Waldheim) sentenced her to 20 years' imprisonment for mistreating prisoners. She was released early in 1955 and settled in the Federal Republic of Germany. The Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg began investigating her in 1969 for crimes she was suspected of committing in the Neukölln subcamp, but the investigations stopped in 1971.

**SOURCES** Jochen Spielmann's essay "Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen, Aussenlager Neukölln, Braunauer Str. 187/189," in *Zehn Brüder waren wir gewesen: Spuren jüdischen Lebens in Berlin-Neukölln*, ed. Dorothea Kolland (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1988), and Harald B. Ramm's essay "NCR—ein KZ-Aussenlager in Berlin-Neukölln," in *Zur Arbeit gezwungen, Zwangsarbeit in Deutschland 1940–1945*, ed. Rimco Spanjer (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1999), both provide concise overviews of the subcamp and incorporate testimony from former detainees and their coworkers. For the history of the NCR in Neukölln before, during, and after the war, see Udo Gösswald's "Memories—Eine Unvollständige Geschichte," in *Sand im Getriebe: Neuköllner Geschichte*, ed. Dorothea Stanić (Berlin: Edition Hentrich, 1990). Benjamin B. Ferencz's work *Less Than Slaves: Jewish Forced Labor and the Quest for Compensation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002) provides a history of his persistent efforts, along with the Claims Conference, to gain reparations for former slave laborers who worked for Krupp during World War II.

Primary source material can be found in various archives, including at the KaN-AHm, which contains interviews from former fellow employees of the slave laborers in the NCR factory. Testimony from former Neukölln detainees, a postcard from a former detainee in Neukölln to a relative in Vienna, and documents related to postwar restitution issues in relation to slave laborers in Neukölln can be found at the YVA. The BA-L contains statements from the former camp commandant, Bruno Kreibich, as well as testimony from former detainees. The Benjamin B. Ferencz Collection at the USHMM contains correspondence and notes regarding the administration of the NCR factory, its use of forced laborers, affidavits that describe daily life in the camp, and a list of for-

mer detainees in the Neukölln camp who sought restitution from Krupp for forced labor. The sentence of a former SS guard by the Chemnitz District Court can be found in the BStU.

Alexander Korb  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. The Stärke- und Veränderungsmeldungen contain contradictory details on the date that the camp opened. It is mentioned for the first time on August 25, 1944, but no further information is available after that date until September 1, 1944. From that date on, it remains in the reports, AG-S, D 9A.

2. Statement, Bruno K., August 10, 1969, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 645/69.

3. Statement, Květa H., October 13, 1971, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 645/69.

4. Statement, Edita C., June 10, 1971, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 645/69.

5. Harald B. Ramm, "NCR—ein KZ-Aussenlager in Berlin-Neukölln," in *Zur Arbeit gezwungen, Zwangsarbeit in Deutschland 1940–1945*, ed. Rimco Spanjer (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1999), p. 76.

6. Entry lists, Ravensbrück concentration camp, USHMM, RG.04-006M, Reel 20, pp. 23, 32; and Statement, Edita C., June 10, 1971, in BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 645/69.

7. Statement, Helen G., January 26, 1971, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 645/69.

8. Stärke- und Veränderungsmeldungen, 1945, AG-S, D 9A.

9. Statement, Bruno K., August 10, 1969, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 645/69.

10. Statements, Hertha B., April 28, 1970, and Anna M., November 21, 1969, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 645/69.

11. Statements, Edita C., June 10, 1971, and Květa H., October 13, 1971, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 645/69.

## BERLIN-NIEDERSCHÖNEWEIDE (*PERTRIX*)

Niederschöneweide is part of the Berlin southeastern district of Treptow-Köpenick. A women's subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp was located there. The subcamp was named after the Batteriefabrik (Battery Factory) Pertrix, in which the prisoners worked for seven months starting in October 1944. The 500 mostly Polish and Belgian women who were brought to Schöneweide from Ravensbrück were first housed in a converted boat shed on the Spree River bank and later in barracks on Kölnische Strasse that are now a Documentation Center on Nazi Forced Labor.

The Pertrix Chemische Fabrik AG established itself in Berlin-Niederschöneweide in 1928. It was a subsidiary of the Akkumulatoren-Fabrik AG (Battery Manufacturing Corporation AFA). The AFA group of companies was established in 1887 in Hagen by agreement between AEG and Siemens & Halske (S&H) and soon monopolized the production of bat-

teries. During World War II, under Director of Defense Economy (Wehrwirtschaftsführer) Günter Quandt, the AFA produced batteries for submarines, trucks, and the Luftwaffe in Hagen, in Hannover, in Berlin, in Posen, and with the help of concentration camp prisoners, also in Hannover-Stöcken.

The Pertrix factory located at 53a Sedanstrasse in Berlin-Niederschöneweide (present-day Bruno-Bürgel-Weg) had around 1,300 workers and produced batteries, flashlights, and from 1934 on, cartridge cases. In 1937 it was designated a defense industry; in 1939, it changed its corporate status from a public corporation (AG) to a limited liability company (GmbH) but remained a subsidiary of the AFA group of companies. Günter Quandt's son Herbert, who was manager (Betriebsführer) of the AFA-affiliated company in Oberschöneweide, was recorded in the Reich's business card index as owner or director of the Pertrix GmbH. The manager was Viktor Werner.

The use of Jewish forced labor began as early as 1938.<sup>1</sup> They were followed by French prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian forced laborers who were mostly from the Soviet Union. Pertrix was then producing mainly lead batteries for aircraft. Within the so-called Fighter Program (*Jägerprogramm*), Minister for Armaments and War Production Albert Speer gave absolute priority to the manufacture of aircraft batteries in April 1944. In the autumn of that year, the production of batteries reached its peak.

The prisoners in the subcamp were initially housed in a boat shed on the Spree River. The boat club at 101 Berliner Strasse (present-day Schnellerstrasse) was owned by the former restaurant and dance hall "Loreley" that itself housed forced laborers working at the company L'Orange Motorzubehör (car accessories; later owned by DaimlerChrysler AG).<sup>2</sup> In 1971, a former female prisoner drew a sketch of the fenced-in subcamp. The Belgian and Polish concentration camp prisoners stayed there from September 20, 1944, until February 26, 1945, when an air raid took place. The boat shed was partially hit during the air raid and could no longer be lived in.

After the air raid, the prisoners were accommodated in camps in the nearby area. Some of them, mostly Belgian women, were taken by the SS to a camp in Köpenick. Here the women had to dig trenches for the German Home Guard (Volkssturm). Although the women were no longer working for Pertrix, the Sachsenhausen concentration camp probably continued to administer them under the name "Pertrix."

About 200 women, mostly Polish women, were taken by the SS to a nearby so-called Italian Camp. The camp in Köllnische Strasse consisted of 13 stone barracks. A central administration barracks divided the site in two. Two barracks that stood empty were used by the women as housing. The subcamp, as with the boat shed, was in the middle of a residential area and could be seen by the surrounding houses.

There were always around 500 prisoners in the Niederschöneweide subcamp.<sup>3</sup> They were mostly from Belgium and Poland, but there were also inmates from other countries.

Before they arrived at Ravensbrück, most of them had spent a few years in police jails or concentration camps. The suffering the Belgian women had to go through differed from that of the Polish women. The Belgian women came directly from police arrest to the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp. From there they were transported, in several transports, at the end of September 1944 directly to Schöneweide.<sup>4</sup>

The Polish women had also been held in police prisons, but from there they were transported to the concentration camp at Auschwitz II-Birkenau and then to Ravensbrück. Finally, the Polish women arrived at the subcamp at the Zehlendorf Spinning Mill (Spinnstofffabrik). Here they were supervised by SS female guards from Ravensbrück and then transferred to Schöneweide.<sup>5</sup> The women were between 16 and 49 years of age. They included "protective custody" prisoners, "foreign civilian workers" (Ausländische Zivilarbeiter, AZA), "asocials," and professional criminals.<sup>6</sup> Although the subcamp was subordinate to Sachsenhausen, prisoners who were seriously ill were taken back to Ravensbrück.<sup>7</sup>

Even though the AFA management had been provided with medical opinions that undernourished humans were especially susceptible to lead poisoning, the malnourished non-German labor force mainly had to work with poisonous materials without any protection.<sup>8</sup> The hygienic conditions in the camp were poor. There was no soap. There was, however, a surplus of vermin. There was no infirmary. The prisoners wore black-and-white-striped clothes with a cross on the back and wooden clogs. Each of the wooden platforms that served as beds was shared by two women.

Statements by witnesses suggest that the food was distributed at the camp. It consisted mostly of ersatz coffee, watery soup, and very little bread. Sometimes there was cheese.<sup>9</sup> One Belgian witness wrote that there was nothing to eat during the night shift. Another witness stated that "we stopped working because they gave us nothing to eat," although they had been promised food. Several prisoners mention a strike that is said to have taken place in February 1945. The SS female guards had the women on a particular shift stand at roll call for hours to find out who the leaders were. Three women were punished by beating following orders from the SS at Sachsenhausen.<sup>10</sup> Now and then there were escapes from the subcamp. According to the daily variation reports (*Veränderungsmeldungen*), the last group escape attempt occurred on March 31, 1945, when eight Polish women escaped from the subcamp in Köllnische Strasse.

Neither the daily variation reports nor the statements of witnesses enable the reconstruction of murders in the Niederschöneweide subcamp. On the other hand, witnesses' statements consistently refer to shootings on the death marches. "Many people collapsed from exhaustion. They were then fatally shot by the SS men."<sup>11</sup>

On the basis of a later investigation by the West German judicial authorities, a few details on the guards have been provided. There was a woman name Hesse; an SS female guard, Käthe Bechler, who died in 1966; and the camp leader,

SS-Unterscharführer Conrad Adolf Schreiber, who was born in 1896 and whose place of residence the then-German Democratic Republic's (DDR) Ministry of State Security was unable to identify until 1971.<sup>12</sup> The former salesman was described by Polish female former prisoners as a pigeon breeder. Schreiber is said to have been particularly brutal. He beat without hesitation and "never spoke quietly but was always screaming."<sup>13</sup> The SS women also guarded the prisoners while they were working at Pertrix.

The subcamp was dissolved over a three-day period; 23 prisoners left the camp on April 18 in the direction of Sachsenhausen; another 134 and 114 women, respectively, left over the next two days.<sup>14</sup> The women remained for one to three days in Sachsenhausen and were then sent on a death march in the direction of Lübeck and Schwerin. Some of the prisoners said they escaped during the march; others were liberated by the Red Army on May 2, 1945.<sup>15</sup>

The Zentralstelle der bundesdeutschen Staatsanwaltschaften (Central Office of the Federal German State Prosecutors) in Ludwigsburg began investigations in the 1970s on the subcamp at Niederschöneweide. Witnesses' statements made to the Polish Main Commission for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes and the Belgian Criminal Department of Military Courts did not turn up any "prosecutable crimes" in the Pertrix subcamp. The German investigations therefore ceased on June 30, 1972.<sup>16</sup>

**SOURCES** Two recent publications at the Documentation Center on Nazi Forced Labour give further details on the camp's history: "NS-Lager entdeckt": *Zwangsarbeiterlager Schöneweide wird historischer Lernort*, ed. Förderverein für ein Dokumentations- und Begegnungszentrum zur NS-Zwangsarbeit in Berlin-Schöneweide e.V. (Berlin, 2006); and *Das and Dokumentationszentrum NS Zwangsarbeit Berlin-Schöneweide. Zur Konzeption. Eine Veröffentlichung der Stiftung Topographie des Terrors*, ed. Andreas Nachama, Christine Glauning, and Katharina Sophie Rürup (Berlin, 2006).

The most important archival sources are the files of the ZdL (today BA-L). The relevant witness statements were made between 1968 and 1971 and, given the period of time, are often inaccurate. The CAFSSRF holds the Veränderungsmeldungen on the women's camp at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The Projekt Gedenkbuch der MGR has collected the transfer lists (*Überstellungslisten*) to and from Niederschöneweide. The ASVG-B holds the documents from the questioning of the German civilian population by the BTS immediately after the war. The interviews, made between 1946 and 1951, provide a subjective, at times, exculpatory view but nevertheless provide an overview. Research in address books, on location, and in scattered files in the former NS archive of BStU complement the knowledge base.

Cord Pagenstecher and Gabriele Layer-Jung  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. <http://www1.jur.uva.nl/junsv/ddr/files/ddr1209.htm>.
2. <http://www.lorange.de>.

3. CAFSSRF, R 22 MI 42, p. 125.
4. ASVG-B, Dienst Archiv und Dokumentation, Anhang Nr. 83 des Endberichts Nr. 20, R 149/Tr. 76662, without title, n.p.
5. BA-L, IV 406 AR 1886/68, o. Bl.
6. CAFSSRF, R 22 9-MI 42 S 125, pp. 7, 27, 52, 76, 79, 94.
7. Rücküberstellungen (Retransfers), September 27, 1944, November 22, 1944, and January 18, 1945, MGR, Projekt Gedenkbuch, Zugangslisten (Entry Lists) Nr. 01121001, 01141201, 01152001.
8. LA-B, 250-03-04 AFA, Nr. 49/2, Confidential Documents 1939, n.p.
9. BA-L, IV 406 AR 1886/68, n.p.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. BStU, HA IX/11, RHE West 609, p. 30.
13. BA-L, IV 406 AR 1886/68, n.p.
14. CAFSSRF, R 22 9 MI 42 S 125, 99.
15. BA-L, IV 406 AR 1886/68, n.p.
16. BA-L, IV 406 AR 1886/68, p. 4.

## BERLIN-REINICKENDORF (*ARGUS*)

### [AKA BERLIN-SCHÖNHOLZ]

The Sachsenhausen subcamp at Reinickendorf was mentioned in 1949 by the International Tracing Service (ITS). A list published in the German Democratic Republic refers to the subcamp as a "repair works" in Berlin. It is listed with many other Sachsenhausen subcamps. An inventory by the Brandenburg Memorials Foundation refers to the camp as "Reinickendorf-Schönholz." It is supposed to have existed from the summer of 1944 to April 1945 for use by the Argus Motorenwerke GmbH. According to some sources, the camp existed from July 1944 to April 20, 1945.<sup>1</sup> It is also possible that the camp was established on August 18, 1944. According to SS files, on September 5, 1944, there were 800 women in the subcamp at Reinickendorf.<sup>2</sup> They arrived in August and consisted of mostly Hungarian Jewish women from Ravensbrück, plus a few Polish women. There was a female doctor among the prisoners. The camp was located close to the Argus company at 28–42 Flotten Strasse. Survivors have also called the camp "Berlin-Schönholz." The camp, consisting of six prisoner barracks and an administration barracks, was clearly visible from the S-Bahn (metro railways) to Tegel and Oranienburg. It was situated in the triangle between the railway stations at Alt-Reinickendorf and Schönholz and between Wilhelmsruh and Schönholz. "The Argus Motoren GmbH was one of the most important companies in the German aircraft industry."<sup>3</sup>

The women worked in two shifts of 12 hours each. They had to do heavy physical work. If they did not fulfill work targets, they were threatened with a transfer back to the main camp. The food was completely inadequate. However, in acts of solidarity forced laborers in the camp were able to supplement some of the women's food. Nevertheless, the women suffered from hunger edema.



In the final weeks, they mostly worked in the vicinity of the camp, digging trenches. They were guarded by members of the Organisation Todt (OT). Some of the women had previously worked at the company Armag.

According to Sachsenhausen change of status reports, there were still 748 women in the Reinickendorf subcamp on March 30, 1945.<sup>4</sup> On April 18, 1945, the women had to march to the Sachsenhausen main camp on foot. Some of them were taken by truck. SS-Oberscharführer Max Bergholz, who had been detachment leader of the camp at Potsdam-Babelsberg until the end of 1944, later admitted that he had been “detachment leader” at “Schönholz” for two weeks from April 21, 1945. It is possible that he accompanied the evacuation to Sachsenhausen.

The camp leader was SS-Unterscharführer Andreas Vollenbruch. One of the SS overseers was Hildegrad Wenke. She beat the women in the most brutal manner. Other women overseers were Richter and Emilie Kalisch. As the war came to an end, the brutality increased. It can be documented that 15 women, including a non-Jewish Polish woman, died in the camp; 9 female Jews were transferred back to Ravensbrück.

Shortly after the war, the Waffen-SS assistant Hilde Mehner from Hohenstein-Ernstthal, who had been an overseer in the Reinickendorf subcamp from August 22, 1944, to April 22, 1945, was arrested by the British Military Administration in Berlin-Spandau. She was interned at Fallingbommel. Prior to Reinickendorf, she had been stationed at the Oranienburg subcamp at Auer.

Following a report made to the authorities by former inmate Margarete Farkas, the State Justice Administration in Cologne began investigations in 1960 into former camp commander Vollenbruch. They were still unfinished in 1964. The result of the investigations was inconclusive because the “investigations were complicated and time-consuming.” The Hungarian Jewish women had mostly moved back to Hungary. The accused could not be arrested because the statements by 30 witnesses “were too vague.” Vollenbruch was accused of having sent 30 Jewish women to Ravensbrück to be gassed and of having shot women who were digging trenches. He is also said to have ordered female guards to beat a pregnant woman to death. A Hungarian Jewish woman, Bozsi Keller, was said to have been badly mistreated by him and then forced to approach the electrified fence, where she died. Vollenbruch was also accused, together with female guards, of forcing women prisoners to stand under the water pipes as a punishment measure. Some of these women died. In winter, women had to carry snow from one place to another using their eating utensils. Another punishment, shaving the heads of the women bald, was infamous among the prisoners. Witnesses reported that during the trench-digging works a young girl, Lili Fischer, was shot by a member of the OT who was guarding the women.

SS-Oberscharführer Max Bergholz, who on his own admission was a detachment commander in Schönholz from April 21, 1945, was arrested in 1945 and interned in the British internment camp at Esterwegen.<sup>5</sup> His fate is unknown.

The Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg in the Federal German Republic began investigations in 1969, but they ceased in 1972 after the death of Vollenbruch, the chief suspect. Other suspects could not be identified because the witnesses’ statements were too vague. Nevertheless, it was determined that Helene Borkowsky, an overseer accused by the women, had hanged herself in Soviet custody after the end of the war. The camp elder, a Hungarian Jewish woman named Gyözo Kalocsai, was accused by her comrades of beating an exhausted woman to death.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** The only known article on the subcamp is the essay by Horst Helas and Henning Müller, “Das KZ-Aussenlager Argus in Berlin-Reinickendorf,” in *Zwangsarbeit in Berlin 1938–1945*, ed. Helmut Bräutigam, Doris Fürstenberg, and Bernt Roder (Berlin, 2003), pp. 269–279. This subcamp is listed in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 262; and Komitee der Antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, ed., *Damals in Sachsenhausen* (Berlin [East], 1967), p. 60.

Archival sources are located in the BA-L, AG-S, and YVA.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-S, D.A. 5147: Uwe Hofschläger: “Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen” (unpub. Diplomarbeit, Free University Berlin, 1997). April 20, 1945, is confirmed by a witness statement by Klara König, BA-L, IV 406, AR 503/60, n.p., Statement September 23, 1964.

2. AG-S, JSU 1, vols. 100–101.

3. Horst Helas and Henning Müller, “Das KZ-Aussenlager Argus in Berlin-Reinickendorf,” in *Zwangsarbeit in Berlin 1938–1945*, ed. Helmut Bräutigam, Doris Fürstenberg, and Bernt Roder (Berlin, 2003), p. 269.

4. AG-S, JSU 1, vol. 101.

5. List of former members of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp command office interned in the British CIC Esterwegen, probably 1945; various texts used here: AG-S, LAG X/3.

6. BA-L, IV 406, AR 862/69, letter from the Zentrale Stelle, Köln, October 2, 1972, n.p.

## BERLIN-SIEMENSSTADT

### [AKA HASELHORST, BERLIN-HASELHORST]

By the end of 1943, ambitious armaments targets contrasted with a sharply deteriorating labor supply. The spring of 1944 brought increased air raids culminating on the night of February 15, 1944, in massive damage to just about all the Siemens factories in Berlin. It was not possible to do without one of the most important suppliers for the navy (including submarine engines and switching devices as well as torpedo-firing

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mechanisms) and the air force (aircraft armaments, radar, remote control guidance mechanisms, etc.). The Einsatzstab (Operations Staff) Benkert was established immediately after the bombing raid. It was headed by a director at Siemens, Hanns Benkert, and was charged with “the reconstruction of the Siemens factories and the damaged electronics industry in Berlin.”<sup>1</sup> Benkert negotiated from the end of June with SS-Standartenführer Gerhard Maurer of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) for more than 2,000 Hungarian Jews—thus relying on the use of prisoner labor. There was a requirement not only for 2,000 male prisoners for construction work but also for 1,000 women, as Siemens wanted to eliminate the chronic labor shortage in its factories at the same time.<sup>2</sup>

The forced labor camp “Haselhorst-Nord,” which was located on Paul Stern Strasse, was converted into the Berlin-Siemensstadt subcamp. Technicians from the construction firm Röling & Co, Charlottenburg, which had been contracted by Siemens, and the first contingent of 200 prisoners, which arrived on July 17, 1944, constructed five barracks and a fence. The fence was most likely electrified. The SS area, with its command office, accommodations for guards and prisoners, and SS kitchen, was located in the so-called Pipe just in front of the actual camp. The camp leader was a former German army captain who had been transferred to the SS, SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Lietsch. Under his command were the roll-call leader Oberscharführer Heinrich P. and his deputy Unterscharführer Gustav S., as well as other SS noncommissioned officers as block leaders. The guards initially comprised 20 older SS men. Later the numbers rose to probably around 50.<sup>3</sup>

Living conditions in the camp were poor. There were initially only improvised washing facilities; later facilities, such as the toilets, were never anything more than extremely basic. The quarters were separated into two large “wings,” one for the prisoners and a smaller one for prisoner-functionaries such as the block elder, foremen, and orderlies. The buildings were extremely cold and were not suitable for human habitation in winter. There were heaters, but they were only effective in the prisoner-functionaries’ room. The barracks were equipped with three-level wooden bunks. Straw sacks were provided for each bunk. The inmates of the barracks varied as the number of prisoners in the camp fluctuated.<sup>4</sup>

The number of prisoners quickly increased. On August 10, 1944, an additional 500 men arrived from the Sachsenhausen main camp, and the first 500 women from the Ravensbrück main camp arrived on August 27, 1944.<sup>5</sup> The men were then moved to another part of the camp consisting of three barracks. The women occupied the first two barracks that had been built. Numbers continued to increase rapidly—on August 29, 1944, another 199 women arrived, and on August 31, 1944, another 316 men arrived in the camp.<sup>6</sup> There were more transports in the following months. On December 24, 1944, the camp reached its maximum number of 2,454 prisoners. There were 1,767 men and 687 women. The plans of the Einsatzstab Benkert in the summer of 1944 had envisaged that

most of the prisoners would be male and female Hungarian Jews. Despite these plans, the prisoners came from just about every German-occupied country. Survivors have said that there were prisoners, often of both sexes, from Bulgaria, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Czechoslovakia, and Ukraine. There were probably also a small number of German prisoners.<sup>7</sup> The transport that arrived just before Christmas probably consisted of 751 men, mostly Hungarian Jews. They were accommodated as a group, crowded into one of the wings in barrack 4, which previously had held only 400 prisoners.<sup>8</sup> With the arrival of the female prisoners, there came female SS overseers. Some reports speak of 8, others of 30. This is probably a reflection of the fluctuating camp numbers.<sup>9</sup>

The use of prisoners was of such significance for Siemens that the company took over responsibility not just for the construction of the subcamp but also for supplying food. Two of its employees were attached to the subcamp for accounting and organizational tasks. Systematic misappropriation by SS and prisoner-functionaries and the endemic corruption in the camp meant that the food supplies were inadequate for the heavy physical labor performed by the prisoners. Despite being aware of the problems, the company management did not interfere. It was only when “of hundreds of people only a few were able to work” (Benkert) and the success of the operation was endangered that Siemens intervened. It did so using a double strategy; first, it ensured that prisoners who could not work were promptly returned to the main camps without bureaucratic hindrance using Siemens’s own trucks because “the SS was incapable of handling the situation.”<sup>10</sup> Those prisoners who could achieve at least 30 percent of the “normal” work quota were issued extra food in their workshops. The return transfers are mirrored in the change of status reports. They show a constant reduction in the prisoner numbers in the camp between transports, a trend that increased markedly with the onset of frost in the winter of 1944–1945. Indeed, the onset of this cold period correlates closely with the return of prisoners to the main camp.<sup>11</sup> The fragmentary source material makes it difficult to determine the consequences of this action. This practice hardly led to any deaths at the Siemensstadt camp<sup>12</sup> since fatalities were effectively “exported” back to the main camps at Sachsenhausen and Ravensbrück. This policy meant that a stay in the Siemensstadt infirmary was dangerous for the prisoners.

There was also a close and amicable relationship between the company and the SS in organizing the use of the prisoners in work. The prisoners were usually selected by an employee of the firm based in the subcamp.<sup>13</sup> The prisoners had to do construction and cleanup work; they worked in the production of cables and switching gears and in electrical assembly. As early as August 24, 1944, 250 prisoners were digging “blast trenches” for the Einsatzstab Benkert, with the numbers finally reaching a total of around 750.<sup>14</sup> Work was done in the open air. This was difficult for the prisoners who were undernourished and whose clothing was inadequate for the weather. Indeed, the detachments Deckungsgraben I and II (covered

trenches) and Kahnentlader (barge unloading) were regarded as punishment detachments. Prisoners who had committed a “theft” or were accused of some other infraction, and above all Russian prisoners, were placed in these “punishment detachments.”<sup>15</sup> Further bombing on October 6, 1944, again caused severe damage at Siemens. For the next two weeks, even those prisoners working in production were used to remove rubble from Siemens factories. In general, managers at the firm expressed their satisfaction with the work done by the exhausted prisoners.<sup>16</sup>

The operation that used the largest number of prisoners, 1,250 at the beginning of January 1945, was the cable factory Siemens-Kabel-Gemeinschaft (SKG) in Gartenfeld. The first 900 prisoners (650 women and 250 men) were quickly deployed here,<sup>17</sup> the women working as “operators on mechanical calculating machines; examiners of lacquered cables; spinners; washers; and working on drills and assembly lines; and trimming off rubber,”<sup>18</sup> while the male prisoners were busy “trimming, mixing rubber, pressing synthetic resins, sheathing and stranding cables together, lacquering and tinsplating wire.” The work was done in two shifts each of 12 hours and was described by the prisoners as heavy labor. Siemens attempted to keep a check on each individual’s work and introduced a bonus system. There was a “performance food bonus” for good work, while for insufficient work the prisoners were beaten by the SS or Siemens employees or were reported to the camp, which resulted in punishments such as removal of food rations, standing for hours, or being beaten.<sup>19</sup> The successful escape of a prisoner at the start of the work deployment in the cable factory resulted in a series of measures: in the event of any further escapes, the “Engineer on Duty” was to report immediately to the camp command and mobilize the internal plant security and auxiliary factory security to surround the factory and search it. In addition, columns of prisoners on the move were escorted by electric carts on which searchlights were mounted—it was hoped that these devices would make escape more difficult during the darker months of the year. The extra efforts made were worthwhile: by using concentration camp prisoners, Siemens was able to introduce a second shift, thereby better utilizing the machines in accordance with the contract orders.

The demand for labor diminished in the spring of 1945 because of shortages of energy and material, prompting Siemens to want to remove the compromising presence of the concentration camp prisoners from its factories. The use of prisoners at the factory was cut back, and the prisoners were made available to clean up the city. An air raid during the night of March 27, 1945, destroyed the camp and killed a large number of guards as well as three female prisoners. The prisoners were at first taken to a nearby forced labor camp and then returned to Sachsenhausen and Ravensbrück.<sup>20</sup>

The Berlin Sachsenhausen Trial was preceded by comprehensive investigations by British and Soviet military authorities and was eventually conducted exclusively by the Soviets from October 23 to 31, 1947. It had the characteristics of a Stalinist show trial. There was no mention of what had oc-

curred in Siemensstadt. For this reason the decision of the court is of little benefit to historical research. Of more value is the material used during the trial. This material, which included the files of the camp administration and the investigation files of the British Judge Advocate General that had been handed over to the Soviets, disappeared for decades into the Committee on State Security (KGB) archives. The sources that are relevant for Siemensstadt are above all the fragmentary surviving change of status reports from the political department and stores, which permit a calculation of the number of prisoners in the subcamp.

The conditions in Siemensstadt and the use of the prisoners by Siemens were, however, the subject of detailed examination in the denazification proceedings of Siemens director Hanns Benkert. They are kept in the Berlin State Archive (LA-B). For reasons of data protection a special application to the Justice Senator needs to be made via the archive to inspect the files. The files may only be inspected for academic purposes.

The Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) investigated Siemensstadt in the mid-1960s.<sup>21</sup> The matter was then handed over to the Cologne State Attorney, which continued with the investigations.<sup>22</sup>

**SOURCES** Under contract from Siemens, Arne Hengsbach collated a detailed survey of all buildings associated with the company in Siemensstadt and at numerous other camps; Arne Hengsbach, “Barackenlager Haselhorst-Nord” and “Die Siemens Baracken-Lager im Auftrag der Zentral-Abteilung für Bauten u. Anlagen der Siemens A.G.” (unpub. MSS, Berlin, [1979]). In many ways a supplement to this work is the overview of forced labor camps and concentration camps in Berlin by Rainer Kubatzki, *Zwangsarbeiter- und Kriegsgefangenenlager. Standorte und Topographie in Berlin und im brandenburgischen Umland 1939 bis 1945: Eine Dokumentation* (Berlin, 2001). Karl Heinz Roth evaluates a number of prisoner work detachments for the Siemens concern in “Zwangsarbeit im Siemens-Konzern (1938–1945): Fakten—Kontroversen—Probleme,” in *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft, 1939–1945*, ed. Hermann Kaienburg (Opladen, 1996), pp. 149–168. Of particular importance is Roth’s structured typology of the use of inmate forced labor for the company. The author verified its validity in the case of Siemensstadt in his “Zwangsarbeit von Konzentrationslagerhäftlingen in der letzten Phase des Zweiten Weltkrieges: Das Beispiel Siemens unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Aussenlager Siemens-Haselhorst und ‘Siemenslager’ Ravensbrück” (Master’s thesis, Technische Universität Berlin, 1997). Roth, however, makes the false assumption that prisoners were already being used in the Gartenfeld cable factory as early as 1943. The monograph by the former director of the AS-M appeared on the 150th anniversary of Siemens AG: Wilfried Feldenkirchen, *Siemens 1918–1945* (Munich, 1996). Worth highlighting here, as well as the monograph’s unmistakable apologia, is the detailed reference section that includes references to Siemens archives marked as “uncatalogued temporary archive” and otherwise not accessible to the public. Modernization and technical and social rationalization are of great relevance to the theme of the integration of forced, unskilled labor in modern capitalist



industries. These standard works deal with the indispensable previous history of the use of prisoners' forced labor in production at the main German electrical companies and explicitly deal with the status of female labor: Heidrun Homburg, *Rationalisierung und Industriearbeit: Arbeitsmarkt, Management, Arbeiterschaft im Siemens-Konzern Berlin 1900–1939* (Berlin, 1991); Carola Sachse, *Siemens, der Nationalsozialismus und die moderne Familie: Eine Untersuchung zur sozialen Rationalisierung in Deutschland im 20. Jahrhundert* (Hamburg, 1990); Tilla Siegel and Thomas von Freyberg, *Industrielle Rationalisierung unter dem Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1991); and Rüdiger Hachtmann, *"Industriearbeit im Dritten Reich": Untersuchungen zu den Lohn- und Arbeitsbedingungen in Deutschland 1933–1945* (Göttingen, 1989). The AS-M is believed to contain an extensive collection of documents. However, the documents are held for the most part in the "uncatalogued files in the temporary archive" and are not available to independent researchers. A number of sources relating to the use of prisoners at the cable factory in Siemensstadt have recently been released and have been referred to in the text. Researchers are therefore forced to rely on the state archives. In addition to the trial files in LA-B, there are the bequests of Bruno Baum (a former concentration camp prisoner); and other important materials are in the BPASD-B(O), which were gathered for the Sachsenhausen Trial and the campaign that was undertaken to denazify and nationalize the "war crimes-implicated Siemens company." In particular there are to be found here numerous statutory declarations by Siemens employees that cannot be seen in the AS-M. The KGB's archival material at CAFSSRF has only recently become available for researchers on microfilm in USHMMA. The denazification proceedings against Benkert are held at BA-B. For reasons of data protection, a special application to the Justice Senator needs to be made via the archive to inspect the files. The files may only be inspected for academic purposes. The Cologne investigation records are held in NWHStA-(D) ZA-K. The material seized by U.S. authorities at the end of the war relating to the administration of concentration camps was in large part—in particular, the material relating to personnel—handed over to ITS. Some of the material was microfilmed by U.S. authorities before it was handed over (NARA) and is therefore accessible at USHMMA, AG-S, and BA-B. Other important documents were collected by the Compensation Treuhand GmbH, which, beginning in the 1960s, began to pay compensation from the larger German companies to Jewish survivors and which required the companies' management files for this purpose. Extracts from these files are to be found in the investigation files of the ZdL (now BA-L). These probably very valuable files are now in Collection M32 at the YVA. The author was denied access to these files on the basis they contained confidential personal information. Other smaller archival collections have been referred to in the text. Shortly after the end of the war, Jewish concentration camp prisoner Erich Altmann compiled a detailed report about his imprisonment in the concentration camps at Auschwitz, Auschwitz/Bobrek, Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen, and Siemensstadt: *Im Angesicht des Todes: Drei Jahre in deutschen Konzentrationslagern; Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Oranienburg* (Luxembourg, 1947).

Rolf Schmolling  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Referat des Direktors Leifer zur Vorstandssitzung der S&H, April 22, 1944, BA-MA, RL3/4497; Kriegstagebuch Rüstungskommando I (Berlin) 01/1944, particularly the entry for February 16, 1944, BA-MA, RW 21-2/7.

2. Protokolle Einsatzstab Benkert v. June 13, 1944, and July 11, 1944, AUB-ISG; Siemens-Konzern, Protokoll der Werksleiterbesprechung, August 21, 1944, Berlin, LA-B, FDGB 276.

3. Statutory Declaration Paul Werner P., February 24, 1947, LA-B R 7200; Abschlussbericht betr. Nebenlager Siemens-Haselhorst/Berlin—KL Sachsenhausen, BA-L, ZdL IV406AR-Z185/71; Statement by Julia W., January 21, 1970, ZdL *ibid.*, p. 139.

4. Baubeschreibung für Behelfsbauten der "Bauweise Oswalt" [from Family Stadler-Bimsbau], March 24, 1944, LA-B, R7200, Bauzeichnung Behelfsbau Typ RAD/6 Übersicht, Stadler-Bimsbau Berlin, May 12, 1944, 1:100 LA-B, R7200; as an example, the report by Fritz Ei., December 30, 1946, LA-B/BPA, IV-L/15/052; Statement Antoni P., October 11, 1971, ZdL IV406AR-Z185/71, p. 530; Statement Helena Sch., December 15, 1969, ZdL *ibid.* For the causes of the cold, see statement by [Foreman] Friedrich R. v. March 14, 1947, LA-B, R7200; Statement Paul Werner P. v. March 18, 1947, LA-B, R 7200; Statutory Declaration Paul Werner P., February 24, 1947, LA-B *ibid.* For the outfitting, see statement by Irena H., née Szy., April 17, 1971, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z185/71, S. 229; Statement by Helena Sch., December 15, 1969; "Siemens-KZ-Haselhorst" (Besprechung mit Herrn [Paul] W. aus dem Vorstand des FDGB, ehemaliger Häftling), December 2, 1946, BPA, IVL-2/6/270/1.

5. Veränderungsmeldungen Sachsenhausen [Männer], August 11, 1944, Film RG-006.025\*26 2286, p. 26; Veränderungsmeldung Sachsenhausen "Konz.-Lager Sachsenhausen Häftlinge Geld- und Effektenkammer" [Frauen], August 28, 1944, USHMMA, RG-006.025\*26 2287, p. 219.

6. Veränderungsmeldung KL Sachsenhausen Effektenkammer [Frauen], August 28, 1944; Veränderungsmeldung KL Sachsenhausen, August 31, 1944, USHMMA, RG-006.025\*26 2286(54), p. 256.

7. Minutes of "Einsatzstab Benkert," July 11, 1944, BPA, FDGB 276; Management Meeting, August 28, 1944, *ibid* G; Record of Interview Vera Gregorejewa S., January 13, 1970, ZdL IV406AR-Z185/71; Statement by Helena Sch., December 15, 1969, ZdL *ibid.*

8. "Freie Gewerkschaft" "Siemens-Konzentrationslager Haselhorst," LA-B, BPA IVL-2/15/052; Report Franz F. February 5, 1947, *ibid.*; Statement Paul W. of March 18, 1947, LA-B, R7200.

9. Statement by Julia W., January 12, 1970, ZdL IV406AR-Z185/71; and Final Report Re Subcamp Siemens Haselhorst/Berlin—Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, ZdL *ibid.*

10. Report Wilhelm V., March 10, 1947, LA-B, R7200; see Benkert in the interview of Paul W., March 18, 1947, LA-B, R7200; also the report by Franz F., February 5, 1947, LA-B, BPA IVL-2/15/052.

11. For example, see the Veränderungsmeldungen [Männer] between September 1, 1944, and September 24, 1944, and between September 25, 1944, and December 29, 1944.

12. There are hardly any reliable reports about deaths. Investigations by ZdL concluded on the basis of verifiable witnesses reports that three female prisoners died as a result of the bombing raid of March 28, 1945. In the surviving, incomplete change of status reports, the deaths of four other women in the camp are noted. There are no details about male prisoners. ZdL, Abschlussbericht Siemens-Haselhorst, IV406AR-Z185/71, p. 7; Veränderungsmeldung (Effektenkammer), September 27, 1944, January 9, 1945, March 13, 1945, March 31, 1945, and April 1, 1945.

13. Statement Paul W., March 18, 1947, LA-B, R7200.

14. Minutes of Meeting of "Einsatzstab Benkert," August 24, 1944, and September 10, 1944, LA-B, BPA, FDGB 276.

15. Paul Werner P. in denazification proceedings Hanns Benkert, ZdL IV406AR-Z185/71, p. 163; Statement Paul Werner P., March 18, 1947, LA-B, R7200; Report Fritz Ei., December 30, 1948, LA-B, BPA IVL-2/15/052, S.4; Statement Danuta Maria Szy., née Zd. April 9, 1970, ZdL, *ibid.*

16. Dr. Mühlbauer of S&H and the responsible record keeper of the cable factory. See Minutes of Meeting "Einsatzstab Benkert," September 10, 1944, LA-B, BPA, FDGB 276; SKG Weekly Report, October 7–10, 1944, and October 8–October 14, 1944, AS-M, 4947; Justification Report Siemens [October 1, 1945] AS-M: XXXIX/2, p. 30.

17. SKG Weekly Report, August 27–September 2, 1944, AS-M, 4947.

18. For the following citation, see "Rechtfertigungsschrift Siemens" [October 1, 1945], p. 29.

19. Statement Helena Sch., December 15, 1969, ZdL IV406AR-Z185/71, pp. 209, 210; Statement Melania Elzbieta No., née. Z., October 7, 1969, ZdL *ebenda*, p. 315; Record of Interview Vera Gregorejewa S., January 13, 1970, ZdL *ibid.*, p. 231; Record of Interview Bruno M., March 18, 1947, LA-B, R7200; Statement Bruno M., March 12, 1947, *ibid.*; Record of Interview Paul W., March 18, 1947, *ibid.*

20. Final report of the Subcamp Siemens-Haselhorst/Berlin—KL Sachsenhausen, ZdL IV406AR-Z185/71; as well as the already cited report by Nicholas Rosenberg.

21. Ermittlungsverfahren gegen Unbekannt betr. Nebenlager Siemens-Haselhorst/Berlin—KL Sachsenhausen, ZdL IV406AR-Z185/71.

22. StA Köln: Ermittlungsverfahren gegen Unbekannt wg. Verdachts des Mordes (Nebenlager Siemens-Haselhorst d. KL Sachsenhausen, Männerlager); StA Köln: Ermittlungsverfahren gegen Unbekannt wg. Verdachts des Mordes (Nebenlager Siemens-Haselhorst d. KL Sachsenhausen, Frauenlager); both: 130Js35/73 Z (Ger.Rep.118 Nr. 2167–2170).

## BERLIN-SPANDAU

The Spandau subcamp was located in the middle of a large industrial area on Pichelswerder Strasse in Berlin-Spandau. The camp buildings consisted of one or two single-level factory units converted for use as lodgings; similar buildings close by had already been in use to accommodate foreign civilian workers and prisoners of war (POWs) since 1942.

The inmates, who were exclusively women, came from the Ravensbrück concentration camp. However, administratively, the subcamp was under the command of the Sachsenhausen

concentration camp. The prisoners were employed by the Deutsche Industrie-Werke AG (DIWAG) in the production of munitions. DIWAG was a state-controlled metal-processing company. Erich Purucker was head of operations. He was a senior bureaucrat in the Armaments Ministry with the rank of SS-Standartenführer.

It is reported that the prisoners were at least occasionally employed at the neighboring armaments factory Spreewerk GmbH, a concern closely related to DIWAG. At its subcamp in Kratzau in the Sudetenland, prisoners were also forced to work for DIWAG. Both companies played an important role in keeping armaments production going in the Berlin area in the last phase of the war.<sup>1</sup>

The first reliable record of prisoners at the DIWAG factory, who were presumably from a concentration camp, is dated Monday, October 2, 1944. A Belgian civilian forced laborer recorded in his diary on this day the presence of political prisoners.<sup>2</sup> Polish prisoners corroborate this date. According to their statements, they arrived in the Spandau camp at about this time in a transport of about 300 women.

Initially, Polish women made up most of the prisoner contingent; they had been arrested and deported in the course of the Warsaw Uprising in the summer of 1944. From about December 1944, a second large group of prisoners arrived in the camp: Hungarian Jewish women deported in the autumn of 1944 from Budapest and other parts of Hungary and destined for the Ravensbrück concentration camp. There were also non-Jewish Hungarian women arrested for political reasons as well as Serbian women, women from Yugoslavia, Poland, and a few women from the Soviet Union, France, Italy, and Germany. According to a number of Hungarian prisoners, the German prisoners were classified as "asocials," although they included political prisoners.

The different prisoner categories were held separately, the Jewish prisoners being kept apart from the others. The usual system of prisoner "self-administration" existed in the camp. Only the name of the female camp doctor is known—a Polish doctor named Irena Kononowicz (1910–1969). Another female camp doctor, probably from Hungary, is supposed to have died in the camp. Prisoner doctors from Sachsenhausen are also thought to have been deployed to provide medical attention. One pregnant Polish woman was returned to the Ravensbrück concentration camp after medical examination by a number of doctors.

From the end of 1944, there were on average between 1,030 and 1,040 prisoners in the Spandau subcamp.<sup>3</sup> The prisoners were mostly young women in their early twenties. There was little variation in the prisoner numbers. The subcamp received allocations of prisoners either from Ravensbrück or the Auer subcamp at Oranienburg. Those who left the camp were mainly sent to Auer. A DIWAG bookkeeper calculated the cost to his company of deploying the prisoners in January 1945 at 88,119.30 Reichsmark (RM) and in February at 88,682 RM.<sup>4</sup>

The subcamp's change of status report for 1945 recorded the deaths of eight women, aged between 18 and 37. No

reference is made to the causes of death. Survivors stated that the prisoners wasted away and died due to lack of medical attention and exhaustion. There are no documented cases of killings by guards. The dead were taken to Sachsenhausen. Hungarian Kató Gyulai told of a young woman who died a week before liberation and of corpses that were brought to Sachsenhausen around April 21, 1945. Another woman died of exhaustion on that transport. Other prisoners are said to have died soon after they were liberated from illnesses contracted during their imprisonment. The first documented death was on December 16, 1944; most deaths occurred in the months of March and April—a clear indication of the prisoners' increasing exhaustion. As the records are incomplete, it must be assumed that there were deaths in the Spandau subcamp other than those documented. All the documented cases relate to Hungarian women; all who died were categorized as Jews other than one "protective custody" prisoner. One can therefore conclude both that this group of prisoners was not in good condition when it arrived at the camp and that in the camp they were exposed to worse conditions than the other prisoner groups. These deductions are supported by the statement of a Polish prisoner.

The camp was primitive and makeshift. In a large hall there were three-level wooden bunks. The bunks were covered by cardboard mattresses and pillows, which were filled with wood shavings. There was also a blanket. Connected to the dormitory were washrooms and latrines, some of which were still being constructed when the prisoners arrived. The prisoners were clothed in worn-out, thin prisoners' garb and shoes with wooden soles.

Some prisoners had hoped that the assignment to the work details would improve their situation. They were quickly disappointed. The prisoners suffered in the cold rooms. Hygienic conditions were completely inadequate, and the camp was full of lice. The inadequate and extraordinarily poor food inflicted rapid weight loss and deterioration on the already weakened women. According to the prisoners, they received daily about 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread, beet soup, a few potatoes, a little substitute coffee, and every now and then some jam, artificial honey, or a piece of sausage. When liberated, many prisoners weighed only about 30 kilograms (66 pounds).

Unlike with other firms that employed concentration camp prisoners, the prisoners in the factory were not strictly separated from the German and foreign civilian workers. There were two shifts, each of 12 hours. After instruction by German and foreign workers, the prisoners had to work on gun molds, which weighed between 7 and 20 kilograms (15 and 44 pounds), lathes, drills, and grinding machines and accomplish related activities. Some prisoners benefited from their contact with the civilian workers because they occasionally gave them food and other necessary items.

It was difficult for prisoners to develop informal structures within their community since most had only been imprisoned

for a short period of time. It was easier for the political prisoners because of their common political beliefs and because of experiences gained during previous imprisonments. One Hungarian-Yugoslavian group aimed to organize assistance and food but also the exchange of political and military intelligence. Those who were racially persecuted, unless they had family members or friends in the camp, initially had to rely on themselves. Communication was relatively easy, as most of the prisoners came from Hungary. Cultural activities were organized as part of the survival strategy. Poems were recited, songs were sung, or there were attempts to organize "cabaret evenings." However, the demoralizing daily prisoner grind gradually put an end to such activities. Thefts also undermined solidarity.

There were apparently conflicts between the prisoners who worked in the kitchen, who were mostly "asocials" and prostitutes from Germany but who also included some Polish political prisoners. The other camp prisoners regarded them as the camp "elite," as they were able to obtain extra food and profit from barter.

There is a record of two prisoners escaping in February 1945. One of the prisoners was a woman from the Soviet Union. She was categorized as "AZA" (foreign civilian worker). The other was a German. She was categorized as "Aso" (asocial).

Little is known about the camp personnel. The female overseers were assessed in an especially negative light by the surviving prisoners. They commonly used physical violence and shouted at and insulted the prisoners. Some witnesses describe mistreatment of prisoners by guard dogs. One girl is supposed to have suffered serious bite wounds.

Former prisoners were usually able to catch names of guards only in passing. In the first weeks, an SS-Führer aged about 40 was commandant; he was called "the red dog" by Polish women prisoners because of his red hair and strict manner. He was succeeded as Lagerführer—probably as early as October 1944—by SS-Unterscharführer Eitel Faenger (1903–1950), who had previously been commandant in the Glau-Trebbin subcamp. Jewish prisoners recall a certain "Peter," who was addressed this way by a female SS overseer. This "Peter" was identified as being Faenger by Hungarian prisoners—who spoke his name phonetically as "Finger," identifying him as "Peter Finger."

Of the SS female overseers, many witnesses name a certain "Anni" who was a senior overseer and whose surname was perhaps "Roth." She was about 25 years old, dark blonde, and attractive and is described as a cruel woman. Other female overseers known for their brutality were called Helga, Hilde, and Grete. Only two SS guards could be identified by name after the war. Friede Emma B. was recruited as an SS overseer together with other female workers from the Arado factory in Wittenberg. She was sent from Wittenberg to Berlin-Spandau. According to her own statements, she was popular among the prisoners; however, the regional court in Halle sentenced her in 1949 to two years' imprisonment for crimes against humanity committed in the camp in Wittenberg. Incidents in



Spandau did not form any part of the judgment at that time. Another SS overseer known by the name Ursula K. could not be traced by the authorities.

The camp was dissolved between April 21 and 22, 1945, at the time when the Red Army began to enter Berlin. The sick prisoners and those who could no longer walk were transported by truck to Sachsenhausen. A day later, the SS drove the majority of the prisoners by foot in a northwesterly direction. These prisoners were finally liberated on either April 23 or 24, 1945, near the small Brandenburg town of Nauen.

After the war in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the state attorney made investigations into the Spandau subcamp. These were dropped in 1973 since there were no reliable statements that could form the basis of a prosecution against named individuals.

**SOURCES** In 1990, the Spandau Council published a brochure: Helmut Bräutigam, *Aussenlager Spandau. Das Konzentrationslager bei der Deutsche Industrie Werke Akiengesellschaft* (Berlin-Spandau, 1990). This subcamp is also listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, vol. 1. (Arolsen, 1979).

The concentration subcamp Spandau at the DIWAG is one of the subcamps whose existence is barely documented. The pretrial documents of the ZdL (at BA-L) 1968 to 1971 and its investigation, which was based on these documents and dropped in 1973 by the ZSSa-K, contain only a few witness statements collected from Hungarian Jewish and Polish women as well as information about the second Lagerführer, Eitel Faenger, who had been dead since 1950. The Spandau Youth History Project (Jugendgeschichtswerkstatt Spandau) holds, besides a German translation of Kató Gyulai's memoirs, interviews from 1988 and 1989 with former Hungarian prisoners Kató Gyulai, Rosi Hazai, Blanke Horowitz, Iren Kása, Ibolya László, and Marianne Pinter. The AG-S holds copies of the Veränderungsmeldungen of the female section of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The originals are held by the RGVA (Call Number R 22.9 M I 42). These reports contain details of the numbers including fluctuations, nationality, prisoner categories, and deaths (Stärke- und Veränderungsmeldungen im Frauenlager des KZ Sachsenhausen from December 31, 1944, to April 18, 1945, D 1 A 1/26). The Bezirksamt Spandau holds the building files of DIWAG and the Spreewerk, which, while they do not contain any direct reference to the subcamp, are useful in reconstructing the location of the subcamp, the immediate surroundings, and living conditions (Bezirksamt Spandau, record group Bauaufsicht, records of Strasse "Freiheit"). The BA-BL holds DIWAG internal files; they contain only two minor references to the existence of the Spandau subcamp (BA-B, R 121, File Nr. 1016; to the Kratzau subcamp, No. 1035). Other documents are held by ITS. The diary of Belgian civilian worker Jan van der Avoort from Oud Turnhout, Belgium, contains notes about the concentration camp prisoners; a copy of the diary is held by ASMS. The memoirs of the Hungarian, Gyulai, written as a MSS in 1947, were published in German in 2001: Kató Gyulai, *Zwei Schwestern: Geschichte einer Deportation*, ed. Linde Apel and Constanze Jaiser (Berlin, 2001). Mrs.

Gyulai, who lives in Budapest, Hungary, has the original MSS.

Helmut Bräutigam  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-BL, R 121/1035
2. Dairy of Jan van der Avoort, Oud Turnhout, Belgium, entry dated October 2, 1944. A copy of the diary is in ASMS.
3. AG-S, D 1A 1/26, Report on the number of prisoners in the female section of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp between December 31, 1944, and April 18, 1945; the original is located in RGVA, Call Number: R22.9 M I 42.
4. BA-BL, R 121/1016.

## BERLIN-TEGEL

There is scarce information about the Sachsenhausen subcamp that was located in the Tegel suburb of Berlin in the Reinickendorf administrative district. Most evidence suggests that the Berlin-Tegel subcamp was distinct from the slave labor camp associated with the Rheinmetall-Borsig factory in Tegel. The subcamp existed for only a few months, from November 1944 until February 1945.

The Berlin-Tegel subcamp held about 40 to 50 men who were prisoners transported from the Sachsenhausen main camp. There is no further information about the demographics of the prisoners, but one source has noted that they were primarily foreign prisoners.<sup>1</sup> The second commando leader (Kommandoführer) of this group was SS-Rottenführer Alfons Knirsch.

The Borsig factory used the prisoners in the Berlin-Tegel subcamp to search for and sweep unexploded bombs. The work was extremely dangerous, and the mortality rate for the prisoners was high. However, because the food rations were relatively plentiful—they were the same supplied to the local police—there were numerous volunteers brought daily from the main camp at Sachsenhausen for this work.

The Berlin-Tegel subcamp was liquidated in February 1945.

**SOURCES** Sources on the Berlin-Tegel subcamp of Sachsenhausen are generally scarce. The main secondary source of information on this camp is the Berlin-Tegel entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979). Although not always consistent with other sources, the ITS catalog provides brief statistical information about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, and so on.

Primary source material is stored at the AG-S in Oranienburg. Limited information can be found in file group I/4, Index der Aussenkommandos und Aussenlager; III/6, Petitjean, Kleine Geschichte des Lagers; Bestand D 30 A/8/1, 52–54,

## 1290 SACHSENHAUSEN

Hellmut Bock, Bericht über das Konzentrationslager; and D 30 A/15, Blatt 1-41: Liste mit Namen von ca. 700 SS-Leuten und 8 Häftlingen aus dem KZ Sachsenhausen, Arbeitsstellen, Aussenlagern.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

### NOTE

1. Unknown author, "Chronik und Bericht über Sachsenhausen," AG-S, I/4, p. 72.

## BERLIN-WILMERSDORF

There is scant information about the subcamp of Sachsenhausen established in the southwestern Berlin suburb of Wilmersdorf. The few sources that do note the creation of a subcamp in Wilmersdorf provide varying information about when the camp existed. Some sources mention that from the beginning of January until early July 1943 a subcamp for male prisoners existed in Wilmersdorf, although the exact location of the camp, the company or office that used the prisoners for labor, and the number or origins of the prisoners are unknown.<sup>1</sup> However, documents at the Sachsenhausen Memorial Archives (AG-S) place the subcamp earlier, from August 1941 to an unknown date—possibly August 1943. It is unclear if the differences in the dates signify two different subcamps in Berlin-Wilmersdorf.

According to the witness statement former inmate Martin Schmidt provided to the Staatsanwaltschaft in Bonn, a contingent of about 100 men was brought from the Sachsenhausen main camp to Berlin-Wilmersdorf, where they were forced to construct offices for the SS-Leadership Main Office (Führungshauptamt) for SS-Obergruppenführer Plebsch in August 1941. The inmates were housed in a former Jewish-owned business. Schmidt recalled that SS-Oberscharführer Schröder supervised the group, although he could not remember any other details about Schröder.<sup>2</sup>

The guard staff consisted of members of the SS, including SS-Unterscharführer Emil Bentrup (September 1941 to August 1942); SS-Rottenführer Albert Hoppe (December 21, 1941, to an unknown date); and Kommando leader SS-Unterscharführer Otto Jöhnk (August 21, 1941, to August 16, 1943).<sup>3</sup>

**SOURCES** There are few sources, either primary or secondary, on the Berlin-Wilmersdorf subcamp of Sachsenhausen. A brief mention of the camp can be found in Rainer Venske, "Aussenlager des KZ Sachsenhausen auf dem heutigen Territorium von Berlin (West)," in *Niemand und Nichts Vergessen. Ehemalige Häftlinge aus verschiedenen Ländern berichten über das KZ Sachsenhausen* (Verlag für Ausbildung und Studium in der Elefanten Press, 1984). See also the entry for Berlin-Wilmersdorf in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979). Although not always consistent with other sources, the ITS catalog provides brief

statistical information about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, and so on. Hans Gräfer's "Die Slaven sollen für uns arbeiten. Zwangsarbeiter in Wilmersdorf," in *Wilmersdorfer Bruchstücke. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bezirkes Wilmersdorf*, ed. Arbeitskreis Geschichte Wilmersdorf, vol. 1 (Berlin: Omnis, 1997) may yield additional information.

Primary source materials on Berlin-Wilmersdorf are mostly located at the AG-S and the ZDL-L. In the AG-S, see especially file groups D 30 A 10/2 A; D 30 A 15; JD 2/17; and JD 21/28. Files that may be useful at the ZDL-L include IV 419 AR 3322/65 and IV 406 AR 759/69.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

### NOTES

1. See Rainer Venske, "Aussenlager des KZ Sachsenhausen auf dem heutigen Territorium von Berlin (West)," in *Niemand und Nichts Vergessen. Ehemalige Häftlinge aus verschiedenen Ländern berichten über das KZ Sachsenhausen* (Verlag für Ausbildung und Studium in der Elefanten Press, 1984), p. 189. See also the entry for Berlin-Wilmersdorf in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979).

2. "Zeugenvernehmung von Martin Schmidt im Ermittlungsverfahren gegen Gustav Sorge und Wilhelm Schubert wegen Mordes, Staatsanwaltschaft Bonn," AG-S, JD 2/17, pp. 117–125. See also Zeugenaussage Martin Schmidt, Staatsanwaltschaft beim Landgericht Köln, AG-S, JD 21/28, pp. 79–82.

3. Liste mit Name von ca. 700 SS-Leuten und 8 Häftlingen aus dem KZ Sachsenhausen, Arbeitsstellen, Aussenlagern, AG-S, D 30 A 15, pp. 1–41.

## BERLIN-ZEHLENDORF

With 301 female concentration camp prisoners, the Sachsenhausen Berlin-Zehlendorf subcamp was established in the autumn of 1944 on the grounds of the firm Spinnstofffabrik Zehlendorf AG, a spinning mill company in the southwest Berlin district of Zehlendorf. It was probably the only subcamp in the Berlin-Brandenburg region to have been transferred to another company within a few weeks of its opening.

The establishment of the camp on the grounds of the Spinnstofffabrik Zehlendorf AG on 3 Wupperstrasse followed a long struggle over the use of labor between the company and the Berlin Armaments Inspectorate III. A group of 189 Polish female forced laborers had been withdrawn from the spinning mill even though this resulted in production shortages that the company had warned about.<sup>1</sup> The relevant employment office was not in a position to replace the lost labor. Even the establishment of a substitute "labor education camp" (*Arbeitserziehungslager*) at the spinning mill did not, from the firm's point of view, have the desired effect. The reason for this was that there was a high prisoner turnover, meaning the prisoners could only be used for basic tasks. Besides, the ad-

ditional expenditure required for the guards was regarded as too high when the low number of useful, trained prisoners was taken into account. The solution was to construct a subcamp: "The Oranienburg Gestapo has stated that it will make available around four hundred political prisoners who are to remain in custody for a lengthy period and who, as a result, are suitable candidates for basic work training."<sup>2</sup>

However, commencement of operations at the subcamp was delayed since, according to the war diary of the Armaments Inspectorate III, "the necessary guards (forty to fifty women) must be raised from volunteers among the existing factory workforce. In the meantime the required accommodation has been arranged."<sup>3</sup> In arranging accommodation, supplies, and the training of the prisoners as well as in negotiating with the responsible authorities, the company was able to draw on its existing experience and infrastructure gained from its previous use of forced laborers: "work-conscripted" Jewish men and women from Berlin, Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), Polish civilian workers of both sexes, Italian military internees (IMIs), and male Sachsenhausen concentration camp prisoners from the Lichterfelde subcamp.

The Sachsenhausen concentration camp kept change of status reports (*Veränderungsmeldungen*) for female prisoners from the end of August 1944. On September 1, 1944, these reports list the Zehlendorf spinning mill as having 301 prisoners.<sup>4</sup> At that point in time, Zehlendorf was the smallest of the Sachsenhausen women's subcamps, having just 6 percent of the total prisoners registered. It is probable the numbers remained constant until the relocation of the camp.

The prisoners working at Zehlendorf were non-Jewish Polish women; 4 of the former prisoners, from whom statements survive, were originally arrested in various locations in Poland between 1940 and 1942 and transferred to Auschwitz. From there they were transferred in the summer of 1944 to Ravensbrück; 2 of the survivors remember that they arrived in Ravensbrück on July 24, making it most likely that they left Auschwitz on a transport on July 22, 1944, which comprised 998 women.<sup>5</sup> Another survivor has stated that she only arrived in Ravensbrück from Auschwitz at the end of August.<sup>6</sup>

The SS guards were women with an average age of about 25 years. Of the nine SS overseers whose names are known, two volunteered, as did a great many others, while a third, according to the Kassel labor office, was "conscripted" to SS duty.<sup>7</sup>

The guards whose names are known did not come from Berlin. After a four-week training period in the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp, the female SS overseers were first deployed as escorts for the transfer of the Polish prisoners to Zehlendorf. After their arrival there, they became part of the guard.

According to Polish survivors, the SS commandant at the subcamp was a 35-year-old SS man by the name of Michael.<sup>8</sup> Survivors remember that he once set his dog on a female prisoner and then beat her. The reason for the attack may have been a strike by the prisoners.<sup>9</sup> The former prisoners are not

aware of deaths in the Zehlendorf subcamp; neither do the change of status reports give any indication of fatalities.

According to the survivors, the work conditions exposed them to a special risk: the Spinnstoffabrik Zehlendorf AG manufactured, among other things, parachutes from synthetic silk for the armed forces. In the spinning department, the threads ran through basins that were filled with sulfuric acid and water. The prisoners often had to put their hands into the basins to reconnect broken threads and to fetch the so-called *Kapillar*, a small golden tube that fell into the water when the threads broke. In doing so the women injured their unprotected arms and their eyes. The women were threatened with beatings if one of the tubes was lost.<sup>10</sup> Other prisoners did less dangerous work such as weeding on the factory grounds. The work shifts were of 12 hours. The women were guarded by Germans while they worked, but it remains unclear whether the guards were SS or internal plant security.

Living conditions in the Zehlendorf subcamp were characterized by malnourishment and accommodation beneath human dignity. The subcamp consisted of a wooden barracks surrounded by barbed wire. It bordered a camp for IMIs and was separated from it by a tall wooden fence. All 301 women were held in one barrack, which was therefore very crowded. The women slept in three-tiered beds on sacks filled with sawdust. According to Janina P., "There was great hunger in the camp."<sup>11</sup> The food consisted of rotten winter vegetables and small portions of bread, margarine, jam, and horse sausage. The women were dressed in striped prisoner clothes and wore wooden clogs. Several survivors have stated that they suffered from the filthy conditions. There were only limited washing facilities.

According to Lydia R., a committee of SS men arrived in the camp one day and ordered the removal of the women. The Armaments Inspectorate's war diary reveals that partial damage to the factory by an Allied air raid prompted the committee's visit and the subsequent decision to move the prisoners: "As a result the three hundred female prisoners who had been deployed to increase production could no longer be effectively used and were again made available for reassignment by the deployment office."<sup>12</sup> However, the women did not return to the Sachsenhausen deployment post but were sent to the Pertrix-owned Akkumulatorenfabrik (Battery Factory) AG Hagen in Niederschöneweide in the Berlin district of Köpenick. The Niederschöneweide (Pertrix) subcamp first appears in the change of status reports on September 20, 1944, with the notation "formerly Zehlendorf." This leads to the conclusion that the transfer of the women to the subcamp at Niederschöneweide was not merely the transfer of a group of prisoners but of the whole subcamp to a new location. Those SS overseers known by name, however, were transferred to another subcamp. Most of them ended up at the Neukölln subcamp in Berlin. Only the senior guard among the SS overseers accompanied the prisoners to Niederschöneweide.

As a result, Zehlendorf was the most short-lived of the Sachsenhausen subcamps: according to the SS files, the camp at the spinning mill existed for just under three weeks.



The SS overseers at the Zehlendorf subcamp twice preoccupied German courts after the war. The SS overseer Frieda Schweinhardt was taken prisoner by Soviet units at the end of the war and interned in many different Soviet special camps (*Sonderlager*) until her trial in 1950. In one of the “Waldheim Trials” held in the German Democratic Republic, she was charged as one of the main accused and sentenced to 20 years’ imprisonment and confiscation of property.<sup>13</sup> She was released early from prison in 1955 and moved to the Federal Republic of Germany, where she was not the subject of any further charges.

In 1971, the State Attorney in Cologne investigated the guards of the Sachsenhausen subcamps. As part of the investigation, assistance was sought from the People’s Republic of Poland in interviewing survivors. However, the investigations did not result in any proceedings, as there was no evidence of any homicides.

**SOURCES** This contribution is based on archival documents found in five archives. Of particular importance are the Veränderungsmeldungen for female prisoners of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Copies are to be found in the AG-S. The originals are located in the CAFSSRF. The war diary of the Armaments Inspectorate III is held in BA-MA and provides details on the history of the formation of the Zehlendorf subcamp. The BA-L (formerly ZdL) holds the results of the investigations by the Sta. Köln into the subcamp’s former overseers. The collection contains witness statements by former Polish prisoners and by former overseers. The only court judgment relating to the subcamp was made by the LG Chemnitz and is held in the BStU.

Alexander Korb  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Erlass (Decree) No. 98781440, May 13, 1944, KTB der Rüstungs-Inspektion III (Rüln III Ib), April 1, 1944–June 30, 1944, BA-MA, RW 20-3/B.

2. Ibid., p. 27.

3. Ibid., p. 30.

4. Stärke- und Veränderungsmeldung 1944, AG-S, D 9A.

5. Statements Cecylia-Martha B., September 24, 1971, and Janina P., June 11, 1971, BA-L, ZdL, IV 406 AR 1886/68. For the transport of July 22, 1944, see Danuta Czech, *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939–1945* (Reinbek, 1989), p. 861.

6. Statement Janiana W., August 12, 1971, ZdL, IV 406 AR 1886/68. On August 24, 1944, a transport of 434 prisoners left Auschwitz for Ravensbrück. See APMO, Mat. RO., vol. VIIId., p. 62.

7. Statement Frieda Schwerter, divorcée, Schweinhardt, May 21, 1970, ZdL, IV 406 AR 645/69.

8. Statement Janiana W., 7.6.1971, ZdL, IV 406 AR 1886/68.

9. Ibid., Statements Janina P. and Lydia R.

10. Ibid., Statement Cecylia-Marta B.

11. Ibid., Statement Janina P.

12. BA-MA, RW 20-3/B, p. 114.

13. Judgment of LG Chemnitz, June 2, 1950, BStU, HA IX/11, RHE West 609, p. 40.

## BERNAU

According to a schedule held at the Sachsenhausen Memorial Museum, there was a work detachment at the SD-Führerschule (Officer School) Bernau from the summer of 1943 to the spring of 1945. Bernau is about 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) from Berlin. There were up to 150 male prisoners located at Bernau. However, neither the initial list prepared after the war nor a master’s thesis written on the Sachsenhausen subcamps refers to the camp at Bernau. The camp commandant’s office does not refer to the Bernau camp in the change of status reports (*Veränderungsmeldungen*).

SS-Obersturmführer Carl Rathgeber was in command of the Sipo and SD-Führerschule in Bernau from 1942 to 1944. While stationed in Bernau, he was made a police inspector. He died in 1964. The purpose of the school was to train SD noncommissioned officers for service in special detachments in the East.

There was a Sachsenhausen work detachment in Bernau as early as the autumn of 1941. Prisoners were sent to work in a large park that included orchards and gardens; there they picked and stored apples. During bad weather the prisoners had to do demolition work at a summer residence, which was located on an island in a small lake in the park and was said to have belonged to an Englishman. There were 10 prisoners based here. They were guarded by three to four SS men. The prisoners were brought to Bernau from Sachsenhausen every day by truck. Another report stated that in 1941–1942 there was a bakery detachment (Kommando Bäckerei) in Bernau. German prisoner Karl Kunz was the foreman. At the end of 1942, there is a record of Polish prisoner Stefan Oblucki from the Bernau work detachment being treated in the Sachsenhausen infirmary.

A political prisoner has stated that he was based at the Bernau Supply Office (Versorgungsamt in Bernau) from mid-1943 to the end of March 1944. He also referred to that detachment as the Bernau construction yard (Bernau Bauhof). Most probably, the detachment had by this time become a subcamp to accommodate the prisoners at their workplace. In the summer of 1943, another prisoner arrived at Bernau. There were by this time 25 prisoners in the Bernau Castle Park (Bernau Schlosspark). They were accommodated on the first floor in the old castle.<sup>1</sup> The whole castle area was surrounded by barbed wire and mesh. The prisoners worked in the castle nursery, glassing a hothouse and cleaning the fishpond and the park. The guards were supplied by the SD-Führerschule. Head of construction was Josef Decker, a so-called Bible student (Bibelforscher, i.e., a Jehovah’s Witness) prisoner. The SS block leader Gustav Sorge stated that about a hundred prisoners were used as construction labor at the SD-Führerschule in Bernau,<sup>2</sup> Germans, Poles, Dutch, and Russian prisoners were deployed there. Later the same detachment worked at Schloss Friedenthal, another Sachsenhausen work detachment.

A Norwegian prisoner stated that there was a carrier pigeon detachment based in Bernau from the beginning of

October 1943. A German prisoner also talks of “a carrier pigeon farm” at Bernau.

There was apparently a group of Communist prisoners in Bernau. At the beginning of May 1944, a special commission of the Gestapo carrying out investigations in Sachsenhausen placed a prisoner agent in the Bernau subcamp to watch over the Communists who “were forming a cell and holding informal meetings.”<sup>3</sup>

As late as the beginning of January 1945, there is a record of the prisoner Johann Idzikowski of the Bernau work detachment being treated in the infirmary at Sachsenhausen.

According to the few statements by former prisoners, there were no deaths and no mistreatment of prisoners at Bernau. Investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) ceased for this reason.

**SOURCES** There are no secondary sources on Bernau. All the sources are in AG-S or BA-L.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-L, IV 406 AR 523/67, p. 46, Statement Georg Brinkmann, March 24, 1969.

2. AG-S, JD 2, Bd. 43, p. 88, Statement Gustav Sorge, May 7, 1957.

3. AG-S, D 30 A, Bd. 7, p. 6, Sonderkommando Aktennotiz, May 4, 1944.

## BIESENTHAL

Biesenthal was registered as a subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp as early as 1949 in a listing of the International Tracing Service (ITS). However, the sources are unknown.

According to lists at the Sachsenhausen Memorial from July 1, 1944, there was an outside detail of 150 men at a provisional police camp in Biesenthal, 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) northeast of Berlin.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the prisoners were also deployed at a training area. The former commandant of Sachsenhausen said after the war that 100 to 150 men had been deployed by the police at Biesenthal.<sup>2</sup>

A former prisoner of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp declared after the war in an undated document on Biesenthal: “construction detail police school, approximately eighty men, adequate food initially, later bad.”<sup>3</sup>

In the documents of the East German General State Attorney’s Office, the SS office in Biesenthal is also referred to as a police training camp. Some 100 prisoners were supposedly deployed there.<sup>4</sup> This information originates from a publication of the East German Anti-Fascist Committee that had been drafted by former prisoners.

According to the change of status reports of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, 110 male prisoners were present in Biesenthal at the end of December 1944; on February 12, 1945, there were 147. The Biesenthal subcamp is mentioned

for the last time in the daily statistics of the main camp on April 9, 1945. The number of prisoners then in Biesenthal was 129. Around this time, the subcamp must have been closed.<sup>5</sup>

As the chief of staff to the command of the Berlin Municipal Police, SS-Brigadeführer and Generalmajor der Polizei Walter Abraham was in charge of the police school at Biesenthal.

The leader of the camp from November 1944 was SS-Unterscharführer Oskar Hoffmann, originally born in Rehau and a porcelain painter by profession. According to his own account, he had previously been leader of the Werder and Ketschendorf subcamps, probably between January 1941 and March 1943. [We were unable to find any record of a subcamp in Ketschendorf.—Ed.]

Hoffmann was first detained after 1945 in the British internment camp of Esterwegen. In a written procedure in accordance with the Law Concerning the Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism of March 6, 1946, he was ranked as “minimally incriminated” (*Minderbelasteter*) in January 1948 by the camp denazification court at the U.S. internment camp Nürnberg-Langwasser. He was sentenced to a half-year’s probation and ordered to make a 500 Reichsmark (RM) reparations payment.<sup>6</sup> He also received written confirmation of the conclusion deduced from information from former prisoners that as a detail leader he had not committed any crimes against humanity, including in Biesenthal. The court released Hoffmann from the internment camp with immediate effect. Hoffmann died in 1961 in Wunsiedel.

From 1967, the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg investigated possible crimes in the Biesenthal subcamp, but investigations were closed without result in 1972.<sup>7</sup> East Germany also processed a judicial assistance request from the ZdL in Cologne with no results.<sup>8</sup>

**SOURCES** There is no literature concerning the Biesenthal subcamp. The subcamp is listed in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 261.

Most of the records can be found at the BA-L and at the AG-S, and a few can be found at IfZ, BA-B, and BLHA.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Mihaela Pittman

## NOTES

1. AG-S, D.A. 5147: Uwe Hofschläger, “Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen” (Diplomarbeit, Freie Universität Berlin, 1997). See also Liste Nationale Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Sachsenhausen, n.d.

2. BA-B, Film 42053, NI-280, statement by Anton Kaindl, June 15, 1946; see also Zusammenstellung, n.d., BLHA, Pr-Br. Rep. 35H Nr. 8/1.

3. Zusammenstellung, n.d., Walter Nowak, IFZ, Ed 106/77.
4. BA-B, DP 3/2015.
5. AG-S, JSU 1, vol. 99–101.
6. AG-S, LAG X/3, Esterwegen list of the interned SS members of Sachsenhausen concentration camp.
7. BA-L, IV 406 AR 734/67.
8. BA-B, DP 3/2015.

## BRANDENBURG (HADEL)

The subcamp of Brandenburg (Havel) was first recorded in the SS daily reports with 30 prisoners on July 9, 1941, and 25 prisoners on October 29.<sup>1</sup> As of February 1944, between 50 and 65 prisoners were regularly deployed at Brandenburg, and in February 1945, between 75 and 85 were reported there. The camp was last mentioned in the daily reports on April 9, 1945.<sup>2</sup> According to prisoners' statements, they were not transferred to the main camp after the subcamp was closed but rather were marched from Brandenburg directly to Mecklenburg in the direction of Wittstock. The Red Army liberated them at Rathenow.

Other sources record that the camp existed between May 13, 1941, and April 18, 1945, at the SS-Military Depot (Zeugamt) in Brandenburg and that it had 30 prisoners.<sup>3</sup> The Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) at Ludwigsburg indicated in its investigation documents that the camp was first mentioned on March 13, 1941, with 30 prisoners.<sup>4</sup> The former commandant of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, Anton Kaindl, stated during an interrogation by the British that 50 to 70 prisoners were deployed at the SS clothing depot in Brandenburg.

The prisoners worked in the captured materials store of the SS Brandenburg military depot and had to organize the stock, draw up lists of the existing materials, and prepare them for delivery. This included SS uniform equipment. Initially, this work was carried out on the upper floors of a cell-block wing in the Old Prison, which was the transfer and storage location for all equipment and clothing for the Waffen-SS and SS offices in Berlin.

The site of the subcamp had a long history. One of the earliest SS concentration camps had existed in the Old Prison from as early as August 1933 until February 2, 1934. About 600 prisoners had been imprisoned there in inadequate, unhygienic conditions. Communists were the principal victims of this camp. Some of them died under torture. Between February and October 1940, over 9,500 people were murdered in a gas chamber on the Old Prison grounds during the "euthanasia" operation (*Aktion T4*) that operated under the cover name State Care Institute (Landes-Pflegeanstalt) Brandenburg on the Havel.

Around 1943, a new SS clothing depot was opened half an hour's march away in a silo on a peninsula of the Havel.

French, Polish, German, Dutch, and Soviet prisoners as well as Luxembourg policeman Norbert Karels, who was killed at the beginning of 1945 in Sachsenhausen, were de-

ployed at Brandenburg. One of the German prisoners was Jewish. In August 1942, a group of Dutch prisoners from the Speer detail from Sachsenhausen was brought to Brandenburg. The SS released the prisoner Martinus Tetters from Brandenburg on February 2, 1945, and the prisoner Joh. Szi-zhinsky on March 19, 1945.

In February 1944, Polish prisoner Zygfried Siminisc tried to break into a nearby camp where a winter aid and captured goods depot was housed; on February 10, 1944, he was sent for half a year to the "shoe-testing" (*Schuhläufer*) punishment detail at the main camp. On July 28, 1944, German prisoner Heinrich Busch was also assigned for unspecified reasons to the Schuhläufer punishment detail at the main camp in connection with the investigations of the Gestapo special commission at the Sachsenhausen camp.

The prisoners' food was supplied by the clothing depot and possibly also by the Brandenburg-Görden Prison. Sick prisoners were treated in the main camp's infirmary. The living conditions were described as pleasant compared to Sachsenhausen. It is reported that soccer and boxing were allowed on Sundays. The prisoners were allowed to grow their hair and wore good shoes. The senior prisoner at the camp was German Willi Franz Rojek.

The prisoners were housed at their workplace on the first floor of the Old Prison in Brandenburg. Two prisoners slept in each cell.

Detail leader of the Brandenburg camp was SS-Oberscharführer Paul Samorey; his staff included SS-Unterscharführer Otto, SS-Unterscharführer Heinz, SS-Schütze Josef Becker, SS-Unterscharführer Kurt Einecke, SS-Sturmmann Josef Pay, and SS-Schütze Josef Mörtelbauer or Würtelbauer.

There are no reports of abuse by those responsible for the concentration camp prisoners. Prisoners confirm that the camp leader Samorey treated them correctly. A Dutch prisoner was supposedly punished for an act of theft by being made to go up and down a staircase repeatedly while carrying a sandbag. However, in March 1945, the leader of the clothing depot, SS-Hauptscharführer Edwin Fritz, a musician by trade, shot seven Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) in the neck in front of the concentration camp prisoners in the yard of the Old Prison because they had stolen food after an air raid. For a time the leader of the newly constructed SS clothing and equipment factory in Brandenburg was SS-Scharführer Friedrich Bloos.

After the war, guards SS-Rottenführer Ludwig Pella and SS-Unterscharführer Otto Schlenker, photographer SS-Hauptscharführer Bernhard Walter, and detail leader SS-Unterscharführer Paul Samorey were imprisoned in the British internment camp Esterwegen.<sup>5</sup> Samorey had been taken prisoner by the Soviets on May 3, 1945, but he had managed to escape. The British released him at the end of December 1947.<sup>6</sup>

The chief of the clothing depot, Fritz, was also imprisoned in the British internment camps at Fallingbowl and Sandbowl, and he died while still under investigation on January



5, 1948.<sup>7</sup> Another guard, Albert Andree,<sup>8</sup> and a member of the clothing depot, Kurt Einecke,<sup>9</sup> were also interned in British camps.

Former member of the SS clothing camp Anton Grössing was briefly in Soviet captivity, from which he was released due to his inability to work; he was rearrested in the American zone. He was granted amnesty in April 1948 by the Fürstentum Brandenburg denazification court after being interned for 11 months in the Dachau concentration camp.<sup>10</sup> The temporary leader of the newly constructed SS clothing and equipment factory in Brandenburg, Bloos, was also interned after the war, first in the U.S. internment camp Ludwigsburg, then in Moosburg until 1947.

The ZdL investigated possible crimes in the Brandenburg subcamp without result from 1967 until 1972.<sup>11</sup> In 1968, East Germany processed without result a request of judicial assistance from the main office in Cologne.<sup>12</sup>

**SOURCES** Except for the cited volume from the Brandenburg records archive, there is no literature specifically on the Brandenburg subcamp. Almost all archive sources are from the BA-L, the AG-S, the PRO, and BA-B.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Mihaela Pittman

## NOTES

1. AG-S, D 30 A, T. 2, pp. 60, 73.
2. AG-S, JSU 1, vols. 100–101.
3. AG-S, D.A. 5147: Uwe Hofschläger, “Funktion und Bedeutung der Außenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen” (Diplomarbeit, Freie Universität Berlin, 1997).
4. BA-L, IV 406 AR 732/67, presents results of the investigation concerning the subcamp Brandenburg (Havel) from August 10, 1968, n.p.
5. List of the former members of the headquarters staff of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp interned in the British camp CIC Esterwegen, probably 1945, different records; AG-S, LAG X/3.
6. BA-L, IV 406 AR 732/67, p. 35, Statement Paul Samorey, November 26, 1968.
7. BA-L, IV 406 AR 732/67, p. 37, Statement Paul Samorey, November 26, 1968.
8. PRO, London, WO 309/1759.
9. PRO, London, WO 309/1764.
10. BA-L, IV 406 AR 732/67, B1. 43, Statement Anton Gössing from March 2, 1969.
11. BA-L, IV 406 AR 732/67.
12. BA-B/SAPMO, DP 3/1968.

## BRIESEN [AKA FALKENHAGEN]

The National Socialist authorities opened the camp of Briesen on October 26, 1943. It was a subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp whose prisoners had to work at a large construction site nearby. The regime planned an underground factory for the production of the poison gas Sarin. The industrial complex received the name Turon. However,

the mass production of poison gas failed because of a shortage of raw materials. Therefore, the newly built factory produced alternative chemical products necessary for the German armaments industry.

A company called Luranil-Baugesellschaft GmbH-Baustelle Falkenhagen, Briesen (Mark) was the builder of the planned factory building. Luranil was a subsidiary company of IG Farben with headquarters in Ludwigshafen am Rhein and assigned the construction project to two regional operating companies, Dyckerhoff & Widmann and Heinemann & Busse.

The construction site and the subcamp were placed in a forest next to a country road connecting the Brandenburg villages of Briesen and Falkenhagen, east of Berlin and close to the towns of Fürstenwalde an der Spree and Frankfurt an der Oder. Some sources called the subcamp Briesen, others Falkenhagen. An explanation for this variation can be found in the number of inhabitants of both communities: although closer to the small village of Falkenhagen, Briesen was larger and therefore better known.

The prisoners had to work under the supervision of foremen and were led by skilled workers. The authorities at the construction site subdivided them into 14 commandos (Kommandos)—13 construction commandos and 1 commando for metalworking. SS guards including two dog handlers observed the daily 500-meter (547-yard) march of the prisoners between the construction site and subcamp.

The camp was made up of two parts: one area was occupied by the SS, and another area was allocated to the prisoners. Both parts were divided by a wire-mesh fence. In addition, the prison camp was surrounded by two electric barbed-wire fences and secured with four watchtowers. A footpath ran between the two fences, enabling the guards to patrol. Furthermore, the whole forest was surrounded by a fence that was 2 meters (6.6 feet) high.

The prisoners lived in five to seven wooden huts—German and Jewish prisoners in separate huts—and slept in wooden bunk beds. They used a shower room with 25 to 30 shower facilities, as did the guards.

The part of the camp used by the SS had an orderly room, living space for the guards, some working areas, and the camp kitchen. The Sachsenhausen concentration camp delivered food once a week.

The SS counted about 500 prisoners on February 7, 1945. A maximum number of prisoners was reached with 700 to 800 persons.<sup>1</sup> Most of them were Soviets, Poles, southern Slavs, and French. There were about 13 Jewish, 10 Dutch, and a minimum of 7 German prisoners. The German prisoners were in most cases so-called prisoner-functionaries (*Funktionshäftlinge*). They represented a connecting link between the subcamp command and the other prisoners.

The first chief of the subcamp was SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Hermann Heidrich, who was transferred to the subcamp Oranienburg (Heinkel-Werke) at the beginning of 1944. His successor was SS-Untersturmführer Helmut Sturmhövel. He was transferred to the subcamp Berlin-Lichterfelde

on March 1944. The only ranking SS member who stayed in the Briesen subcamp during the whole period of its existence was SS-Unterscharführer Alfred Braun. He was the labor service leader (*Arbeitsdienstleiter*).

The 30 to 40 guards—including two dog handlers—were part of the 2nd SS-Wachkompanie Oranienburg and later part of the 7th SS-Wachkompanie Berlin-Lichterfelde.<sup>2</sup> They evacuated the subcamp after the Red Army had started an offensive near the town of Küstrin at the beginning of February 1945. The first deportation train, with about half the prisoners, left Briesen on February 4, 1945, and reached Sachsenhausen on February 7. The last deportation train changed direction and brought prisoners to the Buchenwald concentration camp at the beginning of February 1945. A truck transport with sick prisoners left the Briesen subcamp with the same destination at the end of January 1945.<sup>3</sup> Finally, the authorities evacuated the whole area on April 30, 1945.

Eyewitnesses remembered the murder of a young Sinti (Gypsy) because of his escape attempt in December 1944.<sup>4</sup> There was only one interviewed person by the German fact-finding committee who talked about more than one murder at the subcamp. His name was Doose, and he was a former guard. However, further investigations could not find indications of more than one murder. German authorities suspected Doose of being a liar.<sup>5</sup>

**SOURCES** Primary documentation on the Briesen subcamp is located in AG-S, especially in the Briesen box, which contains a collection of testimonies collected by ZdL (available at BA-L), under file IV 406 AR-Z 40/71.

Alexander Jossifidis

## NOTES

1. BA-L, ZdL Bd. I, pp. 66, 162, 366, Ergebnis der Vorermittlungen betreffend das Nebenlager Briesen/Falkenhagen (KL Sachsenhausen), March 24, 1971 (IV 406 AR-Z 40/71).

2. Ibid., pp. 21, 66, 158.

3. Ibid., p. 203.

4. Ibid., p. 695.

5. Ibid., pp. 21–22.

## DAMMSMÜHLE

Dammsmühle Castle is located in Schönwalde in the district of Niederbarnim. According to documents, 25 prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp were located there in a labor detail on January 2, 1943; by July 3, 1943, there were only 20.

The camp Dammsmühle-Schönwalde is mentioned in the book on the Sachsenhausen concentration camp published in 1967 in East Germany by the Antifascist Resistance Fighters' Committee. The number of prisoners is estimated at 25. The Sachsenhausen Memorial indicates January 2, 1943, as the date of the establishment of the subcamp and July 3, 1943, as the closing date with 27 male prisoners supposedly housed at

the subcamp, which served the SD officer school in Dammsmühle Castle.

An older list held by the Sachsenhausen Memorial indicates August 1942 as the date of establishment, with 25 male prisoners deployed to do construction and excavation work.

According to the recollections of prominent former Sachsenhausen concentration camp prisoner, Communist Willy Sägebrecht, he arrived in Dammsmühle at the beginning of 1943 with 35 other prisoners.<sup>1</sup> Some 28 of his group had been imprisoned in Sachsenhausen for membership in the Communist Party, another 4 as criminal prisoners.

The former guard at Dammsmühle, Romanian-German Viktor Halicki, also confirms that about 40 prisoners were under guard in Dammsmühle.

At the time of the Nazi Party's seizure of power, Dammsmühle Castle belonged to British industrialist Harry Goodwin Hart, who was married to a Jew. During the absence of its owners, the Berlin Supreme Court awarded the castle, then designated as "enemy property," to a new owner, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, who acquired it after a forced sale. The chief of the Security Police and of the SD, Reinhard Heydrich, was supposedly based there while he planned and led the faked attack on the Gleiwitz radio transmitter station.

The prisoners were deployed exclusively in the maintenance of the castle grounds and the garden. They ran a garden business with greenhouses and a small farm of 8 to 10 hectares (20 to 25 acres). Due to a lack of modern equipment, they worked mainly by hand. The farm produce was intended for the SS-Main Office in Berlin. At times individual prisoners would be deployed in ditch-clearing work in Basdorf and at the Schönwalde sawmill.

Rumors in Dammsmühle and the vicinity incorrectly associated the subcamp with the counterfeiting workshop in Sachsenhausen.

The food was delivered once a week from Sachsenhausen. The prisoners had to cook themselves.

The SS in Dammsmühle seem to have refrained from the otherwise usual harassment of the prisoners. The group around the Communist Sägebrecht supposedly even sang Communist songs and the "Moorsoldatenlied" (an anti-Hitler song written by a prisoner) on the occasion of a cabaret evening they had organized.

Initially, the prisoners were housed in an old building in an area that had been deforested years before; later they put up new accommodation barracks there. Sägebrecht acted as foreman. Together with Heinz Junge and Otto Heyer, he is supposed to have founded a party group among the Communist prisoners, enabling them to enlist the criminal prisoners in resistance work and to fend off the camp leader's attempts to divide the inmates. They also seem to have managed to obtain newspapers as well as other news about the situation in Germany through contact with certain guards. The group around Sägebrecht also supposedly threw their own anti-Hitler leaflets from a truck while driving through Bernau.

Heyer took over the position of foreman after Sägebrecht was transferred to the infirmary in Sachsenhausen for treatment in April–May 1943.

The camp was guarded by members of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA), mostly SS noncommissioned officers. The leader of the detail was an SS-Obersturmführer. Only three guards are known by name—Mathias Roth, Erich Dräger, and Viktor Halicki, who said that he did his service in Dammsmühle and then was ordered to go to the front on the Oder River.

The date when the camp was finally closed is not documented. There is proof that office employees of the “RSHA Berlin, Dammsmühle subcamp” were still working at the Dammsmühle Castle until October 1944.

The Central Office in Cologne investigated possible crimes in the Dammsmühle subcamp and requested judicial assistance from East Germany. Investigations were carried out, and it was concluded that the Dammsmühle subcamp had been established for the commander of the SD-Officer School in Bernau, SS-Obersturmführer Karl Rathgeber, and that he had apparently already died. The former prisoners Erich Plumenbohm, Heinz Junge, Johann Petri, and Klaus Pieper characterized Dammsmühle as an especially good detail in which there had been no ill-treatment of prisoners.<sup>2</sup>

**SOURCES** There is little literature dealing directly with the Dammsmühle subcamp except for the booklet by Horst Hup, *Schloss Dammsmühle* (Bernau, n.d.). The subcamp is listed in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 576; in KaW-DDR, ed., *Damals in Sachsenhausen* (Berlin [East], 1967), p. 61; and in the older Gedenkstätte Sachsenhausen, *Übersicht über die Entwicklung der Aussenkommandos des KZ Sachsenhausen 1940–1945* (Sachsenhausen, n.d.).

Most of the primary sources come from the archive of the AG-S and from the BA-L. Willy Sägebrecht published his memoirs of Dammsmühle as *Nicht Amboss, sondern Hammer sein: Erinnerungen* (Berlin, 1968).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Mihaela Pittman

## NOTES

1. Willy Sägebrecht, *Nicht Amboss, sondern Hammer sein: Erinnerungen* (Berlin, 1968), p. 277. His statement “in early 1944” is a mistake.

2. BA-B, DP 3/2015.

## DÖBERITZ

The Döberitz subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp was first mentioned in 1949 in a catalog of the International Tracing Service (ITS). The information relied on the details provided by the Belgian Tracing Service. A document published in 1969 by the ITS mentions that prisoners were

deployed in the construction and maintenance of military facilities.<sup>1</sup> According to the details held at the Sachsenhausen Memorial, the subcamp was established on June 1, 1944. About 100 prisoners were deployed at an SS military depot, at a depot of the Luftwaffe, and at the Wehrmacht camp at Dallgow.<sup>2</sup> The former commandant of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp stated after the war that the prisoners from Döberitz, about 50 to 100 men, were deployed working for the Luftwaffe. A former prisoner of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp referred to labor deployment at the Döberitz subcamp as follows: “some kind of SS military depot, camp work, only forty-five men.”<sup>3</sup> A Dutch document lists 150 prisoners working at the army facilities.

Among the prisoners there appear to have been French, Polish, Soviet, and possibly Belgians. Sick prisoners were transferred to the infirmary at Sachsenhausen. This is documented, for example, in the cases of French prisoner Georges Tessiers and Polish prisoner Stefan Czajkowski in January 1945.

According to the change of status reports of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, there were 60 prisoners by mid-January 1945 and 50 prisoners by the end of March in Döberitz. The subcamp, by then containing 40 prisoners, was closed on April 5, 1945.<sup>4</sup> Shortly before this date prisoner Wladimir Maschenski, registered as a “BV” prisoner (*Berufsverbrecher*—a classification meaning a criminal under “preventive arrest”), escaped on March 23, 1945.

From 1967 the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) at Ludwigsburg investigated the Biesenthal subcamp for possible crimes, but it closed the proceedings without result in 1972.<sup>5</sup> East Germany processed a request of judicial assistance from the Central Office in Cologne, also without result.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** This subcamp is listed in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 261.

Besides the information from the ITS lists from 1949 and 1969, there exist only a few sources held at AG-S. Other sources for this camp are held at BA-L, BLHA, and IfZ.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Mihaela Pittman

## NOTES

1. BA-L, IV 406 AR 735/67, p. 11; see also Zusammenstellung, n.d., BLHA, Pr-Br. Rep. 35H Nr. 8/1.

2. Conference folder workshop SBG, ed., “Die Aussenlager der Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen und Ravensbrück” (Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Ravensbrück, October 17–18, 2003); see also AG-S, D.A. 5147: Uwe Hofschläger: “Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen” (Diplomarbeit, Freie Universität Berlin, 1997); and Liste Nationale Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Sachsenhausen, n.d.



3. Zusammenstellung, n.d.; Walter Nowak, IfZ, München Ed 106/77.

4. AG-S, JSU 1, Vols. 99–101.

5. BA-L, IV 406 AR 735/67.

6. BA-B, DP 3/1916.

## DRÖGEN

In the spring of 1941 a subcamp of Sachsenhausen was established close to Ravensbrück, near Fürstenberg/Havel, at Drögen. In 1949, the International Tracing Service (ITS) put the date of the establishment of the camp, based on official documents, as May 2, 1941. The number of prisoners was reported to be 156. A former prisoner, however, has stated that he was transferred on April 1, 1941, from Sachsenhausen to Drögen. The Sachsenhausen change reports (*Veränderungsmeldungen*) refer to the camp for the first time on April 15, 1941, with a complement of 160 prisoners.<sup>1</sup> On August 1, 1941, there were 230 prisoners; at the end of October, 270; and at the end of December, 253.<sup>2</sup> The camp, which eventually held up to 350 male prisoners, only existed as a Sachsenhausen subcamp until November 30, 1942; then it was subordinated to Ravensbrück.<sup>3</sup> According to an overview of all Sachsenhausen subcamps issued in 1990 by the Sachsenhausen Memorial, the concentration camp prisoners in Drögen were used to construct a Security Service (SD) school.

Originally, it was planned to establish an explosives factory in Drögen, for which a forced labor camp would be built. In February 1941, it was half complete. The explosives factory, however, was never finished. During the same period, there were plans for an SS and SD school for the Security Police (Sipo) in the same location. The first building and facilities originated from the expansion and new construction in the new project. The prisoners constructed, for example, a command office, an entrance area, a roll-call square, typical brick buildings for housing, as well as schoolrooms, a sports field, a shooting range, and remodeled garages. A few prisoners worked in the officers' mess and as barbers in the police school. Others had to work for SS officers on their private property, working in and tending to the gardens.

Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) were also used in the police school, but they were not held as prisoners in the Drögen subcamp. It is thought that a few of them were shot by SS men in the police school, in a sand pit, not far from the laundry, which functioned as a shooting range.<sup>4</sup> Another, a Russian civilian, was shot by an SS-Hauptscharführer after escaping and being recaptured close to the camp. Before being shot, he was held for days in a cellar in the police school.<sup>5</sup>

In the summer of 1941, the personnel from the Border Police School (Grenzpolizeischule) Pretzsch were transferred to Drögen. The expansion of the school by the prisoners continued.

When the prisoners were constructing the sports field, they had to carry 3 cubic meters (106 cubic feet) of sand each hour in tipcarts. Accidents often occurred as a result of the

excessive work demands. For example, when removing gravel from a nearby gravel pit, prisoners were occasionally buried alive under the gravel and died. While working, the prisoners were guarded by members of a police unit under the command of an SS officer. The SS was said to have treated Poles and Jews in a particularly brutal manner.

The prisoners, mostly German political prisoners, Czech students, Soviet civilians, and Dutch, were accommodated in five permanent houses on the police school grounds. The accommodation was fenced in with barbed wire. It is thought that there may also have been foreign Jewish prisoners in Drögen. If so, they were few in number and were later transferred to the main camp. A few Jewish Germans were also prisoners in Drögen; they were, possibly with other Jewish prisoners, transferred in October 1942 to Auschwitz. In September 1942, prisoners were transferred from the Ravensbrück concentration camp to Drögen to work inside the school, for example, laying tiles (as well as cleaning and other jobs in the school).

The food was described as “relatively good.” It was delivered from Ravensbrück and cooked in the police school's kitchen. Sick prisoners were transferred to the main camp for treatment.

Around 180 prisoners, which probably included all Jewish prisoners, were transferred in October 1942, possibly as a result of the camp's dissolution, to Auschwitz. Around 40 remained in Drögen.<sup>6</sup>

The camp leader (Lagerführer) was initially SS-Oberscharführer Hermann Skopnik. He was replaced in June 1941 by SS-Hauptsturmführer Richard Bugdalle. He later returned to Drögen. He was arrested at the end of 1942 for theft and giving favors to prisoners and was sentenced in 1943 by the SS and Police Court (SS- und Polizeigericht) Berlin-Dahlem to three years' penal servitude. For a time, SS-Unterscharführer Erwin Seifert was sent to Drögen as camp leader. Bugdalle's successor was SS-Führer Schröder.

The head of the police school was SS-Oberscharführer Dr. Hans Trummler. The camp was guarded by a police unit, led by SS-Oberscharführer Bauer. The camp elder (Lagersältester) was a criminal, probably Eduard Besch. Political prisoner Hermann Felix was Kapo. Felix had developed a poor reputation when he was in the main camp and was called “Mad Felix.” From March 1942, he was an official orderly in the guards' rooms and was permitted to wear a uniform without markings. After 1945, he remained in the Soviet occupation zone, was convicted in 1946 for making anti-Soviet statements, and was held in a number of camps in the Soviet occupation zone, finally being released from a camp in the Soviet Union in 1953.<sup>7</sup> Another prisoner foreman was political prisoner Curt Fiesel, who was well known as someone who liked to hit others. According to others, the prisoners Felix, Besch, and Schmitz alternated as camp elder.

Although there were many cases of mistreatment, especially by the Kapo Felix, there were no deaths caused by the SS. However, one prisoner, a Pole, died after being mistreated

by SS-Unterscharführer Seifert with the broken shaft of a pick axe in the camp's office. The Polish prisoner had been reported by the construction company Riechling in Neustrelitz for unsatisfactory work and was severely beaten by Seifert. The prisoner died the next morning.

It is also reported that the temporary camp leader, Bugdalle, mistreated the prisoners, especially Poles and Jews, by beating them. A Neustrelitz firm claimed that he reported the prisoners who had not worked satisfactorily to the Kapo, who then beat them.

At the end of 1942, there was only one area left on the site to be built. Once the school for 500 to 700 trainees commenced operations, around 30 concentration camp prisoners remained in Drögen to work in the kitchen and the gardens and to undertake repairs. It was now under the control of Ravensbrück. (The camp may have operated as a subcamp of Ravensbrück until May 8, 1945. There is no information about the fate of this smaller group of inmates.)

The first camp leader, Skopnik, fell into British hands at the end of the war and at the end of 1945 returned to his family in Fürstenberg/Havel. He was arrested by the Soviets and questioned as to who was responsible for the Sipo school. He was later deported and in 1949 sentenced to 25 years in the Soviet Union for membership in the SS and espionage but not for crimes committed in Drögen. He returned from the Soviet Union in 1955.<sup>8</sup>

The head of the police school, SS-Oberscharführer Trummeler, was executed on October 22, 1948, in Landsberg.<sup>9</sup> The occasional camp leader, Bugdalle, was sentenced in 1960 by the München I Schwurgericht (Court of Assizes) to life imprisonment for homicides committed in Sachsenhausen.<sup>10</sup> In 1968, the former camp leader Seifert was charged with the murder of a Polish prisoner in May 1942 in Drögen. He was arrested and in the so-called Kaiser Proceedings was sentenced to life imprisonment on April 20, 1970, in Munich.<sup>11</sup>

Between 1969 and 1972, the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg investigated Drögen as a Ravensbrück subcamp. The investigations ceased as there was a lack of evidence to support the prosecution of any crimes. The German Democratic Republic assisted the Central Office in Cologne, at its request, but without any noteworthy results.

The ZdL also investigated the murder of the Soviet POWs. The results were handed over in 1970 to the Frankfurt am Main State Prosecutor.

**SOURCES** There have been no specific publications on the Drögen subcamp except for the essays by Jens Banach, "Die Rolle der Schulen der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD: Einführung" (pp. 58–81), and Florian von Buttlar, "Entstehungs- und Baugeschichte" (pp. 88–93), both published in Florian von Buttlar, Stefanie Endlich, and Annette Leo, eds., *Fürstenberg-Drögen: Schichten eines verlassenen Ortes* (Berlin, 1994). The subcamp is listed in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951;

repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zwei-tausendeins, 1990), p. 576.

The primary source material is mostly held in the BA-L and AG-S.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-S, D 30 A, Bd. 2, p. 9.
2. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2949/66, p. 60, Veränderungsmeldung des KZ Sachsenhausen, August 1–2, 1941; AG-S, D 30 A, Bd. 2, p. 75; BA-L, IV 406 AR 2949/66, p. 237, Abschlussverfügung, September 30, 1968.
3. AG-S, D.A. 5147: Uwe Hofschläger: "Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen" (Diplomarbeit, Freien Universität Berlin, 1997). See also Tagungsmappe Workshop, SBG, ed., "Die Aussenlager der Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen und Ravensbrück" (Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Ravensbrück, October 17–18, 2003).
4. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2949/66, p. 191, Vernehmung Paul Schneider, February 16, 1968.
5. Ibid., p. 321, Vernehmung Otto Krause, March 18, 1970.
6. Ibid., p. 36, Vernehmung Otto Krause, March 30, 1967. See also AG-S, D 30 A/10/2A, pp. 38, 112.
7. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2949/66, p. 85e, Auszüge aus der Entschädigungsakte von Hermann Felix.
8. Ibid., p. 149, Vernehmung Hermann Skopnik, December 1, 1967.
9. Ibid., p. 190, Vernehmung Paul Schneider, February 16, 1968.
10. Ibid., p. 237, Abschlussverfügung, September 30, 1968.
11. Ibid., p. 367, Abschlussverfügung, July 8, 1974.

## FALKENSEE (WITH STAAKEN)

At a meeting on March 4, 1943, between representatives of the Reichsbahnbaudirektion (German National Railway Construction Directorate, RBBD) Berlin and the Deutsche Maschinenfabrik (Demag) Fahrzeugwerke Falkensee GmbH (Demag Vehicle Factory Falkensee), a subsidiary of Demag AG Duisburg, the Demag representatives stated, "Demag intends as quickly as possible to use a large number of prisoners from the Oranienburg concentration camp for urgent work . . . and to accommodate them at the Reichsbahn camp at Staaken [Nennhauser Damm]."<sup>1</sup> For this purpose, Demag leased the Staaken Reichsbahn camp from the Deutsche Reichsbahn until its concentration camp at its Falkensee factory was completed in July 1943. Demag paid the Deutsche Reichsbahn a total of 30,800 Reichsmark (RM) in rent.

As early as March 11, 1943, the prisoner administration office at the Sachsenhausen main camp accounted for 302 prisoners at Falkensee.<sup>2</sup>



In a caricature by an unidentified artist, Ludwik Zuk-Skarszewski conducts the camp orchestra at Falkensee, 1944. Represented in this sketch are Ludwik Zuk-Skarszewski, conductor; Eugene Lacoste, accordion; Tadeusz Glinksi, Helicon; Zygmunt Paloszewski, trumpet; Roman Chrzanowski, trombone; Feliks Radomski, banjo. The names of the other four musicians are unknown.

USHMM WS #27634 COURTESY OF ALEXANDER KULISIEWICZ

The detail was commanded by SS-Obersturmbannführer Kurt Ludewig, formerly in command of the outside detail “Klinkerwerk.” He had been a member of the SS since 1932 and in 1940 began his career with the SS-Totenkopfverband (Death’s Head Unit). The first prisoners, mainly from Norway and the Soviet Union, arrived in March 1943. The prisoner-functionaries were exclusively German. Ludewig deliberately chose them from the ranks of prisoners classified as “professional criminals” or “asocials.” Only the Norwegians, regarded as “Aryans,” were quartered together as a group in one room, and only they could appoint an agent from among their own number.

By May 10, 1943, there were 1,254 prisoners in the camp. In April and May, additional prisoner transports arrived from France and Poland. There were German prisoners (always in the minority and estimated to number about 150), primarily “professional criminals” and “asocials,” but also “politicals,” Jehovah’s Witnesses, and “Gypsies.” There were 2 Jehovah’s Witnesses who worked in the clothing depot; they were always polite and approachable to their non-German fellow sufferers in the camp. Many male members of the Romany “Weiss” family labored in Demag’s work column number seven, which manufactured shells. They maintained a strong bond with each other.

During this period, the prisoners, working in 12-hour shifts and under the most primitive conditions, built the stone barracks of the future Falkensee concentration camp as well as a camp for forced laborers in the Falkensee district of Falkenhöh. Making the task even harder was a 3-kilometer (1.9-mile) march both to and from the building site. It was not only Demag’s construction bosses but also smaller building

firms from Falkensee that made money from hiring the concentration camp prisoners’ labor (charged per day and per prisoner).<sup>3</sup>

The death rate was high due to the hard working conditions and the inhuman regime presided over by the camp commandant, Ludewig, his roll-call leader Fritz Ficker, and their criminal henchmen, the prisoner-functionaries. The infirmary was infamous—there were only two beds. The foreman of the infirmary tortured prisoners to death, and a Polish prisoner doctor examined prisoners looking for any as-yet-undiscovered Jews.<sup>4</sup>

Prisoner statistics for the period March to July 1943 record strong fluctuations. However, since deaths were only recorded through the main camp at the Oranienburg civil registry office, there is no documentation of death rates specifically for Falkensee. (According to accounts of Norwegian and French prisoners, the death rate for the period of almost four months in Staaken was 40 percent.)

The Staaken camp was handed back to the RBBB Berlin on July 10, 1943. One can assume that no later than this date the newly built Falkensee subcamp on the Finkenkruger Weg, not far from the Demag factory, was in use. At first the wooden barracks were occupied. They later served as barracks for the SS guards and Hitler Youth flak crews. Solidly built prisoners’ barracks were first occupied on October 17, 1943.<sup>5</sup>

One of the earliest of the prisoners’ recollections, especially among French prisoners, is the murder of Polish prisoner Anton Krupa on Bastille Day, July 14, 1943. Krupa had hidden in the foundations of one of the unfinished barracks at Falkensee. He intended to flee once the prisoners had marched off from Staaken. He was betrayed and arrested. In Sachsenhausen he was interrogated for about a week. He was then hanged at the Falkensee camp during a prisoner roll call.

After the prisoners arrived at the Falkensee camp, they were put to work in various Demag assembly lines, building vehicles and manufacturing shells. They were brutally exploited in 12-hour shifts.

Some prisoners were trained to use the machines.<sup>6</sup> The company management was particularly interested in preserving the skills of these trained prisoners. Others had to do very heavy physical work in the foundry; the Kapos confiscated the extra rations prisoners were given for such work (sausage and so on) for themselves.

Column 11 was formed at the beginning of 1944. Following partial destruction of the factory, it was allocated separate barracks within the camp to repair infantry weapons.

It was at this time that column 13 was also formed. It comprised about 20 workers who were strictly isolated from the other prisoners. They were accommodated in the factory cellars. Their task was to complete the *Aggregat 4* (A4) rocket (for propaganda purposes, its name was changed to *Vergeltungswaffe* [revenge weapon, V-2]) with electrical switches. On April 22, 1944, the prisoners of this detail, mostly electricians or skilled metalworkers, were transferred to the Dora concentration camp.<sup>7</sup>



Since the days of the Staaken subcamp, an illegal organization among the political prisoners had been trying to occupy important “prisoner self-administration” posts. Their goal was to “eliminate” the influence of the “green and black triangles” (criminal and asocial prisoners).<sup>8</sup> Barrack one in Falkensee, whose barrack foreman was Christian Mahler, a Communist from Hamburg, was an “oasis” for the prisoners because of its “human” atmosphere.

Especially prisoners from the other barracks, who had experiences with German criminal prisoners regarding themselves as part of the “master race,” spoke with respect of the atmosphere in Mahler’s barrack. In contrast to Mahler, other barrack foremen or room foremen stuffed themselves with the special rations intended for those prisoners in their barrack doing heavy physical labor. Later on, the political prisoners took control of the infirmary, resulting in improved conditions.

In the summer of 1944, Demag lodged a complaint with the responsible SS authority about the poor condition of the leased prisoners, which was causing low rates of production. As a result, the worst slave drivers, commandant SS-Obersturmführer Ludwig and block leader SS-Oberscharführer Ficker, were removed. From then on, the prisoners were spared roll calls at night and similar harassments by the camp leadership.

The new commandant was Hauptmann Ernst Kannenberg of the Wehrmacht, posted for service on the “home front,” who was appointed on June 1, 1944. Kannenberg also held the rank of an SS-Hauptsturmführer,<sup>10</sup> a fact that he would later deny. This manager, of German nationalist outlook, constantly hoped that he would be demobilized because of a war wound. A new work column (860 men for the RBBD Berlin-Grunewald) was formed in August 1944.<sup>11</sup>

The camp’s eight prisoner barracks held 880 prisoners on May 31, 1944. On November 22, 1944, there were 2,475 prisoners.<sup>12</sup> On average, 77 people were crammed into each room. For every two rooms, there were eight washbasins and as many latrines.

In August 1944, a large number of Polish prisoners, survivors of the Warsaw Uprising, arrived at the camp. In November 1944, the Alkett firm took over the armaments factory.

In February 1945, the prisoners got a taste of what could lie ahead for them: the arrival at Falkensee of “more dead than alive” Jewish prisoners from the evacuated subcamp of Lieberose who had survived a murderous eight-day march, sleeping in the open (in February!). They were given some warm soup and slept in the buildings. Norwegian prisoners were able to make contact with the Jewish prisoner Wolfberg. Disguised, he was added to the list of prisoners to be handed over to the International Red Cross. The Scandinavian prisoners from Norway and Denmark left the camp in the direction of the main camp in February–March 1945 as part of *Aktion Bernadotte*.

The concentration camp commandant, Kannenberg, who was influenced by his cook Max Reimann, a Communist, delayed and finally prevented the evacuation of the camp in the

chaotic month of April. He secretly fled the camp during the night of April 25, 1945. The camp administration was then taken over by a camp committee chosen by the prisoners.

On April 26, 1945, a unit of Red Army soldiers appeared at the camp. The camp was evacuated within two hours, as around the camp persistent fighting was taking place with Wehrmacht and SS troops.

In 1947, Kannenberg was sentenced for war crimes to 25 years in a labor camp by a court of the Soviet military administration in Potsdam. Investigations by the Senior State Attorney’s Office in Cologne on the “subcamp Staaken-Falkensee” and the role of Ludwig and others did not result in any prosecutions.<sup>13</sup>

**SOURCES** Former prisoner Kristian Ottosen has published in Norwegian a history of the Falkensee subcamp: *Liv og død: Historien om Sachsenburg-fangene* (Oslo: Ascheburg, 1995). The book has an addendum listing all the names of the Norwegian prisoners in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

The AG-S holds the original of the barrack book of barrack one of the Falkensee subcamp. Christian Mahler, the barrack foreman, kept the book, recording a list of the prisoners in alphabetical order including details of their nationality, prisoner number, prisoner category, surname, first name, birth date, place of birth, profession, date of arrival (the departure date was struck through), room, and work detail. In addition, there is a collection of reports of former prisoners, mostly prepared for the Lagerarbeitsgemeinschaft Sachsenhausen, a section of the Komitees der antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer in der DDR. The reports were to assist in court proceedings against National Socialist perpetrators and serve as an educational tool. They contain details about the German political resistance and SS crimes. Fritz Bredemeier, Gustav Buttgeit, Christian Mahler, Bruno Schulz, Herbert Simon, and Karl Stenzel have written about their experiences in Falkensee. This group of records also contains a “seit-heriges Ermittlungsergebnis betr. die Nebenlager Staaken-Falkensee Demag zu Hermann-Göring Werken,” with the results of the investigation by Osta. Köln by 1969. In the 1980s, a comprehensive questionnaire with 30 questions was sent to surviving French prisoners. About 100 replies can be viewed in AG-S. Since the middle of the 1990s, the AG-S has collected copies of documents relating to Sachsenhausen held by other archives—there are the below-mentioned daily Veränderungsmeldungen for the prisoners’ money and personal effects administration held at the USHMMA and the Falkensee survivors’ accounts (Peter Farun) from the YVA. The verdict of the LG Münster in the trial of Dr. Baumkötter, Dr. Gaberle, and Dr. Adam discusses the public hanging of Pole Anton Krupa at Falkensee on July 14, 1943. At the USHMMA, in Record Group RG-06 War Crimes Investigations and Prosecution, .025 CAFSSRF, are records of war crimes trials held in the Soviet Union between 1939 and 1992 (bulk dates 1945–1947), and \*26 Sachsenhausen, 1939–1951 (N-19092, vol. 100), and daily Veränderungsmeldungen on the money and personal effects administration from the years 1944 and 1945. The BA-BL holds details on the perpetrators, particularly the commandants of the Falkensee subcamp. The

details are to be found in the Collection BDC, SS Personnel Card Index—Kurt Ludewig and Ernst Kannenberg. The BA also holds records of the Reich Corporate Index; Collection R 3101 of the RWM includes the card index “Demag-Fahrzeugwerke G.m.b.H. Falkensee” and the card index “Alkett-Altmarkische Kettenwerk G.m.b.H, Werk Spandau.” The BA-DH contains some of the records of Section IX/12 of the BStU: Ernst Kannenberg’s personnel files (Negative No. P89,A 5; ZB 2969, Obj. 4 with a denazification certificate in Russian, Polish, and German; MM 1367-1-114; StVE K.220, A.12); and Kurt Ludewig’s personnel files (ZB II 1103, A.1, p.96; ZB 150/56, Obj.5; ZM 1514, A 1, S. 177; Negative No. P93 D9; MM 1367-1-121; ZR 924, A. 1, S.58; sowj. DAL; ZM 1502, A.24, S.21). The HM-F holds a bundle of documents on the subcamp. It contains building drawings of the camp barracks and the construction instructions of Frickel Architects, Hannover, dated March 24, 1943. There is also a copy of an almost contemporaneous report by Hermann Stickelmann, a political prisoner, dated April 20, 1947, and a copy of the diary of political prisoner Bruno Schulz, relating to the history of an infirmary for seriously ill former concentration camp prisoners established after the liberation in Falkenhöh. The LA-B, Collection RBBD Berlin, SU 18663, contains the building file for the Staaken camp for the period March to June 1943. It also contains the lease between Demag and the DR for the lease of the camp. This collection also contains the building files for the RAW, Falkensee (12 volumes), classification SU 18669. Demag’s firm archives are now held in the archives of the MA-M. The Alkett archives are now in possession of ZAR-D. These documents contain slivers of information about the history of the factory. The Markali family holds some documents, including a hand-illustrated songbook from Falkensee written by Norwegian songwriter Dagfin Rimestad. The author holds videos of interviews with Sigurd Syversen (Norway); Karl Stenzel (Germany); Leo Van Deene (the Netherlands); Jean Sabut, Robert LaGorce, Andre Izaguirre, Guy Lesimple, Yves Parranaud, all from France; and the written memoirs of Sofus Tofte (Norway). The memoirs of French-speaking author Roland Picart (prisoner number 65478) have been published as *Falkensee*, 2 vols. (Vauluse: Imprimerie Meffre, Vaison-la-Romaine, n.d.); they contain a list of the French prisoners in the Falkensee camp. Also noteworthy is AOS, *Sachso: Au couer du système concentrationnaire nazi* (Paris: Minuit, 1982).

Klaus Woinar  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. LA-B, RBBD, SU 18663.
2. ITS, Ia, Extract from a report on prisoner numbers, Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp.
3. HM-F, Binder KZ.
4. AG-S, Memoirs of Gustav Buttgereit, Document R-44-37, p. 1.
5. AOS, *Sachso: Au couer du système concentrationnaire nazi* (Paris: Minuit, (1982), p. 206.
6. Memoirs of Sigurd Syversen, in the possession of the author.
7. AG-MD, New Arrivals from the Falkensee labor camp on April 22, 1944.

8. Memoirs of Karl Stenzel, in the author’s possession.
9. AOS, *Sachso*, p. 206.
10. BA-BL, BDC, SS Personnel Card Index, Kannenberg, Ernst.
11. Memoirs of Leo van Deene, in the author’s possession.
12. USHMMA, RG-06.025\*26. Sachsenhausen.
13. AG-S, VVN, LA-B XI 8a.

## FALLERSLEBEN

The history of the short existence of this camp remains somewhat vague but is closely connected to the construction of the Volkswagen (VW) factory in Fallersleben in 1942. Hitler issued an order to the SS in January 1942 to “complete, extend and start the operation of a light metal foundry at the Volkswagen factory in Fallersleben.” Professor Porsche, the head of the operation, considered the task of the SS to be the “provision of a work force and related material.” The Volkswagen works promised the Waffen-SS the preferred delivery of light field cars (*Kubelwagen*) in return. The work detail Fallersleben was at this time still subordinated to the Neuengamme concentration camp.<sup>1</sup>

It seems that the first prisoners came from Neuengamme, possibly shortly before or at the same time as the ones who arrived from Sachsenhausen on April 26, 1942 (or already on April 8).<sup>2</sup> More prisoners were transferred from Buchenwald to Fallersleben on June 23, 1942. The camp was mentioned in the letter exchange with the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) as the “KL Arbeitsdorf.” The task was supposed to have been the construction of a large factory.

It is not easy to throw light on the relationships between the different camps. Although the first prisoners came from Neuengamme and they considered the camp to be a subcamp of Neuengamme, other former prisoners stated clearly that the camp was subordinated to Sachsenhausen. The release of prisoner Gustav Thorun on May 22, 1942, can count as an indisputable support for this fact: the prisoner had been transferred from Sachsenhausen to Fallersleben in April 1942. “The release documents were issued by the KL Sachsenhausen.”<sup>3</sup>

It has been determined that the labor leader of the subcamp was SS-Hauptscharführer Karl Hecht, who was born in 1909 in Leese, in the district Nienburg. Before that Hecht was block leader and later head of the mail censorship office in Sachsenhausen. The prisoners confirm that he “beat prisoners inhumanely and that he often deprived them (especially the Jewish prisoners) of food.”<sup>4</sup>

SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Schitli, born in 1912 in Osnabrück, was named the SS leader of the camp. He is recorded as missing from the end of March 1945. He was possibly also the camp leader. SS-Obersturmführer Walter Ernstberger from Pforzheim was probably the deputy or acting camp leader. SS-Oberscharführer Thieme, who was deployed at Fallersleben, was accused of “physical and psychological torture.”<sup>5</sup> August Kolb was promoted in No-

vember 1941 to SS-Obersturmführer and was deployed on March 1, 1942, at “Concentration Camp Fallersleben near the City of the Strength through Joy Car” (KL Arbeitsdorf b. Stadt der K.d.F. Wagen Fallersleben).

The prisoners’ camp is supposed to have been located “in the foundry within the factory premises in Wolfsburg.”<sup>6</sup> Mainly German prisoners, but also Polish, Dutch, and French prisoners, were housed here. A total of 500 to 600—although according to other sources, only 200—prisoners were deployed at Fallersleben, among them Jewish prisoners.<sup>7</sup>

The camp had at least nine prisoners’ huts, a former prisoner reported. However, three other former prisoners have testified that the prisoners were supposedly not housed in huts on the premises of the light metal foundry that was under construction but in underground air-raid shelters.

All working sites for the prisoners were located within the VW factory premises. The prisoners in the metal buckling detail and the concrete labor detail were engaged in excavations and the erection of an enormous factory building for the light metal foundry. The work was suspended and “the work detail transferred to Sachsenhausen”<sup>8</sup> because of the frost that started in October 1942.

The prisoner Houber from Cologne was supposedly shot and killed by a guard during outside work as a punishment for illegal trafficking with cigarettes and food. This supposedly happened when he was chased outside the guards’ duty line by another SS man. However, only one former prisoner has testified to this.

There are also reports of harassment and brutal acts committed by SS-Hauptscharführer Hecht during work, including testimony that he left “five Gypsies” “to die” completely exhausted after he had subjected them to protracted labor accompanied by his slave driving. An SS man called Sachse supposedly punished prisoners with 25 blows after suspecting them of planning to escape. In addition, one Sunday prisoners were made to landscape a garden 200×150 meters (656×492 feet) in size under blows from SS-Hauptscharführer Hecht and Kapos. The overall mortality in the camp was apparently high.

The Fallersleben subcamp was supposedly closed with the transfer to Sachsenhausen of 85 prisoners on October 5, 1942, and of other prisoners to Buchenwald on October 11, 1942.<sup>9</sup> Most of the prisoners brought to Sachsenhausen were immediately transferred to the Berlin-Lichterfelde subcamp.

One of the SS men in charge of the Sachsenhausen subcamp, SS-Obersturmführer Walter Ernstberger, became a prisoner of war (POW) or was interned in a Soviet camp. He committed suicide in the POW camp in Sagan, Poland, or in the penal camp Workuta in the USSR in the summer of 1945.

The Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in West Germany investigated the subcamp Fallersleben as early as 1967.<sup>10</sup> A second procedure was handed over to the State Attorney’s Office in Braunschweig in July 1975. It was closed without result in March 1976.<sup>11</sup>

**SOURCES** There is no literature concerning the subcamp Fallersleben as a branch of Sachsenhausen. For the opening and closing dates of the Sachsenhausen subcamp, see *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), pp. 257, 485, 493, 628.

The archives for Sachsenhausen/Fallersleben can be found mainly at BA-L and AG-S.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Mihaela Pittman

## NOTES

1. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 138/75, p. 17, protocol of a discussion between Professor Porsche and SS-Gruppenführer Pohl on January 29, 1942.

2. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 138/75, p. 20; Franz Grünewald, April 10, 1942, p. 28; Heinrich Hesshaus, April 1942, p. 36; Wilhelm Hesshaus, mid-April 1942, p. 10; Julius Mlynarczyk, end of April–beginning of May 1942.

3. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 138/75, p. 72; interrogation Gustav Thorun from February 13, 1969.

4. AG-S, D 30 A/12/2 B, p. 68, report Willy Kühne.

5. Ibid.

6. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 138/75, sheet 28, interrogation Heinrich Hesshaus from June 20, 1968.

7. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 138/75, p. 2, entry from July 29, 1968, to the procedure IV 404 AR 1401/67; Conference folder workshop “Die Aussenlager der Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen und Ravensbrück” (Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Ravensbrück, October 17–18, 2003), ed. Brandenburgische Gedenkstätten.

8. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 138/75, sheet 38, interrogation Wilhelm Hesshaus from June 25, 1968.

9. *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951, repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 628.

10. BA-L, IV 406 AR 1401/67.

11. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 138/75, p. 117.

## FÜRSTENBERG (ODER)

From the outbreak of war in 1939, an armaments industry based on forced labor developed in the town of Fürstenberg/Oder. The Sachsenhausen subcamp there existed from the summer of 1944 to the beginning of February 1945. It stood on the grounds of an abandoned glass factory, the Neue Hütte (New Glass Factory), which had ceased production in 1930. The site can be found on present-day Beeskower Strasse at the corner of Oderlandstrasse.

The prehistory of the camp is still somewhat vague. According to information from the company Rheinmetall-Borsig AG Berlin, it took over from Degussa AG a facility for the manufacture of airplane gun mountings and automatic



weapons in the district of Schönfliess, which manufactured for a branch of a factory based in Guben.<sup>1</sup> However, Degussa at this time did not own a factory in Fürstenberg/Oder.

The bombing of the Reich capital prompted Rheinmetall to find alternative sites outside Berlin. In August 1943, the aircraft armaments division of the Frankfurt/Oder Armaments Command (Military District III) allocated to “Rheinmetall-Borsig AG Berlin-Tegel” the site known as “Neue Glashütte, Vereinigte Glashüttenwerke AG” Werk F, Fürstenberg/Oder” (United Glassworks), located immediately to the north of the Degussa site. Once production was relocated from the capital to Fürstenberg/Oder, Rheinmetall also relocated the manufacture of *Maschinengewehr-131* (MG-131) parts from Litzmannstadt (Łódź), which was under threat from the Red Army, westward to the city on the Oder River.

Also in 1944, production from the Guben factory was relocated to Fürstenberg/Oder. It was in this factory at Schönfliess that Rheinmetall began to use concentration camp prisoners, from September 30, 1944, at the latest. That female concentration camp prisoners were used, as in Guben, is revealed in a situation report from the Guben factory for the period July 1, 1944, to September 30, 1944, which records the transfer of production from Fürstenberg/Oder. The report, however, does not state exactly when in this period the female concentration camp prisoners began production in Fürstenberg/Oder. The formerly Guben-based production in Fürstenberg/Oder was carried out under the trade name Oder-Gerätebau Aktiengesellschaft (Oder Tool Manufacturing Company Ltd.) and involved the manufacture of parts for the MG-131 machine gun and small parts for the *Maschinenkanone-103* (MK-103). The site consisted of barracks and warehouses. Organisation Todt (OT) built many permanent structures for storage and production purposes for Oder-Gerätebau on land put up for sale by the Fürstenberg/Oder municipality and that Oder-Gerätebau wanted to buy from OT after completion of construction.

The female concentration camp prisoners were put to work dismantling and sorting airplane scrap. Aircraft wrecks were stored at the Neue Glashütte. The roughly 150 to 350 Jewish female prisoners from the Ravensbrück concentration camp had to extract raw materials and scrap metal from airplanes that had either been shot down or crashed. The raw materials and scrap metal were melted down at the nearby aluminum smelter at Finkenheerd. According to an undated report of the German Democratic Republic’s Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes (Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime, VVN), an external detail of 350 mostly female Jewish concentration camp prisoners from Sachsenhausen were at Fürstenberg/Oder. Their task was to “reclaim raw materials, scrap metal, aeroplane parts.” It was “heavy work.”<sup>2</sup>

Other groups of prisoners were apparently put to work building a power station on the Oder River for the state-owned Märkische Elektrizitätswerke. It is possible that male prisoners were involved in this project. However, this has not been substantiated.<sup>3</sup>

The use of male concentration camp prisoners at Fürstenberg is documented solely by their inclusion in the death lists

drawn up for the change of status reports in Sachsenhausen. Records of the deaths of male prisoners in the Fürstenberg/Oder subcamp start at the beginning of 1945 and list four Hungarian prisoners (who died on January 3, 4, and 12, 1945), two Dutch Jews (January 8 and 23, 1945), as well as a Latvian (January 25, 1945) and three Poles (January 7, 10, and 17, 1945), the latter being political prisoners. However, there is no separate reference to a male camp at Fürstenberg/Oder in the change of status reports.

The women were apparently quartered in the Neue Glashütte, the evacuation site for the Guben-based Rheinmetall operations. Plans for a camp for about 400 female concentration camp prisoners on the site of the Neue Glashütte dated from the beginning of November 1944. In December 1944, the Fürstenberg company Wilke & Streckebach, working on behalf of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Baugeschäfte Fürstenberg/Oder (Working Cooperative of Fürstenberg/Oder Building Firms) carried out extensive conversion work on a half-timbered building. The building had previously been used by the Oder-Gerätebau as a storage depot. The documents recording the costs for the “penal camp” or “concentration camp” for “female prisoners” indicates that the quarters were equipped by Oder-Gerätebau with beds, stools, and other pieces of furniture that were the property of the firm. Toilets were built, a kitchen was put in, and six large stoves were installed in the open-plan rooms. The windows were made compatible with blackout regulations, and 30 windows were nailed across with barbed wire. The building was surrounded by a 2.6-meter-high (8.5 feet-high) barbed-wire fence. In addition, barbed-wire barriers were put in place. The roll-call area was in an open warehouse on the site.<sup>4</sup>

The first mention of the Fürstenberg/Oder prisoners in the Sachsenhausen change of status reports is on October 30, 1944, when a record of 50 prisoners appears. At the end of December 1944, following the apparently successful conversion of the storage depot building into lodgings, the number of prisoners rose considerably to 200. At the end of January 1945, the SS statistics recorded the highest number of prisoners—650.<sup>5</sup> At the end of November 1944 and the beginning of January 1945, the SS transferred 3 Latvians and 4 other prisoners, most probably sick female concentration camp prisoners, to the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

Anton Knirsch was a member of the camp guard. He was born in 1905 in Pirkelsdorf. Following the dissolution of the camp, he was transferred to Ravensbrück.<sup>6</sup> Willy Schenk, born in 1892 in Vieselbach, was also a member of the guard. Prior to Fürstenberg/Oder, he was stationed as a guard at the Sachsenhausen/Briesen subcamp.<sup>7</sup> Both were interned after 1945 in the British occupation zone.

The Fürstenberg/Oder subcamp is last mentioned in the Sachsenhausen change of status reports on January 29, 1945. The camp was dissolved on February 1, 1945, and the prisoners were marched to Sachsenhausen. According to records of the VVN, the camp “was evacuated in February 1945. Survi-

vors of the march were liquidated in the Sachsenhausen crematorium.”<sup>8</sup>

On either February 18 or 20, 1945, 149 prisoners of unknown gender from the Fürstenberg/Oder subcamp were shot in Sachsenhausen. SS-Unterscharführer Horst Hempel, the roll-call leader at Sachsenhausen, participated in the shootings. In 1946, a Soviet military tribunal became interested in the transport of the prisoners from the Fürstenberg/Oder subcamp to Sachsenhausen. An accused SS leader at the main camp, Emil Sauter, confirmed that he was aware that the prisoners from Fürstenberg/Oder had been exterminated in the crematorium.<sup>9</sup> Although Hempel admitted his participation in the crime to the Soviet secret service, the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD),<sup>10</sup> the murders were mentioned neither in the indictment nor in the verdict of the Soviet Sachsenhausen Trial in Berlin in 1947. Neither were the murders of the Jewish prisoners from the Fürstenberg/Oder subcamp taken into consideration when Hempel was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment by the regional court in Düsseldorf for crimes committed in Sachsenhausen.<sup>11</sup> The execution squad in Sachsenhausen was under the command of SS-Hauptscharführer Otto Moll, who was condemned to death by a U.S. military court in 1946 and hanged in Dachau.

**SOURCES** The only work specifically about Fürstenberg/Oder is the recently published essay by Thomas Irmer, “Spuren nach Sachsenhausen. KZ-Häftlinge, Kriegsgefangene und Zwangsarbeiter in Fürstenberg/Oder,” *Eisenbüttelstadt. Erste sozialistische Stadt Deutschlands*, ed. Arbeitsgruppe Stadtgeschichte (Berlin-Brandenburg, 1999), esp. pp. 39n.21, 40–42. The topic is also mentioned by Joachim Hübner, “Rüstungsbetriebe in Fürstenberg,” in the same volume; in Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, ed., *Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus: Eine Dokumentation*, vol. 2, Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen-Anhalt, Sachsen, Thüringen (Bonn, 1999); as well as in Andreas Ludwig, *Eisenbüttelstadt: Wandel einer industriellen Gründungstadt in fünfzig Jahren* (Potsdam, 2000). On the transfer of Jewish women from Ravensbrück, see Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, *Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus*, 2:260.

There are relatively few archival sources. A description of the camp drawn up in the DDR is to be found in the SAPMO collection at BA-BL. Individual reports about the hunt for the perpetrators are found in the PRO and in the AG-S (copies are from the CAFSSRF), and the daily reports are in the AG-S. The SM-E holds references to the construction of the camp in the Wilke & Streckebach collection in the file “Kosten- voranschläge für die Fa. Rheinmetall-Borsig.”

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Joachim, “Rüstungsbetriebe in Fürstenberg,” in *Eisenbüttelstadt. Erste sozialistische Stadt Deutschlands*, ed. Arbeitsgruppe Stadtgeschichte (Berlin-Brandenburg, 1999), p. 28,

where there is a reference to a letter from Rheinmetall Berlin AG in 1996.

2. BA-BL, SAPMO, Dy 55/V278 5/14, Card Index Fürstenberg/Oder.

3. Andreas Ludwig, *Eisenbüttelstadt: Wandel einer industriellen Gründungstadt in fünfzig Jahren* (Potsdam, 2000), p. 16, but no source is given.

4. SM-E, Collection Wilke & Streckebach, Kosten- voranschläge für die Fa. Rheinmetall-Borsig, For these points, thanks go especially to Barbara Schulz and Axel Drieschner, who in 2003 arranged an exhibition on the Fürstenberg/Oder Stalag.

5. AG-S, Collection CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 101.

6. PRO, WO 309/1771.

7. PRO, WO 309/1779.

8. BA-BL, SAPMO, Dy 55/V278 5/14, Card Index Fürstenberg/Oder.

9. AG-S, JSU 17, Collection FSB-Archive Moscow, N-K509975 BD, p. 52 (Interrogation on 8 September 1946).

10. AG-S, Decision of the Soviet Military Tribunal, December 27, 1946, File 1593, p. 149. Hempel admitted the deed on the same day; see *ibid.*, File 1594, p. 164.

11. Verdict of the LG Düsseldorf, 8 Ks 2/59.

## FÜRSTENWALDE

In July 1942, in an unused joinery at 31 Lindenstrasse, the SS established a subcamp in Fürstenwalde for the SS company Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke (German Equipment Works, DAW). At first the camp was administered by the Buchenwald DAW and therefore came under the auspices of the Buchenwald concentration camp.<sup>1</sup> According to another source, the camp was founded on January 2, 1943. From April 15, 1943, the Fürstenwalde subcamp fell under the control of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.<sup>2</sup> The initial 10—and, by July 1943, 79—prisoners were accommodated in a barrack. They made windows for bomb-damaged houses in Berlin and windows for a number of concentration camps as well as kitchen furniture and lockers for prisoners in the Lieberose subcamp.<sup>3</sup> The working day for all concentration camp prisoners in DAW factories was increased from December 3, 1943, from 10 to 11 hours.<sup>4</sup> There were German, Polish, Ukrainian, Norwegian, French, and Belgian prisoners in Fürstenwalde. The German prisoners consisted of political, criminal, and so-called asocial prisoners.<sup>5</sup>

The detail leader was at first SS-Unterscharführer Willi Riemenschneider (born in 1905 in Hannoversch Münden) and from January 1944, SS-Obersturmführer Büttner. In the DAW factory at Fürstenwalde, Herr Saeger was the sales manager, and Herr Heuhausen was the foreman. Herr Kropp was also employed as a technical salesman.<sup>6</sup> The guard was under the command of SS-Oberscharführer Karl Leukel (born 1899 in Eiserfeld). The head of the kitchen was SS-Rottenführer Toni Feisthammer. Both of these men were dismissed in the spring of 1943 for corrupt dealings.<sup>7</sup> The successor detail leader was SS-Sturmscharführer Willy Nurrek (born 1898 in Scherpingen near Danzig). The roll-call

leader was SS-Unterscharführer Willi Bonowski. SS-Rottenführer Emil Klatt, Walter Hempel, Paul Weisner, Georg Mayer, Franz Wennemoser, Ferdinand Lindtner, and Kurt Wenzel were all members of the guard. Lindtner, Weisner, Wennemoser, and Wenzel were transferred to the Briesen [aka Falkenhagen] subcamp on the dissolution of the camp.<sup>8</sup> According to Klatt, he served with the SS-Nachrichten-Regiment 500 in Ketschendorf following the dissolution of the Fürstenwalde subcamp.<sup>9</sup>

Other SS functionaries were SS-Rottenführer Alfons Knirsch, Hartmann Blasius Schrittwieser, Herbert Kopiska, Mücke,<sup>10</sup> SS-Unterscharführer Neuhaus, Schmidt, and SS-Scharführer Oskar Hofmann.<sup>11</sup>

Knirsch was interned after 1945 in the British internment camp at Esterwegen. He admitted that from January 7 to May 22, 1943, he had been a guard at the Fürstenwalde and thereafter at the Glöwen subcamp. SS-Sturmmann Ferdinand Lindtner, who from May to June 1944 was a member of the guard at the Fürstenwalde subcamp, was with him at Esterwegen, as was SS-Unterscharführer Oskar Hofmann, who was first stationed in the Sachsenhausen subcamps of Werder and Biesenthal, and from March 1943 was in Fürstenwalde as detail leader of that camp.<sup>12</sup> Klatt, Mayer, Weisner, Wennemoser, and Wenzel were also interned after 1945 in British internment camps. While in the British internment camp at Neuengamme, Walter Hempel was registered as a war criminal for serving with the SS-Totenkopfwachbataillon (Death's Head Guard Battalion).<sup>13</sup>

Prisoner numbers remained relatively constant. In the middle of May 1944 there were 80 prisoners in the Fürstenwalde subcamp. Survivors stated that rations were 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of bread per day, 0.75 liters (3.2 cups) of white cabbage or Swede soup per day at the noon meal, and 0.25 liters (1 cup) of coffee each morning and evening.

The foreman from the end of 1943 or the beginning of 1944 was Fritz Busching, a criminal prisoner.<sup>14</sup> Political prisoner Karl Schmellentin was foreman from March 1944 to the dissolution of the camp, when he was returned to the main camp.<sup>15</sup> Schmellentin stated that in addition to Poles, French, and criminals, there was one other German prisoner in the camp apart from him. This man worked in the outside detail in the hall of the "Reichshallen" entertainment center where, under guard, he painted kitchen cupboards and was even allowed to meet his wife.<sup>16</sup>

In June 1944, a significant contract for prisoner lockers for the Lieberose subcamp was completed. The wooden lockers were delivered unpainted and untreated.<sup>17</sup>

Criminal prisoner Ernst Pfeiffer, who escaped and was recaptured near Halle, was hanged in the industrial yard of Sachsenhausen on July 7, 1944. A Czech prisoner who fled with him was also recaptured near Halle; his fate is unknown.<sup>18</sup>

The completion of the work was part of the reason for the dissolution of the camp on July 31, 1944. Some of the prisoners were then transferred from Lindenstrasse to the Sachsenhausen main camp and others to the Bad Saarow (Fuchsbau) subcamp, which had existed since 1943, with SS-

Führer Nurrek and Leukel accompanying the Bad Saarow contingent.

**SOURCES** The secondary sources on this camp consist of the work of student Claudia Bär: "Recherchen zum KZ-Aussenlager Fürstenwalde/Ketschendorf," in *InBe*, ed. Regionalarbeitsstelle für Ausländerfragen, Jugendarbeit und Schule e.V. (Brandenburg, 1995). Henrike Hoffmann recently wrote "Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen—Die Aussenlager in Fürstenwalde" (unpub. Diplomarbeit, Freie Universität Berlin, 2001), which is available at the library of the Sachsenhausen Memorial, Collection 6320.

The BA-B (Collection NS 3) holds documents on the DAW. Memoirs of former prisoners and perpetrator details are to be found in the AG-S and the PRO. Also available are the memoirs of political prisoner Karl Schmellentin: *Arbeiter Schutzhäftling Staatsfunktionär* (Berlin, 1986).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-S, R 49/25.
2. Ibid.
3. BA-B, NS 3/463.
4. BA-B, NS 3/845, p. 18.
5. See Claudia Bär, "Recherchen zum KZ-Aussenlager Fürstenwalde/Ketschendorf," in *InBe*, ed. Regionalarbeitsstelle für Ausländerfragen, Jugendarbeit und Schule e.V. (Brandenburg, 1995), p. 6.
6. BA-B, NS 3/118.
7. AG-S, LAG XI/9, p. 3.
8. PRO—all references are from the Collection WO 309.
9. PRO, WO 309/1771.
10. Possibly Hartmann Mücke; see AG-S, LAG XI-9a, letter from GKBZHWP to DDR Sta., January 13, 1970.
11. AG-S, LAG XI-9, p. 4.
12. AG-S, LAGX/3, Esterwegen list of interned Sachsenhausen concentration camp SS members.
13. PRO, WO 309/1768.
14. AG-S, LAG XI/9, p. 7. Busching was convicted in 1952 in the FRG and then moved to the GDR.
15. Henrike Hoffmann, "Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen—Die Aussenlager in Fürstenwalde," (unpub. Diplomarbeit, Freie Universität Berlin, 2001), p. 13; see Karl Schmellentin, *Arbeiter Schutzhäftling Staatsfunktionär* (Berlin, 1986), p. 188.
16. Schmellentin, *Arbeiter Schutzhäftling Staatsfunktionär*, pp. 189, 192.
17. Ibid., p. 193.
18. AG-S, LAG XI/9, letter from the ZLNW-K to the Gsta. DDR, November 7, 1968. See Hoffmann, "Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen—Die Aussenlager in Fürstenwalde," p. 15.

## GENSHAGEN

As early as 1934, the board of Daimler-Benz AG planned to build a plant for the mass production of engines, in the ex-



pectation that its establishment would place the company in the leading role for engine manufacturing for the German military. In 1935, Daimler-Benz and the Reich Air Ministry decided to establish a factory for the mass production of aircraft engines in the Genshagen Heath, a forested area 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) south of Berlin. The factories, spread over a 4-square-kilometer (1.5-square-mile) area, were designed so that in the case of war production they could quickly be stepped up to mass-produce aircraft engines for fighters and bombers.

The 6,828 “workforce members” in Genshagen produced 1,427 aircraft engines in 1938. In 1939 an increase to only 6,860 workers was enough to raise output to 2,249 engines. In 1940 the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front, DAF) awarded the factory the Goldene Fahne (Gold Flag), its highest award. It was a National Socialist model factory. At the same time, the first prisoners of war (POWs) and laborers from occupied countries in Western Europe were brought to Genshagen. At the end of 1942, among the 13,146 factory employees in Genshagen were 6,011 foreigners of whom 2,778 were Russian forced laborers. Annual production had increased to 4,920 engines. Production was further increased enormously and in the spring of 1944 reached a monthly output of 1,000 units—and this with a slightly reduced labor force.

British historian Neil Gregor has described this process of production increase, carried out above all at the expense of civilian forced laborers, as factory work was increasingly made to resemble work in a concentration camp. In the fall of 1944, the managers at Daimler-Benz obtained female prisoners from the concentration camp for women at Ravensbrück as forced laborers for work in their National Socialist model factory.

In early 1944, the threat of air raids to the Genshagen factory and the government designation of air armaments as a priority prompted the relocation of a substantial part of the facilities to southern Germany, specifically the caverns of the gypsum mine “Friede” at Obrigheim am Neckar. A heavy bombing raid on Genshagen on August 6, 1944, which caused 150 deaths and the destruction of several factory buildings, resulted in the evacuation of further sections of the factory with their skilled labor forces and expensive and, in wartime, irreplaceable special machinery. All that remained in Genshagen were the more basic engine assembly lines, which were equipped with more simple machinery. Production on these lines was so piecemeal that although the high speed at which these repetitive tasks had to be performed left the prisoners exhausted, the work could quickly be learned by people who had never had any experience with factory work or even skilled metalwork. The workers could be women and even young girls; neither did they have to be fluent in German. Indeed, it was of advantage to peace on the home front if the few remaining German foremen and skilled tradesmen in the factory buildings could not communicate with their subordinates and discuss how they had ended up in this forced labor, where they

came from, and what they had experienced at the hands of German occupying troops and special detachments at home.

So the Daimler-Benz Genshagen factory management acquired female labor from one place where it was still to be found in abundance in the last year of the war: in the fall of 1944 representatives of Daimler-Benz combed the female concentration camp at Ravensbrück for the strongest and healthiest candidates. The most suitable women appeared to be those that had most recently arrived, in special transports from Warsaw and Budapest, where they had been abducted just a few weeks before from their homes, schools, and streets. Between September and December, Daimler-Benz selected more than 700 Poles, 125 French women, 80 Hungarian Jewish women, about 50 “criminal” or “asocial” German prisoners, a group of Ukrainian women, and a few Russian, Serbian, Belgian, and Greek women from the roll-call square at Ravensbrück to assemble its famous aircraft engines, which for years had powered the Messerschmitt (Me) fighters and Heinkel (He) bombers that had brought death to the homelands of these same women.

A total of 1,100 women from Ravensbrück had to work as forced laborers from the fall of 1944 in the largest aircraft engine assembly line in Europe, proudly called the Deutschlandhalle, or Great Hall of Germany, by the people at Daimler. About 30 SS female overseers accompanied the women from Ravensbrück: some of whom had themselves previously worked in armaments factories and had undertaken a two-week training course in Ravensbrück to prepare them for their new assignment. An electric fence was installed around the factory. Eight SS men provided external security. They had undergone a short training course in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, a shorter course (two weeks) than the SS women in Ravensbrück. The camp commander was 32-year-old SS-Unterscharführer Friedrich August Wilhelm Mantzel. He had served in the business administration of the Waffen-SS between 1940 and 1944. On January 29, 1944, he was transferred to the SS-Totenkopf-Wachbataillon in Sachsenhausen.

The outside detachment was placed under the command of the closest main concentration camp, Sachsenhausen. This had become the practice from September 1, 1944, irrespective of the origin and gender of the prisoners. Driven on by the SS women overseers, the prisoners initially had to work a 12-hour day. This was later increased to 16 and then 24 hours, and if by the end of the month the production targets had not been reached, the prisoners had to work 36 hours without sleep. The dormitories were air-raid shelters and cellars located under the factory buildings. They were equipped with several-tiered bunk beds. The result was that the women did not see daylight for months. It was a concentration camp in a factory.

Those who thought of escape were stopped by the electric fence. Once the women were made to march past a section of fence in which hung the charred body of a Russian woman holding a pair of pliers in her hand. Whether this was an

escape attempt or a scene staged by the SS remains unclear. The effect on the prisoners was nevertheless the same.

It certainly made it easier for the women to survive Genshagen that they could see ever more signs that the end of Nazi rule was getting closer and that it would only be for a relatively short time that they would have to live and work in concentration camp conditions. However, although production began to fall due to the failure to deliver parts from Obrigheim or from power cuts, this did not mean that the women were able to get any more rest. On the contrary, they were tormented even more by being made to do senseless cleanup work on the site even in the bitter cold.

Another factor helping the women to survive was that among their number were women who had been in the resistance in their home countries and that the camp clerk, Frieda Franz, a German Communist, had been in camps for years and had experience in subverting the system. All the surviving women thankfully tell how important assistance from Franz was.

Hungarian Jewish woman Edit Bán, later Edith Kiss, a sculptress and painter from Budapest, was saved by Franz from being transported back to Ravensbrück even though Bán had been placed on the retransfer list because she was so undernourished that she could no longer work. Franz, who had to type the list, changed Bán's name to "Banke," the name of a German woman who had recently died. In doing this, she saved unique testimony to the feelings of the women throughout their abduction, concentration camp imprisonment, and sufferings in forced labor: within a few weeks of Bán's return home, she painted the 30 gouaches of her "deportation album."

After the SS had burned all the camp files on April 19, 1945, the evacuation of the Genshagen subcamp to the Sachsenhausen main camp began. The Jewish women were not, unlike the other Genshagen prisoners, driven on a death march but were transported to Ravensbrück in closed rail wagons. The intention was to murder them in the camp's gas chambers. However, when they arrived in Ravensbrück, the SS had already murdered the prisoners in the gas chamber detachment and blown up the gas chambers so that the advancing Red Army would not find any traces.

In April 1947, a mass grave was found near Ludwigsfeld on the Berlin Ring Autobahn. It contained the corpses of 500 "Eastern workers" and 19 female concentration camp prisoners. Witnesses to the exhumation say they were probably Czech women. Some had clearly been shot in the nape of the neck. Despite years of research as part of a project at the Ravensbrück Memorial, these women have not been identified.

**SOURCES** The Genshagen subcamp essay is based on the research the author has done over the course of two decades and the books and films that have appeared in this time. The results of that research will come together in his work *"Innere Bilder wird man nicht los." Edit Kiss und die Frauen im KZ-Nebenlager Daimler-Benz-Genshagen* (Berlin: Metropol-Verlag, 2007). The Genshagen factory was first comprehensively described in *Das Daimler-Benz-Buch* (Nördlingen,

1987); and the accompanying file and documentary publication *Die Daimler-Benz AG 1916–1948* (Nördlingen, 1987). Originally, his dissertation at the Georgia Institute of Technology, Bernard P. Bellon's book appeared as *Mercedes in Peace and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990). As a result of the facts that appeared in these books on Daimler's role in the war and the use of forced labor, the Daimler-Benz concern commissioned its own research through the GUG, which after several years of research and interviews published its results in 1994 under the title "Zwangsarbeit bei Daimler-Benz," *ZfU* 78 (1994). This volume remains today the most comprehensive analysis of the forced labor system in a German armaments company. One failure in the book is that survivors from Eastern and Central Europe are insufficiently represented even though they made up by far the largest proportion of slave laborers at the Daimler-Benz enterprise. The MBAG-A (now DCAG-UA) commissioned a work on the Genshagen factory, *Daimler-Benz-Motoren-GmbH-Genshagen: Eine Flugmotorenwerk bei Berlin* (Stuttgart, 1990). This work was not designed for public presentation; however, it uncritically reproduces the depiction of the factory in the German Labor Front's (DAF's) *Leistungsbericht* 19 (1940). There are two copies of this volume in the DCAG-UA and one copy in the NARA. Neil Gregor in *Daimler-Benz in the Third Reich* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), German title *Stern und Hakenkreuz* (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1997), focuses on economic developments and company decisions that cumulatively barbarized the treatment of the Russian forced laborers between 1942 and 1944. Between 1997 and 1999, the Ravensbrück Remembrance and Memorial Site (MGR) ran an exhibition on the Genshagen factory and history of its concentration camp prisoners and forced laborers under the title "Wir waren ja Niemand." Two young German researchers have published the following works: Linde Apel, "Zwangsarbeit jüdischer Frauen im Aussenlager Genshagen"; Apel, *Jüdische Frauen im Konzentrationslager Ravensbrück 1939–1945* (Berlin, 2003); pp. 276–280; Doreen Eschinger, "Ungarische Jüdinnen in Ravensbrück am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs—Überlebenschancen und Überlebensstrategien im Lageralltag" (master's thesis, Humboldt University Berlin, 2003), pp. 87–95. Since 1990, the author has interviewed women who once worked as forced laborers in Genshagen and has followed them in their struggle for moral and material recompense. Seven documentary films have appeared as a result by 2004, including, with Rainer Burmeister, *Für Lohn und Würde: Zwangsarbeiterinnen klagen gegen DaimlerChrysler* (30 minutes; BRD, 1999).

The author's private archive holds an extensive collection of memorabilia, photos, pictures, documents, and recordings of interviews (both sound and film). The other most important archival collections are the DCAG-UA (Collections Kriegswerke 1, Forstmeier, GUG-Interviews, Leistungsbericht Goldene Fahne, vol. 19); and the IWM (Speer Collection on the Relocation from Genshagen to Obrigheim/Neckar). The AG-R and AG-S hold little material. The transfer lists "Oktober 1944 KZ Ravensbrück—Aussenlager Genshagen" are of particular importance as they contain the names of 900 prisoners transferred to Genshagen as well as the list of the transfers back, the names of the sick, and

those women who could no longer work, some of whom died in Ravensbrück or were murdered. The file collection NL Genshagen/KL Sachsenhausen 406 AR-Z 21/71 of the ZdL at BA-L contains a collection of files relating to investigations into prisoner deaths in the Genshagen subcamp. The files of the proceedings against former Genshagen factory security officer William Knoll (born October 25, 1899) at the Bergedorf denazification tribunal are held at the BA-K (Z 42 III/3781).

Helmuth Bauer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## GENTHIN

The Silva GmbH, a branch of the Magdeburg-based Poltewerke, was the owner of a camouflaged ammunition factory. It was hidden in a forest near Genthin, a village that is about 120 kilometers (74.6 miles) west of Berlin and 29 kilometers (18 miles) west of the town of Brandenburg. The factory building was located close to Reichsautobahn Nr. 1 connecting the towns of Magdeburg and Brandenburg.

The Genthin subcamp, whose prisoners were forced to work in the production of ammunition for tanks and anti-aircraft guns, existed from March 16, 1943,<sup>1</sup> to May 6, 1945. At the beginning about 300 prisoners,<sup>2</sup> most of them women and girls from the Soviet Union and Poland, made up the permanent workforce at the ammunition factory. In September 1944 and following the Warsaw Uprising, SS authorities deported another 300 to 400 Polish women to the Genthin subcamp. At first it was a subcamp of the Ravensbrück concentration camp whose authorities handed over command to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp on October 29, 1944.

Although the command changed, neither prisoners nor guards were affected by this measure. The number of prisoners continued to increase, and SS guards counted about 1,000 prisoners in 1945, who were not only Polish and Russian by origin but also Czech, French, Yugoslav, and Ukrainian. They were guarded by 10 SS female and 10 SS male members. SS-Scharführer Steffen was the first Truppen-Kommandoführer of the subcamp and led it between March 1943 and December 1944. His successor was Unterscharführer Otto Wahl, who commanded guards and prisoners from January 1945 till the liberation of the subcamp in May 1945.<sup>3</sup> He was supported by Hermine Braunsteiner, a Vienna-born Lagerführerin of the subcamp who worked in Genthin from the beginning of 1944 until the day of the subcamp's liberation.

The prisoners were surrounded by a wooden fence that was secured with electrified barbed wire. Moreover, the guards used two watchtowers for better control and guarded the prisoners on their 10-minute walk from and to the nearby factory building. The SS Unterscharführer Wahl drew a plan of the subcamp. The prisoners slept in two-story or three-story plank beds and were forced to work in 12-hour shifts in a factory building that produced ammunition for the Wehrmacht until May 5, 1945.

The SS authorities decided to evacuate the Genthin subcamp on May 6, 1945, after the U.S. Army had reached the Elbe River. The destination of the forced march was the Sachsenhausen concentration camp more than 100 kilometers (62 miles) away. However, the convoy was stopped about 3 kilometers (almost 2 miles) outside Genthin by a group of higher SS members who argued that the prisoners would hinder military traffic on the roads. They sent them back to the subcamp, where the guards left them alone.<sup>4</sup> One day later, on May 7, 1945, a group of Red Army soldiers reached the subcamp and liberated the prisoners.

There were no murders reported in the subcamp itself. However, one woman was deported from Genthin to the Ravensbrück concentration camp and hanged because of sabotage.

On November 22, 1949, a Vienna court gave SS-Lagerführerin Hermine Braunsteiner a prison sentence of three years because of her strict and brutal regime at the Ravensbrück concentration camp. After her release in April 1950, she made friends with U.S. soldier Russell Ryan. They emigrated to Canada and in October 1958 to the United States. Due to the so-called Majdanek Trial, she was extradited from New York to the Federal Republic of Germany in May 1973, where the trial ended at a Düsseldorf court in 1981. Braunsteiner was sentenced to double life imprisonment. Johannes Rau, the prime minister of North-Rhine Westphalia, pardoned her, and she was released in April 1996. She died three years later, on April 19, 1999, in the town of Bochum.

**SOURCES** For further information relating to Lagerführerin Braunsteiner, see Deutsches Historisches Museum at [www.dhm.de/lemo/html/biografien/BraunsteinerRyanHermine](http://www.dhm.de/lemo/html/biografien/BraunsteinerRyanHermine).

Primary documentation on the Genthin subcamp is located in AG-S, especially in the box Genthin, which contains a collection of testimonies collected by ZdL (now BA-L).

Alexander Jossifidis

## NOTES

1. BA-L, ZdL Aktenvermerk, January 24, 1968 (IV 409 AR-Z 468/66).

2. Ibid.

3. Aussage des ehemaligen Truppen-Kommandoführers Otto Wahl bei seiner Vernehmung durch das Staatliche Kriminalkommissariat Darmstadt, May 20, 1970.

4. Ibid.

## GLAU

As with Lieberose, the Glau subcamp centered on the use of prisoner labor by the Waffen-SS. Since December 1941, the Waffen-SS had maintained SS-Artillery Targeting School I near an artillery practice range at Glau, near Trebbin, in the district of Teltow. In the Glau Mountains there was an SS gunnery school and a facility to jam radio transmissions. A prisoner-of-war (POW) camp was located at the southern



edge of the Glau Mountains.<sup>1</sup> A photo of the camp shows seven barracks along a camp road.<sup>2</sup>

Glau was also an SS garrison administrative center, headed by an SS-Obersturmführer from Austria.<sup>3</sup> The center was owned by Reinhold Ludwig, born in 1909 in Eisenach. He was interned by the British after 1945.<sup>4</sup> The Glau project was identified by the Nazi Party leadership with the code number "RFSS 2431."<sup>5</sup>

The subcamp, which was established either at the end of 1941 or 1942, was next to the POW camp (a prisoners' barrack<sup>6</sup> was separated from it only by barbed wire),<sup>7</sup> between the villages of Glau and Blankensee. In 1935, the SS compulsorily acquired land owned there by Josef Weissberg's Christliche Siedlungsgesellschaft (Christian Settlement Society), after Weissberg had been convicted and banished.<sup>8</sup> The camp's external security was a double barbed-wire fence. There were no guard towers.<sup>9</sup>

The prisoners were put to work on expanding the practice grounds by constructing roads and barracks for between 200 and 300 men, a shooting range, a sewer system, and a 1.5-kilometer (almost 1-mile) entrance road to the barrack, as well as on transport operations.<sup>10</sup> Here there is a further parallel with Lieberose. The work had to be completed double-quick. At times, the prisoners had to work on the building site, standing in water with bare feet.<sup>11</sup> The prisoners also had to pull dummy tanks, which were fired at as part of the training exercises.<sup>12</sup> There was a construction office at the Glau troop training area. It consisted of an SS-Hauptscharführer, SS-Untersturmführer, two or three SS-Unterführer, as well as a number of civilians.<sup>13</sup> Prisoners were also said to have been put to work in the garages of the SS school. The prisoners constructed a tower for anti-aircraft defense on a hill in a forest. The work detachments were under the command of "professional criminal" prisoners, who are described as the "worst sort."<sup>14</sup> The prisoners probably also worked on a rabbit farm.<sup>15</sup>

The conditions, including the food, are said to have been better in Glau than in the main camp. The prisoners possessed two blankets each.<sup>16</sup> However, it was reported that the German prisoner cook, Hansen, sold meat from the prisoners' kitchen to the detail leader.<sup>17</sup>

SS-Scharführer Krämer took command of the detachment prior to May 1942.<sup>18</sup> He acted humanely.<sup>19</sup> From May to the end of August 1942, SS-Oberscharführer Martin Knittler was in command of the Glau subcamp. During this period there were about 50 Soviet, Polish, and Czech prisoners in the camp.<sup>20</sup> (The Soviet Union sentenced Knittler to lifelong forced labor. In 1958, he committed suicide in prison.) After Knittler, the detachment leaders were frequently changed. They were SS-Oberscharführer Albrecht Djuren, described as "the most rabid persecutor of intelligence,"<sup>21</sup> missing and presumed killed since 1945; SS-Unterscharführer Wilhelm Rett from Kaiserslautern (killed in action on January 4, 1944); SS-Oberscharführer Grossman; SS-Scharführer Schneider; SS-Scharführer Mussmann; SS-Oberscharführer Emil Rieder; and SS-Unterschar- or Oberscharführer Fänger.<sup>22</sup> SS-

Sturmscharführer Georg Müller stated that he was in command from July 11, 1944, until the dissolution of the camp. In 1945 he was interned by the British in Esterwegen.<sup>23</sup>

There were between 15 and 18 guards, mostly young German SS but later ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche), who were based at the Glau troop training ground as part of the SS training unit. The names of the brothers Klein, who came from Batschka in Hungary (possibly Josef and Jakob), are known. Survivors described them as being brutal and barbaric. It is claimed that they shot a Dutch prisoner named Jan van der Klein and two Russian prisoners on the way to work. The shootings were condoned by the detachment leader,<sup>24</sup> Fänger. Another Hungarian ethnic German, Hack, also a member of the SS personnel, is said to have mistreated the prisoners for no reason while they were working and also to have shot two Russian prisoners.<sup>25</sup> Valentin Jaromir, born in 1918 in Kobier, Upper Silesia, was also a member of the guard. He had previously served at Dachau and the Sachsenhausen subcamps at Potsdam and Rathenow. He claimed, however, to have served primarily as a gunner. He was interned in 1945 in the British occupation zone.<sup>26</sup>

The former head of the SS-Bauleitung Berlin and later head of the SS-Bauinspektion Reich Nord, SS-Hauptscharführer Alfred Sorge<sup>27</sup> was a frequent visitor to the Glau subcamp. Sometime in the summer of 1944 while he was at Glau, a Russian prisoner, Wladimir Sikorskij, was shot by the detail leader (SS-Sturmscharführer Müller) because he had stolen potatoes from the cellar of an SS dormitory.<sup>28</sup>

The camp elder was a German political prisoner, Will Rutat, who had previously fought in Spain and later worked in the Ministry of National Defense in the German Democratic Republic. The camp clerk was until the spring of 1944 Georg Stein from Luxembourg, followed by René Trauffer, also from Luxembourg.<sup>29</sup> It is likely that Trauffer was returned to Sachsenhausen in November 1944.<sup>30</sup> Paul Koch then became the camp clerk, and Hermann Bertram became foreman.<sup>31</sup> Polish prisoner Sbiczek Kajie worked as an assistant clerk in construction management, and Polish prisoner Tadeusz Kowalski was used as a technical draftsman.<sup>32</sup> The prisoner Stein is said to have obtained an illegal radio, which could receive Allied news broadcasts, which he passed on to the main camp.<sup>33</sup>

A list of names of 65 prisoners working on the Glau building site on August 5, 1942, has survived.<sup>34</sup> At the beginning of 1943, the Glau work detail included 177; in the middle of February 1944, 139 prisoners. In the spring of 1944, half of the detail was transferred to the Sachsenhausen/Grünheide subcamp.<sup>35</sup> In the summer of 1944, no more than 180 prisoners were put to work at the troop training ground in Glau. On February 12, 1945, there were still 31 prisoners at the Glau subcamp.

It was reported that the detail leader intended to shoot the prisoners before they were evacuated but that the Sachsenhausen main camp commandant decided otherwise.<sup>36</sup>

In 1968, the Central Office in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia in Cologne (ZLNW-K) investigated the homicides in the Glau subcamp. The Polish-based Main Commission

for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes also investigated these homicides. The investigations did not result in any prosecutions.<sup>37</sup>

**SOURCES** The only work specifically written on Glau is a school paper by Nadine Sachse, “Das Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen mit seinem Aussenkommando Glau bei Trebbin (unpub. MSS, Luckenwalde, 2003). Photographic evidence may be found in Helmut Bräutigam, “Fremdarbeiter in Brandenburg in der NS-Zeit,” *InBe* 17 (1996): 71.

Memoirs of former prisoners and details about the perpetrators are to be found in the AG-S, BLHA, and PRO. A published prisoner testimony on Glau is Georg Stein, *Die Cäsar der Entscheidung* (Luxembourg, 1946).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Nadine Sachse, “Das Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen mit seinem Aussenkommando Glau bei Trebbin” (unpub. MSS, Luckenwalde, 2003), p. 8.
2. Helmut Bräutigam, “Fremdarbeiter in Brandenburg in der NS-Zeit,” *InBe* 17 (1996): 71.
3. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 2.
4. PRO, WO 309/1773.
5. BA-B, NS 4-2451.
6. According to some sources, there were two prisoners’ barracks and an SS barracks. See AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 9, Record of interview of the Polish prisoner Jerzy Fiodorow in the Glau subcamp.
7. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 2.
8. Sachse, “Das Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen mit seinem Aussenkommando Glau bei Trebbin,” p. 8.
9. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 6, Record of interview of the Polish prisoner Jan Zbigniew Karczewski in the Glau subcamp.
10. Sachse, “Das Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen mit seinem Aussenkommando Glau bei Trebbin,” p. 9.
11. AG-S, LAG II/10, Report by the former Glau subcamp prisoner Gerg Heinzmann.
12. Sachse, “Das Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen mit seinem Aussenkommando Glau bei Trebbin,” p. 10.
13. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 2.
14. AG-S, LAG II/10, Report of the former German prisoner Heinzmann in the Glau subcamp.
15. AG-S, Collection BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 35H, Collection D 30 A/8/2A, p. 295, Report by Georg Heinzmann. Peter Gregoire has also mentioned working on a manor. See Sachse, “Das Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen mit seinem Aussenkommando Glau bei Trebbin,” p. 11.
16. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 9, Interrogation of the former Polish prisoner Jerzy Fiodorow in the Glau subcamp.
17. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 11, Interrogation of the former Polish prisoner Jerzy Fiodorow in the Glau subcamp.
18. AG-S, LAG, XI/10, p. 2.
19. Georg Stein, *Die Cäsar der Entscheidung* (Luxembourg, 1946), p. 163.
20. AG-S, Interrogation of Knittler by the Soviet Military Tribunal, December 20, 1946, File 1560, p. 257.
21. Stein, *Cäsar*, p. 164.

22. AG-S, LAG XI-10, p. 2.
23. AG-S, LAG X/3, Esterwegen list of Sachsenhausen concentration camp SS members.
24. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 3.
25. AG-S, LAG XI, p. 6, Interrogation of the former Polish prisoner Jan Zbigniew Karczewski in the Glau subcamp.
26. PRO, WO 309/1769.
27. BA-K, Z 42 IV/5891. Sorge was sentenced by the denazification court in 1948 to 10 years’ imprisonment.
28. AG-S, LAG XI, p. 10, Interrogation of the former Polish prisoner Jerzy Fiodorow in the Glau subcamp.
29. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 3.
30. Sachse, “Das Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen mit seinem Aussenkommando Glau bei Trebbin,” p. 9.
31. AG-S, Collection BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 35H, Collection D 30 A/8/2A, p. 295, Report by Georg Heinzmann.
32. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 3.
33. Stein, “Das Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen mit seinem Aussenkommando Glau bei Trebbin,” p. 166.
34. AG-S, LAG XI/10, p. 12.
35. AG-S, Collection BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 35H, Collection D 30A/10/2, p. 141, Report of Karl Witt.
36. AG-S, LAG XI, p. 11, Interrogation of the former Polish prisoner Jerzy Fiodorow in the Glau subcamp.
37. AG-S, LAG XI/10.

## GLÖWEN

The Glöwen subcamp was one of six Sachsenhausen subcamps to which only Jews were transported in 1944. It was only in Glöwen that there existed a number of larger groups that together numbered more than 770 male and female Jewish prisoners. The subcamp was established in the summer of 1944 at a munitions and machine storage area of the Dynamit Aktien Gesellschaft (DAG). It was located between Berlin and Magdeburg, not far from Havelberg.

The DAG installation, originally known under the name of “Roland” for security reasons and located in a 500-hectare (1,236-acre) forest, was planned as a large facility for the production of nitrocellulose. Construction began in October 1938, and around 50 construction firms from the region were involved in the work. Some 175 foreign laborers and 50 German Jews, as part of the “self-contained labor deployment” (*Geschlossenen Arbeitseinsatz*), were used as forced laborers.<sup>1</sup> French prisoners of war (POWs) were also used.

In 1942, the camp was converted to a regional storage facility for captured weapons and machines and was known as “Lager Glöwen.” A disassembly installation (*Entlaborierungsanstalt*) was established for the Cologne explosives factory Meissner & Söhne, to recycle explosives from munitions left over from World War I and from captured munitions.<sup>2</sup> The production of detonators was planned.

The buildings erected at the facility were covered with earth for camouflage purposes. The earth in turn was planted with fir trees. Aircraft buildings were painted with camouflage paint, and when they were used as munitions stores, they were surrounded by earthen walls.

Glöwen had a rail connection, and railway equipment was located on the site. At the beginning of 1945, around 10 to 12 cars were turned around daily. It was planned to increase that rate to between 50 and 70 cars.

At times it was planned to relocate other facilities to Glöwen: for example, the Deutsche Maschinenfabrik AG (Demag) tank tracks assembly from Falkensee and the Arado aircraft factory from Rathenow in Brandenburg, both of which used prisoners from Sachsenhausen.<sup>3</sup>

In August 1944, around 300 Polish Jewish men and women were transported from the Pionki forced labor camp near Pionki in the direction of Glöwen. In Pionki, they worked as forced laborers for the largest explosives factory, which after the occupation of Poland had been taken over by the Westfälisch-Anhaltinische Sprengstoff AG (WASAG). Around 3,000 Jewish prisoners from Radom were held on the factory site as forced laborers. Many of them were held there after the evacuation of both Radom ghettos in August 1942.

When the Red Army pushed into the Radom area in July 1944, it was decided by the armaments factory and the Armaments Ministry's Main Committee for Gunpowder and Explosives (Hauptausschuss Pulver und Sprengstoff) to relocate the gunpowder factory to Glöwen.<sup>4</sup> Once the factory had been disassembled, the majority of the Jewish forced laborers were deported to Auschwitz. Raul Hilberg has pointed out that, as in Pionki other Jewish forced laborers in German occupation industries, such as Steyr-Daimler-Puch (SDP), or Hugo Schneider AG (HASAG), were pulled out and deported.<sup>5</sup>

Around 300 Jewish forced laborers from Pionki, including 30 women, were transported in four rail cars via Tschenschau (Częstochowa) to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. They were to rebuild the factory in Glöwen. They were chosen largely because of their tradesmen's skills, but some were arbitrarily chosen. Eventually, the SS transferred the women to the Ravensbrück concentration camp. The men were first held in "quarantine" in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and only later were they taken to Glöwen.

On August 16, 1944, 499 Hungarian Jewish women were transported from the Stutthof concentration camp near Danzig to Glöwen.<sup>6</sup> The women had been arrested after the occupation of Hungary and transported to Auschwitz II-Birkenau. From there the SS transported them to the Rigakaiserwald concentration camp and, when that was evacuated, then to the Stutthof concentration camp.

The male and female prisoners at Glöwen were taken to the subcamp's barracks, which in part were located in a "community camp" (*Gemeinschaftslager*) constructed for German civilian workers. The barracks were surrounded by an electrified barbed-wire fence. There were four watchtowers. The subcamp included a camp kitchen that was supplied by DAG, an infirmary, and a workshop. The prisoners made sure that a fellow prisoner, aged 10, worked in the kitchen and repairing the prisoners' wooden shoes. They wanted to protect him from the more physically demanding work.<sup>7</sup>

The men and women were separated. If they made contact through the barbed wire that separated them, they could be

punished by being forced to stand for prolonged periods or by being beaten. Survivor Abraham B. recalled, "It was not only forbidden to speak with other inmates but also to look out of the camp. I was punished because while on the way to work I had said to the women who were marching by 'good morning.' I had to stand the whole day at attention for several hours wearing a rucksack filled with stones."<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the prisoners were able, for example, to make their own candles and a cloth bag. They exchanged these outside the camp for Sabbath candles. The women had asked the men for candles, which the men had made from paraffin that was available in the camp. In return, the women sewed the cloth bag.

Hunger, the cold in the particularly cold winter of 1944–1945, and the persecution by a number of SS men were the greatest dangers in the Glöwen subcamp. The SS man who was the camp's economic officer and in charge of supplies for the camp is remembered by survivors as being a particularly brutal SS man. It was he who implemented the punishment of 25 blows with a cane.<sup>9</sup> Another method was used to make the prisoners comply. This was the threat to return the prisoners to the Sachsenhausen main camp. "Transport back to the main camp at Sachsenhausen was always a threat that we heard from the SS men: 'If you continue like that you'll be back in Sachsenhausen.'"<sup>10</sup> Survivors have stated that four male prisoners died in the Glöwen subcamp through exhaustion and hunger.<sup>11</sup> At least two prisoners who could no longer work and who were ill were taken back by rail to Sachsenhausen. Three female prisoners became ill from typhus, and one of them died.<sup>12</sup> In the spring of 1945, a woman gave birth, and she and her infant were taken back to Ravensbrück where they were probably murdered.

There were 16 SS male guards at the Glöwen subcamp<sup>13</sup> and around 10 young SS wardresses. Investigations carried out in 1967 by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg into the former camp leader and other members of the guard at the Glöwen subcamp were stopped because it was not possible to prove any homicides.<sup>14</sup>

Inside Glöwen, the prisoners for the most part were supervised by DAG factory security officers.<sup>15</sup> At the beginning of 1945, the factory and work security supervisor noted that factory security had "become more lax with the Jews, especially the Jewesses." The factory security officers "should not be allowed to engage in any form of conversation or transaction with the Jewesses. Regardless of the position of anyone involved the matter will be immediately reported to the police."<sup>16</sup>

Inside the camp grounds, the concentration camp prisoners were divided into work groups. Some of the groups were supervised by German engineers who had previously been based in Pionki.

The male prisoners, dressed in inadequate clothing, basically did unloading work without tools. At first they had to unload the machines from Pionki and later machines from other firms. Some prisoners did carpentry and electrical installation work. In addition, work was to be done on extracting gunpowder.<sup>17</sup>



The female prisoners also had to work on disassembling munitions and manufacturing detonators. The head and chief engineer of the DAG technical department, Heinrich Schindler, planned to produce 150 million detonators each month.<sup>18</sup> However, the requisite production facilities were never finished. Instead, the women worked in a variety of work detachments, working in the fields, gardens, or small workshops such as a bakery in the area.

In September 1944, the “Special Gunpowder Committee” (Sonderausschuss Pulver) of the Main Committee, Gunpowder and Munitions (Hauptausschuss Pulver und Munition), which consisted of representatives of the munitions firms, called a meeting of the committee representatives in Glöwen.<sup>19</sup> As a result, the Pionki factory facilities were divided between the munitions’ firms.

In October 1944, the DAG Berlin construction office, which had been relocated to the town of Glöwen, demanded an additional allocation of 15 accommodation barracks, as it was possible that the use of prisoners to manufacture detonators would be expanded.

On December 16, the SS administration in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp indicated to DAG that a withdrawal of prisoners from Glöwen was planned for January 15, 1945.<sup>20</sup> This was objected to by the Army High Command (OKH), which wanted the prisoners to remain to work on transporting machines and goods and in production.<sup>21</sup> A demand was also made that the male concentration camp prisoners, who were still formally part of the Pionki Gunpowder Factory, transfer to the DAG.<sup>22</sup> The DAG wanted to continue to use the concentration camp prisoners in the production of detonators, which was supposed to begin in February 1945. Planning envisaged the use of prisoners in a DAG factory in Allendorf<sup>23</sup> or in two other factories in Thüringen.<sup>24</sup>

Most probably the SS dissolved the male camp on February 14 and then the female camp on April 14, 1945.<sup>25</sup> In mid-February 1945, the SS divided the male prisoners into three groups. More than 100 were transported to the Sachsenhausen subcamp at Rathenow. There, they riveted aircraft wings at the Arado aircraft factory. The factories were located above-ground and had no protection against air raids. Working with air pressure devices in 12-hour shifts in such facilities meant that the prisoners often suffered from frostbite. The concentration camp prisoners were not allowed to enter the underground production facilities that would have offered protection from the cold and air raids. The SS guards fled in April 1945 shortly before the arrival of the Red Army.

The second group was transported to Bergen-Belsen, where most of them died from starvation. The third group was transported back to Sachsenhausen in February 1945 and, following its dissolution, was sent on a death march in the direction of the Baltic.

The female prisoners remained in Glöwen until its dissolution in mid-April 1945. They then set out on a weeklong march to the Ravensbrück subcamp at Malchow. A DAG factory was also located here. They were freed in Malchow by the Red Army on May 2, 1945.

**SOURCES** The history of the Sachsenhausen subcamp at Glöwen was researched by the author for the GMS exhibition “Die Baracke 38—Jüdische Häftlinge im KZ Sachsenhausen 1936–1945” and described in the following two essays. “Zwangsarbeit im Beutelager—Das KZ Aussenlager Glöwen,” in *Havelberg: Kleine Stadt mit grosser Vergangenheit*, ed. Stadt Havelberg (Havelberg: Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1998), pp. 169–187; and “Zwangsarbeit von jüdischen KZ-Häftlingen in der Rüstungsproduktion in der Region Berlin-Brandenburg in der Schlussphase des Zweiten Weltkrieges—Die Aussenlager Glöwen und Schwarzheide des KZ Sachsenhausen,” in *Zwangsarbeit während der NS-Zeit in Berlin und Brandenburg—Formen, Funktion und Rezeption*, ed. Winfried Meyer and Klaus Neitmann (Potsdam: Verlag Berlin-Brandenburg, 2001), pp. 163–175. Earlier research did not follow the Pionki transports beyond Tschenstochau. See Sebastian Piatkowski, “Oboz pracy przymusowej dla Żydów w Pionkach,” *NaZag* 21 (n.d.): 14.

The SS was supposed to destroy the “Lager Glöwen” files at the beginning of 1945. Dynamit Nobel AG states it no longer has the relevant files. During the author’s research, he located handwritten documents of the factory and work security supervisor for the “Lager Glöwen,” which had been discovered by the Bundeswehr when removing ordnance and which are now located in the BLHA (Bestandssignatur: BLHA Pr. Rep. 75 Dynamit AG). The AG-S holds seven files of documents that are the results of research the author did in the BA-B, BLHA, WWA-D, IPN, AMS, and APR, as well as research done on location in Pionki, Havelberg, and Glöwen. The AG-S holds the interviews that the author’s colleagues Eva Brücker, Maïke Leffers, Anneke de Rudder, and Monika Schmidt and he made in 1996 with the Glöwen survivors Irachmil Bahir, Jizack Flekier, Abram Lancman, Amek Mandel, Joseph Rotbaum-Ribo, Mordechai Rozenczaig, Morris Rubinstein, and Marika Weinberger. The interviews were made in Israel, the United States, Britain, and Australia. Survivor Abraham Lancmann published his memories of Pionki, Glöwen, and Rathenow in *Młodość w czasie Zagłady*, trans. Anna Przedpelska-Trzeciakowska (Warsaw: “Rytm,” 2002).

An initiative by local pupils in 2005 to erect a monument at the former subcamp is documented in Thomas Irmer/Ulla Seeger, *Erinnerung an eine “geliebte Zeit”* (Berlin, 2007).

Thomas Irmer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BLHA, Schreiben an das Kommando des Rüstungsbezirks Potsdam, August 13, 1940, BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 75 Dynamit AG.

2. Sprengstoff-Erzeugungsmeldung vom Februar 1945, BA-B, R3/3053, Bl. 94. The report reveals that production in Glöwen was not great in comparison to other sites.

3. BLHA, Jahresbericht 1944 der Tätigkeit des Lagers Glöwen, January 17, 1945, und Anlage Schreiben des OKH an die DEMAG-Fahrzeugwerke, Falkensee, v. 29.6.1944, in Mitteilung des OKH an die B-Gutverwaltung der DAG in Glöwen, o.D., BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 75 DAG.

4. Schreiben an den Hauptausschuss Munition und Pulver, September 12, 1944, BA-B, R3, Nr. 3054, Bl. 362. The

letter indicates that it was intended to relocate a munitions factory from Bromberg in the same manner as the Pionki relocation. The letter includes the following: “Selbstverständlich soll gewahrt bleiben, dass die Mehrzahl der Produktionsanteile in den Händen der Stammfirmen des zu räumenden Werkes ist, sofern die militärischen Forderungen dieses vertretbar lassen” (Naturally, the majority of the production facilities will remain in the ownership of the firms being evacuated unless military requirements dictate otherwise).

5. Raul Hilberg, *Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden*, 3 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1990), 2:567.

6. Befehl Nr. 55 des Kommandanten des KZ Stutthof, August 16, 1944, AMS. Documents in the Stutthof State Museum include the transport list with the names of 499 women.

7. Interview with Joseph Ribo by Thomas Irmer, AG-S, Bestand B 38.

8. BA-L, ZdL, IV 406 AR 745/67 Aussage A.B.

9. ZdL IV AR 745/67d., pp. 233–234, Aussage N.G., and pp. 292–295, Aussage Jakob H.

10. Ibid., pp. 233–234, Aussage N.G.

11. ZdL IV AR 745/67, Schreiben von Abram W. of March 18, 1950; see also Lancmann, Abraham.

12. ZdL IV AR 745/67, Aussage von Gerda Z.

13. See Aufstellung SS-Wachmannschaft, AG-S, LAG X 3.

14. ZdL, AZ. IV 406 AR 745/67; see also IV 406 AR-Z 141/1971 (Rathenow).

15. BLHA, Vgl. Namensliste Werkschutz, BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 75 DAG.

16. BLHA, Vermerk des Betriebs- und Werkschutzleiters Otto Adams, February 22, 1945, BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 75 DAG.

17. Schnellbrief des OKH an den Hauptausschuss Pulver und Sprengstoff, December 18, 1944, Betr.: Umsetzung von 268 Juden (Häftlinge) von Pionki z.Zt. Glöwen, in BLHA, BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 75 DAG.

18. See IWM, CIOS-Report Item No. 2, File No. XXXII-38, “Explosives: Summary of Capacity and Production in Germany,” July 1945.

19. Schreiben des Sonderausschuss Pulver an das OKH, September 12, 1944, BA-B, R3, Nr. 3054, Bl. 365. For a corresponding meeting in Glöwen, the following were notified: Direktor Dr. Marquard, WASAG; Dr. Langmesser, DSC; Dr. Kühne, Verwertchemie; Direktor Ehringfeld, Eibia; Direktor Dr. Schulz, Wolff & Co.; Dr. Ott, Hauptausschuss Pulver und Sprengstoff; as well as Herr Stürk vom Sonderausschuss Pulver. See also BA-B, R3/3054, Bl. 331, Schreiben des Sonderausschuss Pulver an den Hauptausschuss Pulver und Sprengstoff of September 28, 1944, Betrifft Sitzung in Glöwen 28.9.1944, Vorgang: Verteilung von Maschinen etc. des Werkes Pionki.

20. Schreiben des OKH an die Waffen-SS des KZ Sachsenhausen of January 6, 1945, Betr.: Arbeitseinsatz der Häftlinge in Glöwen, in BLHA, BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 75 DAG.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Anlage zum Rundschreiben Nr. 14/45g., p. 3, in BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 75 Dynamit AG.

25. Angaben nach Bundesgesetzblatt Nr. 64/1806, Teil 1, 1977.

## GRÜNHEIDE

The Grünheide subcamp located on the eastern edge of Berlin, not far from Erkner, is not mentioned in the International Tracing Service’s (ITS) catalog of camps and prisons published in 1949.<sup>1</sup> A 1960s publication on Sachsenhausen lists the camp with the notation “barracks building.”<sup>2</sup>

According to a listing by the Stiftung Brandenburgische Gedenkstätten, the camp existed from the spring of 1944 to January 1945. Around 70 male prisoners were deployed as a construction detail at an SS station.<sup>3</sup>

A diploma thesis, prepared under the auspices of the Sachsenhausen Memorial, lists the camp as existing from the summer of 1944 to the beginning of 1945. The prisoners were used by the SS or the Wehrmacht.<sup>4</sup> Following the listing “according to camp statistics,” there were as many as 180 prisoners in the camp.<sup>5</sup> In an overview of all subcamps produced by the Sachsenhausen Memorial before 1990, it stated that the use of the prisoner labor was: “Barracks construction for SS war reporters, Wehrmacht buildings.”<sup>6</sup> A committee of former prisoners compiled a postwar list that mentions Grünheide as having 180 prisoners working at the “2. SS-[Bau]-Brigade.”<sup>7</sup> Another document prepared by a former prisoner states the following: “Grünheide: Small detachment thirty-five men. Barrack construction for SS war reporters. Center for propaganda reports.”<sup>8</sup>

It is said that in the summer of 1944 a transport of around 50 men from the Glau subcamp was sent to Grünheide.<sup>9</sup> The prisoners at first had to camp under the open sky before they established their first accommodation barrack in a forested area. The barrack was surrounded with barbed wire. SS-Unterscharführer Rausch of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) was in charge of construction.

It is thought that later another 100 prisoners were transferred from the Sachsenhausen main camp to Grünheide.<sup>10</sup> The Sachsenhausen change of status reports state that on June 1, 1944, there were 50 prisoners in the Grünheide subcamp. The highest number of prisoners is recorded for the end of October 1944 when 70 prisoners are registered at the camp. On February 12, 1945, there were still 65 prisoners at Grünheide.<sup>11</sup>

The prisoners went on to erect three more barracks, an air-raid bunker for the SS, and trenches made out of prefabricated slabs. The site was said to be overflow quarters for war reporters, where women also worked, although only one of the finished barracks is supposed to have been used.

The prisoners were Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, French, Belgians, and Norwegians. The camp elder was for a short time the criminal prisoner Curt Reuter. He was chosen

because he spoke French. He was a barrack elder in the main camp and from September 1943 worked on operations in the prisoners' infirmary.

The prisoners saw the camp at Grünheide as a subsidiary camp of the Berlin-Lichterfelde subcamp—they were supplied from there, and inspections were made from that camp. The camp was also controlled by the camp command in Lichterfelde through SS-Oberscharführer Erwin Seifert and SS-Obersturmführer Ludewig.

Security at the camp was provided by 12 to 15 SS from the RSHA. The camp leader was SS-Unterscharführer Rudolf Finger, who admitted to being the only SS man from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp based in Grünheide. He had been based at Sachsenhausen from the beginning of 1941, followed by three years at the Berlin-Kaiserallee commando and, from the end of August 1944, at the Berlin-Lichterfelde subcamp. He was transferred on August 28, 1944, to Grünheide, where according to his own statement he remained until February 1945.

There are no known instances of prisoner mistreatment in Grünheide, and no accusations were later made against the construction chief, the camp leader, and the SS guards. Finger, who later lived in the German Democratic Republic, denied being the camp leader in Grünheide when questioned by the General State Prosecutor of the German Democratic Republic. He stated that he was only a member of the guard. Finger was a member of the Seventh Sachsenhausen SS-Totenkopfwachbataillon, which was stationed in Berlin-Lichterfelde.

As the front approached, the whole Grünheide prisoner detachment was evacuated to Lichterfelde. In April 1945, some of the prisoners were sent via the Heinkel subcamp and then on the death march from the main camp to Mecklenburg.<sup>12</sup>

All that is known about criminal proceedings against those in charge is that the supposed camp leader, Finger, was interned as a "guard" in 1945 in the British internment camp at Esterwegen and was, according to his own statement, convicted by a jury in Bielefeld in December 1947.<sup>13</sup> His sentence was considered already served because of the time he spent as an internee in Esterwegen and Eselsheide.

Investigations begun in 1967 by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg ceased in 1971, as there were no grounds for any charges in respect to crimes of violence at Grünheide.<sup>14</sup> A request for legal assistance by the Zentralstelle in Cologne to the German Democratic Republic resulted in the former camp leader, Finger, being questioned in the German Democratic Republic. He was not a member of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) or any community organization but was nevertheless given a certificate of good character. He was said to be quiet, industrious, and willing to help. The West German investigating authorities were merely told that Finger had only been a member of the guard. The file was then closed.

**SOURCES** There are no known secondary sources on the Grünheide subcamp. The archival sources are found in the

BA-L and AG-S. There are a few archival sources in the BA-B and PRO.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990).

2. KaW-DDR, ed., *Damals in Sachsenhausen* (Berlin [East], 1967), p. 61.

3. SBG, Workshop Conference Binder "Die Aussenlager der Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen und Ravensbrück" (Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Ravensbrück 17. und 18. Oktober 2003).

4. AG-S, D.A. 5147: Uwe Hofschläger, "Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen" (Diplomarbeit, Freien Universität Berlin, 1997).

5. BStU, RHE-West 330/1, p 237.

6. AG-S.

7. BLHA, Pr. Br. Rep. 35 H, Nr. 8/1, p. 459.

8. IfZ, Ed 106/77, Aufstellung des ehemaligen Häftlings des KZ-Sachsenhausen Walter Nowak, n.d.

9. BA-L, IV 406, AR 2361/67, p. 10, Record of interview Wilhelm Fischer, October 24, 1967.

10. BA-L, IV 406, AR 2361/67, p. 63, Record of interview Curt Reuter, July 2, 1970.

11. AG-S, JSU 1, vols. 99 and 101.

12. BA-L, IV 406, AR 2361/67, p. 13, Record of interview Wilhelm Fischer, October 24, 1967.

13. PRO, WO 309/1765, List of Former Members of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp command office interned in the British CIC Esterwegen, probably 1945, various lists; here: AG-S, LAG X/3; BA-L, IV 406, AR 2361/67, p. 75, Schreiben der Gsta. DDR an die ZSSSta-K, June 9, 1970.

14. BA-L, IV 406, AR 2361/67.

## HENNIGSDORF

The Sachsenhausen subcamp at Hennigsdorf was established in October 1944 near the Hennigsdorf factories of the second-largest German electrical concern, the Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG). About 650 female concentration camp prisoners, most of them Polish women, were used for forced labor in the armaments production at Hennigsdorf, located to the northwest of Berlin. The first use of concentration camp prisoners in an industrial firm in the Berlin-Brandenburg region was probably planned in Hennigsdorf in 1940.

By 1940–1941, between 20 and 45 male prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp worked in a rolling mill of the Mitteldeutschen Stahl- und Walzwerke (Central German Steel and Rolling Mill) in Hennigsdorf. The company had been a part of the Flick concern since 1926. In May 1940, the board of directors of the rolling mill negotiated with SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Burböck of the Inspectorate of



Concentration Camps (IKL) in Oranienburg about details regarding transport, food, accommodation, and payment.<sup>1</sup>

The concentration camp prisoners were taken daily by truck to Hennigsdorf. On top of the work, which was physically demanding and done in 12-hour shifts, the prisoners had to unload scrap metal as well as clean the melting pots and change the fire clay stones in the blast furnaces.<sup>2</sup>

The Hennigsdorf factories of AEG to the northwest of Berlin, established in 1909–1910, produced in 1934–1935 some 10 percent of the total production of all AEG factories.<sup>3</sup> They manufactured products such as electric locomotives and industrial ovens and household devices such as refrigerators and insulation. With the beginning of the war, Hennigsdorf supplied components for air armaments, munitions, and tank construction. In Hennigsdorf the AEG used countless foreign workers from Western and Eastern Europe, as well as French and Soviet prisoners of war (POWs).<sup>4</sup> As part of the 1942–1943 “camp construction project” (*Lagerbauaktion*), around 20 barracks for more than 4,000 people were built to the west of the Hennigsdorf factory on the Hohenzollern Canal.

In July 1942, representatives of the AEG Hennigsdorf insulation material factory and the German occupation administration at the Łódź ghetto agreed on the use of 200 ghetto inmates for the process used to separate glimmer. The AEG representatives in Łódź stated: “As this work is a very simple process needing neither technical skill nor strength, children and youths can be used.” Glimmer, a mineral composition found in rocks deep under the earth, was used in the electrical industry as an insulation material. The glimmer supplied by AEG Hennigsdorf had to be cut by the ghetto inmates with knives and molding tools into three different sizes. The ghetto administration informed AEG that “in view of the specificities of the Ghetto and due to measures for the solution of the Jewish question no responsibility could be assumed for the actual use of the labor.” At the beginning of August 1942, an AEG skilled tradesman from Hennigsdorf taught 150 ghetto inmates how to separate glimmer. According to details from the Elder’s Council, there were 650 ghetto inmates at the end of 1942 and 500 in April 1943 involved in the production of glimmer, 45 percent of whom were youths. When production stopped because of AEG delivery problems, the ghetto administration threatened to withdraw the Jewish forced labor. It was reduced in June 1943 by about 50 percent, and in November 1943, AEG terminated the production contract supposedly because “the use of machines in cutting glimmer had progressed to such an extent that it was no longer profitable to split glimmer by hand and no longer responsible to use labor for such purpose, especially given the importance of labor for the war economy.”<sup>5</sup>

The Hennigsdorf subcamp, as with another subcamp at the AEG operations in Berlin-Köpenick, was one of the last subcamps established by the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1944 at an industrial enterprise. The majority of the 650 female concentration camp prisoners, who were transferred on October 10, 1944, from Ravensbrück to Hennigsdorf,

were Polish women arrested after the Warsaw Uprising. At the end of 1944, Hungarian Jewish women were transferred to Hennigsdorf.<sup>7</sup> There were probably also female prisoners from the Soviet Union,<sup>8</sup> as well as from Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and France. During that same time period between September 28 and October 9, 1944, around 680, mostly Polish female prisoners, were transferred to the subcamp established at the AEG-Kabelwerk Oberspree in Berlin-Köpenick.<sup>9</sup>

The Hennigsdorf subcamp was surrounded by two barbed-wire fences. It was located in former barracks for foreign workers located to the west of the AEG factory grounds. It included an infirmary, kitchen barracks, washing and toilet facilities, as well as rooms for the female SS guards.<sup>10</sup> “Hennigsdorf,” according to the then-25-year-old Janina Krafczyk from Warsaw, who together with her mother had been transported to the subcamp, “appeared luxurious in comparison to Ravensbrück because everyone had their own bed.”<sup>11</sup>

The SS initially gave the women civilian clothes, which were marked with a white-painted cross. The clothes probably originated from Jewish women who had been deported.<sup>12</sup> At the beginning of 1945, prisoner overalls were handed out to the women.

For some of the women, daily religious observance in the camp gave them a reference point for sticking together. Krafczyk stated, “We made a beautiful altar between the windows. . . . An altar with little flowers made from cable and a small cross. We turned to it when we prayed or sang.”<sup>13</sup>

The altar was constructed by the women out of bits of cable and plastic that they smuggled out of the factory. Some scratched into leftover materials drawings depicting, for example, the daily march to work. Those pieces were used as jewelry items to make presents or else for barter purposes.

While SS men guarded the external camp from the outside, inside the camp the female prisoners were watched by 32 SS women. The female SS also guarded the women on their daily 3-kilometer (1.9-mile) march to the factory and while working. They divided the women into different work detachments. It is said that some female SS treated the women brutally.<sup>14</sup>

Kept separately in a specially constructed building of the screw factory, the female concentration camp prisoners did skilled work in a variety of departments. They had to produce the mechanical detonators for mines and flak grenades, assemble aircraft engines, and execute drill and soldering work. The women were also involved in the production of gramophone records and processing glimmer.<sup>15</sup> They were taught by AEG civilian workers during the weekly, alternating 12-hour day and night shifts. The civilian workers treated the women differently: Krafczyk recalled that she “was drilling deep holes into the metal plates. . . . At one moment I lowered my head too low. The foreman jumped over to me, grabbed my head and pulled me up from behind. Apparently my hair had come very close to the drilling machine. When he saw that . . . he was very attentive, he seized me by the head. . . . He did not talk a great deal, indeed I never heard him talk. I

never saw him talk with the wardresses. But now how he scolded the wardress! Why did we not have scarves! The next day we all had scarves, which we wore only when in the factory.”<sup>16</sup> There were other AEG civilian workers who would not get involved: “There were two engineers, one for each shift. One hardly looked at me. Once the other noticed that the pistons were smoking because tin residue had made them filthy. . . . It was only he who would clean the pistons for me and would be friendly to me. The other one did nothing. I could have fallen over dead and he would not have noticed.”<sup>17</sup>

At the beginning of 1945, the shifts were reduced to eight hours because of material shortages. When the factory buildings were severely damaged during an air raid on March 18, 1945, the forced labor stopped completely. Instead, the female prisoners had to clean up rubble and later work on fortifications.<sup>18</sup>

When the subcamp was dissolved in April 1945, the women were forced on a death march to the Ravensbrück concentration camp. Some of the prisoners, including Krafczyk and her mother, remained at the village of Sommerfeld and were later liberated by a Polish detachment of the Red Army.<sup>19</sup> Others died along the way from exhaustion or were shot by the SS.<sup>20</sup> The remainder of the prisoners were forced to march to Ravensbrück.<sup>21</sup>

**SOURCES** Due to only fragmentary sources being available, all the more valuable are the details supplied by former female prisoners. The biography of Janina Krafczyk was put together by the author for the Sachsenhausen Memorial permanent exhibition “Die Baracke 39—Der ‘Alltag’ der Häftlinge des KZ Sachsenhausen” and the CD-ROM *Gegen das Vergessen*. For forced labor and AEG, see Thomas Irmer, “. . . eine Art Sklavenhandel—Zwangsarbeit bei AEG/Telefunken in Berlin und Wedding,” in *Zwangsarbeit in Berlin 1938–1945*, ed. ABR (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2003), pp. 154–166. On Berlin-Köpenick, see Irmer, “Zwangsarbeit von jüdischen KZ-Häftlingen in der Rüstungsproduktion in der Region Berlin-Brandenburg in der Schlussphase des Zweiten Weltkrieges—die Aussenlager Glöwen und Schwarzhöhe des KZ Sachsenhausen,” in *Zwangsarbeit während der NS-Zeit in Berlin und Brandenburg—Formen, Funktion und Rezeption*, ed. Winfried Meyer and Klaus Neitmann (Potsdam: Verlag Berlin-Brandenburg, 2001), pp. 163–175. On forced labor in Hennigsdorf, see Helmut Fritsch, *Zwangsarbeit in Hennigsdorf 1940 bis 1945: Eine Dokumentation* (Hennigsdorf, 2001).

Documents on forced labor at AEG Hennigsdorf are kept in the ASt-Hen, the BLHA, and BA-L. The AG-S contains the interviews with former female prisoners from the Hennigsdorf subcamp, including that of Krafczyk. YVA holds the correspondence with the Łódź ghetto administration.

Thomas Irmer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Aktenvermerk der Direktion der Mitteldeutschen Stahl- und Walzwerke Friedrich Flick KG, May 28, 1940, Betr.: Arbeitskräfte aus dem Konzentrationslager Oranienburg, ASt-Hen, Te VI/5/8.

2. BA-L, ZdL, Abschlussverfügung des Ermittlungsverfahren 24 AR 1/62.

3. Bericht AEG-Fabriken, BA, Deutsche Bank, P3362, p. 15.

4. For forced labor and AEG, see *ibid.*

5. All quotations from Korrespondenz Getto- Verwaltung/Ältestenrat/AEG Fabriken Hennigsdorf 1942/43, YVA, JM 919.

6. Überstellungsliste von K.L. Ravensbrück nach K.L. Sachsenhausen Arbeitslager Hennigsdorf, October 6, 1944, IPN.

7. Details from Erös Andor and Sandor Pal, Budapest, July 20, 1945, YVA, 015/2359, The Jewish Agency for Palestine, Abteilung für Dokumentation, Hennigsdorf, Protokoll Landeskomitee für die Fürsorge der Deportierten, Budapest, July 20, 1945. See also Veränderungsmeldung (Frauen-Lager), March 27, 1945, AG-S, Stärke- und Veränderungsmeldungen.

8. Veränderungsmeldung (Frauenlager), April 9, 1945, AG-S, Stärke- und Veränderungsmeldungen.

9. KZ Ravensbrück, Arbeitseinsatz: Arbeitslager Oberschöneweide (KZ Sachsenhausen), 1. Überstellung, September 28, 1944; Überstellungsliste von KL Ravensbrück nach KL Sachsenhausen, Arbeitslager Berlin-Oberspree (AEG), I. Überstellung: 300 Häftlinge, October 2, 1944; Überstellungsliste vom KL Ravensbrück nach KL Sachsenhausen, Arbeitslager Berlin-Oberspree (AEG), II. Überstellung: 400 Häftlinge, October 9, 1944, IPN.

10. Interview with Janina Krafczyk by Eva Brücker, 1996, AG-S, Bestand B’38/39.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. Aussage Fritz Witt, BA-L, ZdL Ermittlungsverfahren IV 406 AR 1846/68; and Interview with Janina Krafczyk, in AG-S, Bestand B’38.

15. Aussage von Dorothy P., April 20, 1950, ZdL, Ermittlungsverfahren IV 406 AR 1846/68.

16. Interview with Janina Krafczyk by Eva Brücker, 1996, AG-S, Bestand B’38/39.

17. *Ibid.*

18. Details from Erös Andor and Sandor Pal, Budapest, July 20, 1945, YVA, 015/2359, The Jewish Agency for Palestine, Abteilung für Dokumentation, Hennigsdorf, Protokoll Landeskomitee für die Fürsorge der Deportierten, Budapest, July 20, 1945.

19. Interview with Janina Krafczyk by Eva Brücker, 1996, AG-S, Bestand B’38/39.

20. Aussage Dorothy P., ZdL, Ermittlungsverfahren IV 406 AR 1846/68.

21. ZdL, Abschlussbericht Ermittlungsverfahren IV 406 AR 1846/68.

## KIEW

From July 1942 to spring 1943, a subcamp of Sachsenhausen was created in the city of Kiev, which was then part of the Soviet Union (today it is in the Ukraine). There is little information about this camp, perhaps because there were only four

or five prisoners transported to Kiev for work. According to the International Tracing Service entry for this camp, the inmates, all men, were brought to Kiev to assist in the opening of safes that belonged to Soviet authorities. They were employed for this activity by the Higher-SS and Police Leader (Höherer-SS und Polizeiführer, HSSPF).

**SOURCES** There are few primary and secondary sources on the Kiev subcamp of Sachsenhausen. Information for this entry comes from the Kiev entry in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979). Although not always consistent with other sources, the ITS catalog provides brief statistical information about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, and so on.

The Kiev subcamp is mentioned in one primary source stored at the AG-S in Oranienburg, in file group I/4, Index der Aussenkommandos und Aussenlager. However, no additional information, besides the fact that there was a work commando sent to Kiev, is provided.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## KLEINMACHNOW

In the summer of 1944, a subcamp of Sachsenhausen concentration camp for female prisoners was established at Kleinmachnow, near Berlin. It was located right on the factory premises of the Dreilinden Maschinenbau GmbH, a subsidiary of Robert Bosch GmbH. Organizationally, it reported to the main Sachsenhausen camp. The women in the camp were from the Ravensbrück concentration camp and had been selected by employees of the Dreilinden Maschinenbau GmbH to do forced labor for the armaments factory.

About 800 female prisoners, mostly young women, were transferred in September and October 1944 in two transports from the Ravensbrück women's concentration camp to the Kleinmachnow subcamp. As of March 30, 1945, precisely 749 prisoners, who with very few exceptions came from Poland, were interned there. They had been brought to Germany after the German occupiers crushed the Warsaw Uprising by the Home Army (Armia Krajowa). Among the prisoners were a number of Jewish women from Poland. They lived and survived in the camp using pseudonyms, revealing their Jewish origin only to a few fellow prisoners.

The subcamp consisted of an approximately 6,700-square-meter (72,118-square-feet) large factory floor, which was separated from the rest of the works by a double fence of barbed wire, the inner one of which was electrified. The air-raid shelter below the floor served as accommodation for the prisoners. At any given time, about 30 women had to stay in each of the unheated, dark and damp rooms. Working around the clock in 12-hour shifts, they carried out primarily precision work. What exactly they produced, the prisoners did not know; they were only told that they were making aircraft engine parts for Bosch. Their sole employer was the Dreilinden

Maschinenbau GmbH, which had been founded on behalf of the Reich Air Ministry and produced fuel injection pumps, magneto ignitions, starters, and other equipment especially for aircraft engines, all in accordance with Bosch designs.

As a rule, survivors reported that the German foremen and overseers treated them well, although the female SS guards hit them and tortured them, with roll calls lasting hours. Gynecological experiments were carried out on some of the prisoners at the Sachsenhausen main camp (according to other statements, also at Ravensbrück); one woman is said to have died from them. Other deaths are not known. One pregnant woman was sent back to Ravensbrück, and from there she was taken to Bergen-Belsen, where she gave birth to a child that died a few days later. Numerous survivors had gynecological problems after the detention, which they ascribed to a drug that had been added to their food to prevent menstruation.

The commandant of the Kleinmachnow subcamp was Walter Dankworth from Berlin, born April 4, 1903, who belonged to the Seventh SS-Wachbataillon Sachsenhausen. From 1941 to the end of the war, he was a member of the SS-Totenkopfverbände (Death's Head Units). Before that he had worked at Siemens as an engineer and had then volunteered to provide technical assistance to the police. After three months of military training, he was assigned to the guard company of Sachsenhausen and held guard duty in various subcamps. In December 1944, having been promoted in the meantime to SS-Unterscharführer, he took over the Kleinmachnow subcamp, which he ran up until its evacuation to the Sachsenhausen main camp. Eight guards were assigned to him, probably likewise members of the Seventh SS-Wachbataillon Sachsenhausen, as well as the camp's female guards.

Evidently there existed in the camp a small-scale barter system through which some women were able to get additional clothes and food. They sewed shopping bags from cleaning rags for the machines and also made jewelry from metal shavings. They exchanged these articles with some of the foremen and fitters for bread.

In April 1945, as the Red Army approached, the Kleinmachnow subcamp was evacuated, and the women were sent back to the Sachsenhausen main camp. Paul Vogelgsang, a manager at the Dreilinden Maschinenbau GmbH, had a train of streetcars made available for the transport, escorted by the female guards and watched by camp leader Dankworth. On April 22, 1945, the women, together with all other prisoners of Sachsenhausen, were driven to the infamous death march in the direction of Schwerin.

**SOURCES** Very little is known about the approximately 170 concentration camp subcamps in Berlin and its surroundings. The first study of the subcamp Kleinmachnow, Angela Martin, *„Ich sah den Namen Bosch.“ Polnische Frauen als KZ-Häftlinge in der Dreilinden Maschinenbau GmbH* (Berlin: Metropol, 2002), contains a substantial chapter about the previously unknown history of Dreilinden Maschinenbau GmbH and its deployment of forced laborers.



For Martin's report, 45 survivors were interviewed, while other eyewitnesses have recorded their memories of forced labor and relocations in writing. These sources can be seen at the Berliner Geschichtswerkstatt e.V. Preliminary Inquiry Files in the Sta. Köln, part of an effort to prosecute unidentified SS members suspected of murder and provide additional information about the living and working conditions in the camp and can be found in NWHStA-(D), Rep. 118/2109,2110. They contain numerous testimonies from survivors as well as records of depositions of the camp leader and a female guard. The proceedings were abandoned in May 1972 because the suspicion of violent crimes at the Kleinmachnow subcamp was impossible to prove even after all of the investigatory possibilities had been exhausted. The AG-R and AG-S have only lists of intakes and transfers that give indications of the occupancy of the Kleinmachnow subcamp and the prisoners' origins.

Angela Martin  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## KOLPIN

Alongside the establishment of the SS military training camp "Kurmark" in the Jamlitz region, only 100 kilometers (62 miles) from Berlin, the density of SS duty stations in the area surrounding the capital of the German Reich increased further from the summer of 1943 on with the emergence of the SS garrison headquarters Bad Saarow.

It was likewise in the summer of 1943 that the SS-Leadership Main Office (SS-Führungshauptamt, FHA) started two related projects in the Fürstenwalde/Bad Saarow/Scharmützelsee area east of Berlin.

Simultaneously with the relocation of its offices to the Bad Saarow area from Berlin, which was in danger of bombardment, the FHA began a large building project, the construction of an underground intelligence center in the Rauener Mountains south of Fürstenwalde.

The two projects were apparently connected. Both an overflow camp for SS duty stations and a large intelligence bunker were built in the space, which was in use from the second half of the year 1943 onward.

The project "relocation of SS duty stations" (*Verlagerung von SS-Dienststellen*) out of the Reich capital was carried out from the end of July 1943 under the code name "Siegfried."<sup>1</sup>

The SS garrison headquarters that was established for these two projects, Bad Saarow, encompassed an area from Fürstenwalde to south of Beeskow as well as from Storkow to the Schlaubetal (Schlaube valley).<sup>2</sup> As of August 9, 1943, there also existed an "SS-Standortverwaltung Bad Saarow." Several subcamps of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp—Bad Saarow (also mistakenly called Ketschendorf), Fürstenwalde, Storkow, Spreenhagen, and Kolpin—were located from 1943 on within the jurisdiction of this garrison headquarters.

The Kolpin subcamp was closely connected with the Bad Saarow subcamp. The SS-Zentralbauleitung Bad Saarow was

headed by SS-Untersturmführer Hans-Gustav Bauer, who had been born in Nürnberg in 1912. As of May 1944, project offices for the central construction administration were located adjacent to the main building sites at Bad Saarow, as well as at Storkow, Trebnitz, and Kolpin,<sup>3</sup> each of which was also a subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

The camp leader was SS-Unterscharführer Karl Jüngling, who had previously been briefly in command of the Lieberose subcamp.<sup>4</sup> After 1945, while in the British internment camp at Esterwegen, he stated that he held this position from October 20, 1944, to February 2, 1945.<sup>5</sup> The camp was guarded by 25 to 30 ethnic Germans.<sup>6</sup>

One SS-Hauptscharführer Müller, said to have been responsible for Kolpin, reported "good and friendly treatment" of the prisoners. He also claimed to have tried to get additional food for them. His actual role, however, is unknown.<sup>7</sup> The block elder in block one was political prisoner Wilhelm Kottkamp.<sup>8</sup> The foreman in Kolpin is said to have been the prisoner Blutschuth.<sup>9</sup>

According to German ethnologist Hellmut Draws-Tychsen, who was roll-call clerk at the Bad Saarow subcamp until April 1944, the subcamps at Bad Saarow, Storkow, Spreenhagen, and Kolpin were considered one unified labor camp. SS records term Bad Saarow a work camp, and Trebnitz, Storkow, and Spreenhagen as labor details.

The Kolpin outside detail, however, was not listed separately in the SS records. It may have been a sublabor detail of the Bad Saarow subcamp.

According to accounts given by former prisoners, the camp was established in the summer of 1944 and accommodated between 150 and 400 prisoners. Other sources, however, suggest that the Kolpin subcamp was set up only in the fall of 1944.<sup>10</sup>

It is documented that the prisoners were deployed in the building of overflow quarters for the Office of Foreign Affairs/Counterintelligence of the Wehrmacht, later absorbed in the Military Office of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA).

The camp was dissolved on February 15, 1945.

**SOURCES** Scant documents on the prehistory of the camp are found in the BA-B (Collection NS 33). Memoirs of former prisoners and information on the perpetrators are preserved in the AG-S and at BLHA.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, NS 33/107, fol. 224.
2. BA-B, NS 33/107, fol. 189, Map of the SS-Standortverwaltung "Bad Saarow," n.d.
3. BA-B, NS 3/1072, fol. 139R.
4. AG-S, LAG XI/9, fol. 8.
5. AG-S, LAG X/3, List of the former SS members at the KZ Sachsenhausen who were held at the British internment camp at Esterwegen.
6. AG-S, LAG XI/9, fol. 8.

7. According to former political prisoner Willy Kühne, AG-S, Collection BLHA Potsdam, Pr. Br. Rep. 35H, vol. 12/2, shelf mark D 30 A/12/2 B, fol. 68–69.

8. AG-S, Collection BLHA Potsdam, Pr. Br. Rep. 35H, vol. 10/2, shelf mark D 30 A/10/2 A, fol. 138, confirmation of Wilhelm Kottkamp's detention by the VVN Essen.

9. AG-S, Collection BLHA Potsdam, Pr. Br. Rep. 35H, vol. 10/2, shelf mark D 30A/10/2 B, fol. 37, questionnaire of the former prisoner Heinrich Deichmann at the Bad Saarow subcamp.

10. AG-S, LAG XI/9, fol. 8.

## KÖNIGS WUSTERHAUSEN

“Besides the clearance detail, which remained in Łódź until it fell to the Russians, there are also other people who survived for much stranger reasons. With the help of Biebow and his deputy Seifert, about five hundred Jews, mostly foremen and their families (there were even thirty children among them) were kept in a tailor's shop under the pretext that they had to dismantle the workshops. This enabled the five hundred to remain in Łódź until October 20, 1944, at which point the women were taken to Ravensbrück, while the men followed the workshops to Königs Wusterhausen, a labor detail of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus reads the concise history of the origins of the Sachsenhausen subcamp at Königs Wusterhausen, as recorded by Gerald Reitlinger.

In connection with the large-scale deportation of Jewish and non-Jewish forced laborers to the so-called Old Reich to strengthen the struggling National Socialist war economy, a subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp was established in the fall of 1944 in the Brandenburg city of Königs Wusterhausen, southeast of Berlin.<sup>2</sup>

Its origin can be traced back directly to the Führer's decree to the German Housing Relief Service (Deutsche Wohnungshilfswerk, DWH), from September 9, 1943. Reichswohnungskommissar Robert Ley was in overall charge of the DWH, the last of the emergency housing programs in National Socialist Germany, intended to create temporary homes to accommodate “national comrades” who had been bombed out.<sup>3</sup>

On November 19, 1943, Reichsminister Albert Speer, in his dual capacity as commissioner for the Four Year Plan and plenipotentiary for the building industry, issued for the Berlin firm Kelterborn & Stenvers the “War Contract No. 160—Urgency level domestic 43 Y w 1,” for the construction of 4,500 temporary homes made of light concrete in the Litzmannstadt (Łódź) ghetto.<sup>4</sup> Although production hardly advanced beyond the testing and preparation phase in the time remaining prior to the evacuation of the ghetto in August 1944, the number of Jewish men and women sent there to do the work grew constantly.<sup>5</sup>

When the approaching Red Army made the liquidation of the ghetto unavoidable, the German ghetto administration

official responsible for the construction of temporary homes, Franz Seifert, searched for a production site in the Old Reich and finally decided on Königs Wusterhausen.<sup>6</sup>

As Reitlinger suggests, it is in fact unusual that a large number of the prisoners (approximately 500 Jewish men, women, and children) working to produce temporary homes in the Litzmannstadt ghetto, after dismantling and loading production facilities and raw materials onto freight trains, were taken directly to the Old Reich, thus avoiding the more usual—and life-threatening—selection process at the Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp.<sup>7</sup> However, the information available suggests that pragmatic rather than humanitarian motives were at play here. Both the ghetto official Seifert, who was pressing ahead with the relocation of the temporary homes factory, and Fritz Stenvers, the partner at the Berlin firm Kelterborn & Stenvers responsible for the construction of the temporary homes, were very interested in utilizing the experience and knowledge of the Jewish prisoners already working in the Litzmannstadt ghetto producing temporary homes. They were joined by the head of the labor department in the ghetto, Aron Jakubowicz, who was the deputy of the Jewish elder there, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski.

Whereas the men were first taken to the so-called quarantine at Sachsenhausen, women and children were brought to the Ravensbrück women's camp. Eventually, they were transferred to Königs Wusterhausen in what appears to have been a total of three transports. In November 1944, after civilian construction workers had prepared the terrain, a first group of approximately 150 men from Sachsenhausen was brought to Königs Wusterhausen to erect the buildings on the site. A second transport followed just before Christmas 1944, and finally, on February 27, 1945, approximately 250 women (among them several Hungarian Jews) were transferred from Ravensbrück to Königs Wusterhausen. As a result, families that had initially been separated by the transport from the dissolved Litzmannstadt ghetto were reunited at Königs Wusterhausen. Still, due to the chaotic conditions, the effective production of temporary homes was no longer possible. Instead, the prisoners were used to do other jobs such as manufacturing ammunition boxes and fieldwork outside the camp.

Statements collected in Israel in 1971 from former prisoners unanimously contend that there were no intentional murders in the Königs Wusterhausen subcamp. Nevertheless, even here at least four women and a small child died due to the inhumane conditions, lack of hygiene, poor nutrition, and insufficient medical care. There are additional indications that others died from exhaustion or were murdered on the death march from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp to Rostock following the evacuation of the camp in April.

The camp commandant at Königs Wusterhausen was Willi Seifert from East Prussia. He was in command of about a dozen SS supervisors from the Seventh SS-Wachbataillon Sachsenhausen, who were responsible for guarding the camp. The supervision of the female prisoners was the responsibility

of three female SS guards, one of whom was accused of particular cruelty in several witnesses' statements.

The evacuation of the camp by the SS guard forces in April 1945 apparently could not be carried out as planned. It had been intended to be accomplished in several stages, but it seems that only the first group (about one-third of the prisoners) was taken to Sachsenhausen and then forced to take part in the infamous death march toward Schwerin. After the SS guard forces had fled the camp in haste, the remaining prisoners were freed by the Red Army on April 26, 1945. Because of the confusion, however, the camp appears to have been shelled mistakenly by Soviet tanks, resulting in further deaths.

The subcamp was not the only forced labor camp in Königs Wusterhausen. Several other camps of different kinds for foreign workers existed in the city and the surrounding area. This was revealed through investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg in 1966. During the course of these investigations, the former camp commander, Seifert, declared himself insane in order to avoid prosecution. In June 1971, the case was closed, as the depositions of former prisoners in Israel did not allege any homicides, which at this time were still within the statute of limitations and therefore would have been legally pursuable.<sup>8</sup>

**SOURCES** The only historical account of the Sachsenhausen subcamp at Königs Wusterhausen is Frank Stier, *Kriegsauftrag 160: Behelfsheimbau im Ghetto Litzmannstadt (Łódź) und im KZ-Aussenlager Königs Wusterhausen durch das Deutsche Wohnungshilfswerk* (Berlin, 1999). This article is based on Stier's book. According to Stier, the city council of Königs Wusterhausen commissioned research into the history of the subcamp 50 years after the end of the war, acting on the initiative of David Grünstein, who as a young man had been held prisoner at Königs Wusterhausen. For the earliest reference to the Königs Wusterhausen subcamp, see Gerald Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung: Hitlers Versuch der Ausrottung der Juden Europas 1939–1945*, German trans. by J.W. Brügel, 4th ed. (Berlin, 1961), p. 342n., citing Bendet Herschkovitch, "The Ghetto in Litzmannstadt," *YAJS* 5 (1950): 85–122.

The few primary sources discovered to date on the Königs Wusterhausen subcamp are preserved at the ASt-KöW, AG-S, APŁ, BA-B, as well as ZdL (now BA-L) and others. They are cited in the above-mentioned publication. Probably the most important of them are the testimonies of former prisoners, recorded at Tel Aviv in the early 1970s and now held in BA-L.

Frank Stier  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Quotation in Gerald Reitlinger, *Die Endlösung: Hitlers Versuch der Ausrottung der Juden Europas 1939–1945*, German trans. by J.W. Brügel, 4th ed. (Berlin, 1961), p. 342n., citing Bendet Herschkovitch, "The Ghetto in Litzmannstadt," *YAJS* 5 (1950): 121.

2. Anhang, Schreiben des Stellvertretenden Bürgermeisters von Königs Wusterhausen an den Landrat von Teltow, September 21, 1944, BA-B, DP 3 V 43/70.

3. Dr. Fischer-Dieskau, legislative measures of the Reichswohnungskommissar, BA-B, NS 41 RAM 1515, fol. 170–172.

4. Reichsminister Speer, Kriegsauftrag 160, APŁ, 554 Reichsminister Speer DWH, fol. 6.

5. Beschäftigtenberichte, Aktennotizen Auskämungsaktion APŁ, GV 219, fol. 16–17.

6. Telegram from Stenvers to Seifert, September 5, 1944, APŁ, GV 557, n.p.

7. BA-L, ZdL NL Sh IV AR/2704/66.

8. Ibid.

## KÜSTRIN

According to a survey on the subcamps of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, there was one at Küstrin-Fasterheide from May 16, 1943, to April 30, 1945, for 300 male prisoners who were deployed at the Deutsche Zellwerke AG, Phrix-Werke, IG Farben.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the former commandant of Sachsenhausen, Anton Kaindl, stated while interned in a British camp that there were approximately 300 prisoners at Küstrin.<sup>2</sup> Similar details were published by the Antifakomitee (Anti-Fascism Committee) of the German Democratic Republic, which speaks of 300 prisoners at the "labor camp Fasterheide, cellulose factory (Phrix-Werke) IG Farben."<sup>3</sup> The Sachsenhausen Memorial, on the other hand, lists a total of 500 prisoners for the camp.<sup>4</sup> A list put together by former prisoners, meanwhile, gives the number as about 400 prisoners, who they state were used for the erection of army buildings.<sup>5</sup> Another prisoner recalled immediately after the war: "Building project (armaments factory), approximately four hundred men, mostly French, physical condition satisfactory, as the French frequently received care packages from the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross). Evacuated to Buchenwald in February 1945."<sup>6</sup> The French survivors' organization for the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, however, only gives the names of 18 French prisoners for Küstrin. In the official list of the International Tracing Service (ITS), the Küstrin subcamp is referred to as "labor camp Fasterheide." It was mentioned on May 17, 1943, for the first time as having 30 prisoners, but on May 25, 1943, that number was already put at 300.<sup>7</sup> Whatever the case, there were still 282 prisoners in Küstrin in early July 1943.<sup>8</sup> The name Fasterheide was not actually known to the prisoners because the same camp had previously accommodated foreign forced laborers and was then called Fasterheide. The forced laborers, like the later concentration camp prisoners, were deployed at the Zellulose- & Zellwolle AG. It is possible that the concentration camp prisoners were accommodated in two separate camps because a number of the eyewitnesses do not recall any Soviet prisoners or a deployment in the tank factory. The camp was located about 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) north of Küstrin, directly at the mouth of the Warthe River. The factory was 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) from the camp. A Soviet prisoner-of-war (POW) camp also existed close by the subcamp.



According to SS records, the number of prisoners remained relatively constant between July 1943 and July 1944 at just under 300. The camp reached its highest occupancy, probably with 373 prisoners, in early September 1944, whereas in early October 1943, there were only 283 prisoners at Küstrin. The camp must have been dissolved between January 13 and February 12, 1945.<sup>9</sup> In fact, a survivor later stated he had been held prisoner at Küstrin from June 1943 to January 1945.<sup>10</sup> Wachmann Eduard Weigelt mentions January 30, 1945, as the end of his assignment at Küstrin.<sup>11</sup> When the camp was dissolved, one group of prisoners was evacuated on foot to Sachsenhausen. Whether or not prisoners were killed during this march is a controversial question among the survivors. Other prisoners were brought to Buchenwald upon evacuation from Küstrin. No evidence exists to prove the assumption of the Zentralstelle in Cologne that the prisoners had to march to Lübben, perhaps to the Sachsenhausen subcamp there, from which point they were taken on trains to Buchenwald.

Apparently, there existed two additional labor details beyond the deployment of prisoners in a paper mill of the Zellwerke AG, where the prisoners, divided into four groups, were assigned to concrete work and occasionally to the construction of temporary homes outside the factory.

For one, according to an account by Soviet prisoner J.F. Potapow, the prisoners worked with the most primitive means, even for building a tank factory and for the repair of vehicles and tanks in a small mechanical workshop. The erection of the tank factory was stopped in the summer of 1944. Repair of the tanks was sabotaged. It seems that prisoners were also used for unloading wood at the port. The camp, consisting of four barracks and a kitchen, was secured by barbed wire and guard towers. One of the block elders was named Stephan. The camp elder was political prisoner Erich Czechor, who enjoyed the confidence of the camp command and was even allowed to go on leave to the town of Küstrin with an escort. He helped the Soviet prisoners get additional food, shoes, and cigarettes. The cigarettes made it possible to put the guards in a lenient mood. Within the camp, perhaps in a separate part of it, there were Ukrainians, Russians, and Poles alongside the Germans. The working conditions were particularly bad for the Russians, and the guards were cruel to them. A bond of solidarity existed among Soviet and German political prisoners in the camp, which the camp elder Czechor called the "illegal camp committee." There were also French, Belgian, and Dutch prisoners at Küstrin.

Czechor was the camp elder from the late summer of 1943 to 1944 and also served this duty later at the subcamp Briesen. In his capacity as block elder at the main camp, he behaved sadistically toward Polish prisoners. It is believed that he had been an SS member earlier and was demoted because of his Communist activities and brought to the concentration camp. According to his statements, he was Obertruppführer at the Reich Labor Service and was suspected of maintaining contacts with subversive persons in Kassel. Ac-

cording to a 1933 document from the Hannover Police, Czechor, who joined the Nazi Party in the same year, stated that he went undercover as "Commander of the anti-fascists at Hann[ersche] Münden" in order "to gain valuable elements from the communist movement for the National Front."<sup>12</sup> Within the Nazi movement, he belonged to the group around the Strasser brothers. In Küstrin, he appointed at first only Germans as block elders and foremen but eventually also allowed Russians as barracks elders and foremen. Later, Paul Wolf of Magdeburg is said to have been camp elder. According to his own account, Karl Heinz Lorenzen was camp elder for six to seven weeks immediately after the departure of Czechor. He said he later acted as foreman of the temporary home building detachment in Küstrin.

In December 1944, a group of prisoners left Küstrin and marched south on foot, ostensibly in the direction of Lübben, where they were allegedly brought to Buchenwald in railroad cars.<sup>13</sup>

The camp's first leader, from the summer of 1943 to the turn of the year 1943–1944, is supposed to have been SS-Sturmbannführer Wilhelm Hermann Heidrich, who was born in 1886 in Idar-Oberstein. He is also referred to as commander of a guard detachment and later became leader of the Briesen subcamp. One SS-Unterscharführer Möckel, who has not been precisely identified, demonstrably acted as "detachment commander" at the "Küstrin labor camp" at the end of 1944. Various prisoners testified that he did nothing that deserves particular blame. A prisoner, who was at Küstrin from December 1943 to December 1944, named a certain Novotny, who hailed from the Sudetenland, as camp leader. On the other hand, he identified SS-Führer Ernst Möckel as head of the labor detail at Küstrin.

Several other SS leaders are known by name, including the chief of the guards, Gustav Berndt, who stated he served at Küstrin from May 1943 to February 1, 1945; the Wachmänner Hans Bitto, who claimed he was at Küstrin until March 1945; Willi Dalügge; Eduard Weigelt, who specified his exact dates for Küstrin as May 28, 1943, to January 30, 1945; Rottenführer Hans-Eduard Poppe; Josef Fells; and a cook, the ethnic German SS-Oberschütze Johann Kriks. Some 25 to 30 privates belonged to the guard forces.

Wachmann Poppe was denazified in 1948 in Bielefeld in a court proceeding and fined 500 Deutsche Mark (DM) because of his affiliation with the SS. He had previously been interned in the British-occupied zone, as were the Wachmänner Dalügge, Weigelt, Berndt, and Bitto.

The presumed first leader of the camp, SS-Sturmbannführer Heidrich, probably died in 1946 in a British internment camp.

From 1967 to 1970, the Central Office in Ludwigsburg and Cologne inconclusively investigated those responsible for the camp. The investigators considered the excesses associated by a Soviet survivor with Küstrin to have been confused with the motor pool detachment Wald of the Sachsenhausen main camp.<sup>14</sup> The German Democratic Republic also processed a

request for judicial assistance from the Central Office in Cologne, but their investigations did not result in any evidence of the killing of prisoners.<sup>15</sup>

The Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg also briefly investigated accusations against the former camp elder Czechor for abusing prisoners at the main camp.<sup>16</sup>

**SOURCES** Aside from the occasional mention in more general surveys, there is no specific literature on this subcamp. Documents are to be found above all at the BA-L and AG-S. The memoirs *Die unsichtbare Front*, and Karl Heinz Lorenzen, *Haltungen haben einen Preis* (Flensburg, 2002), contain references to Küstrin.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-S, D.A. 5147: Uwe Hofschläger, “Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen” (Master’s thesis, Freie Universität Berlin, 1997). See also the list at AG-S, n.d.

2. BA-B, film 42053, NI-280, deposition of Anton Kaindl, June 15, 1946.

3. KaW-DDR, ed., *Damals in Sachsenhausen* (Berlin, 1967).

4. Conference papers of the workshop SBG, ed., “Die Aussenlager der Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen und Ravensbrück” (Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Ravensbrück, October 17–18, 2003).

5. Compilation, n.d., BLHA, Pr-Br. Rep. 35H No. 8/1.

6. Compilation, n.d., Walter Nowak, IfZ, München Ed 106/77.

7. *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 268.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 577.

9. AG-S, JSU 1, vol. 101.

10. AG-S, D 30 A/10/1B, fol. 74.

11. PRO, WO 309/1784.

12. BA-L, IV 406 AR 218/67, supplement, n.p.

13. BA-L, IV 406 AR 218/67, fol. 263, deposition of Georg Brinkmann on August 15, 1969.

14. AG-S, LAG XII/5, final decree of the Central Office in Cologne, July 6, 1970.

15. BA-B/SAPMO, DP 3/1965.

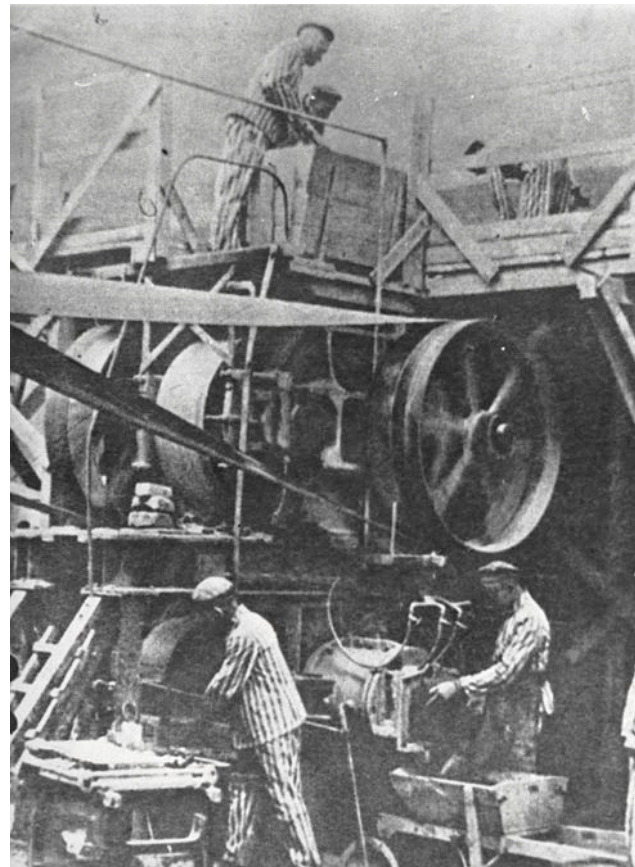
16. BA-L, IV 406 AR 218/67, supplement, decree of July 24, 1967, n.p.

## LEHNITZ [AKA KLINKERWERK]

Beginning in August 1938, the SS assigned prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp to build what was to be the world’s largest brickworks (*Klinkerwerk*), close to a lock just north of Lehnitz, near Oranienburg. The location was chosen both for its proximity to the main camp, which provided the labor, and because it was possible to transport the bricks at low cost on the Hohenzollern Kanal (the

present-day Oder-Havel Kanal), which was part of the Gross-Schiffahrtsweg Berlin-Stettin (main Berlin-Stettin shipping route). A section of the site had already been in use since 1936 as a firing range by the SS-Totenkopfstandarte (Death’s Head Regiment), which was stationed at Oranienburg Castle.

The rationale behind the project was the National Socialist desire to promote its image through monumental architecture, particularly the redevelopment of Berlin into the projected world capital of “Germania.” There was to be a north-south axis leading to a “Great Square” with a “Great Hall” that was to have a capacity of 180,000 people, the creation of which would have destroyed all of the historic fabric in its path. Responsible for the realization of Hitler’s megalomaniac ideas was Albert Speer in his capacity as Generalbauinspektor für die Reichshauptstadt Berlin, an authority created in 1937. The necessary bricks were to have been produced at the Lehnitz brickworks. To this end, the SS founded the Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke GmbH (German Earth and Stone Works, Ltd., DEST). The clay came from a pit at nearby Zehlendorf. The large-scale brickworks with its modern tunnel kilns and drying presses was to have been a model SS enterprise with the highest economic and technical stan-



Undated photograph of prisoners performing forced labor at the Lehnitz (Klinkerwerk) subcamp.

USHMM WS #19179, COURTESY OF AG-S

dards. However, since the wrong clay was chosen for this process, the project turned out to be an expensive mistake, demonstrating the inability of the SS to achieve efficient production in their concentration camp enterprises. To cover up the fiasco, they switched to the traditional wet-press method with artificial drying for the bricks. The rebuilding effort, which dragged on for years, was managed by the engineer Erduin Schondorff, whom the SS subsequently entrusted with running all of the brickworks throughout the German Reich and in the occupied countries. The prisoners had to rip out the tunnel kilns with their hands. In 1942, a policy was adopted for the whole German Reich—not least because of this experience—to bring the prisoners to the factories rather than, as in the early phase of the concentration camp system, to bring the factories to the concentration camps.

In the early years, about 1,500 prisoners marched daily from the Sachsenhausen main camp to the wooded area at the Klinkerwerk for construction of the enormous workshop halls, laying out the docks, and erection of the pertinent factory buildings and dwellings. They had to do the construction work in a primitive manner, with only wheelbarrows and shovels. The Klinkerwerk outside detail was seen as a particularly frightening punishment and even a death sentence. “Every prisoner would rather accept any other labor detail than being sent to the brickworks. . . . The fact is that the brickworks has gotten a bad reputation among the prisoners, because the wastage of human lives is so huge. . . . As the prisoners are available in unlimited numbers and are so incredibly cheap (after all, a dead man costs nothing more than a telegram to his mother or some other person), it really doesn’t matter if today there are only three dead bodies and tomorrow thirty. Indeed, in the end the brickworks is little more than a regular execution site.”<sup>1</sup>

The average survival time for the deployment at the Klinkerwerk was estimated at six months. Every day prisoners died there from exhaustion or committed suicide. They were shot dead “while attempting to escape” if they crossed the chain of sentries in their despair. They sank into the moor or the ditches, fell into the water while unloading barges, or were dragged to their death by the carts. “A turning platform was intentionally prepared so that the carts overturned and it was impossible for the four members of the crew to lift it up again. Many prisoners were beaten to death with clubs while doing this job. The so-called chain of sentries was drawn so tight that no prisoner was able to take more than two steps from the cart. Those who collapsed from exhaustion and hunger were killed by sharpshooters standing by with shots in the head.”<sup>2</sup>

It was a place of suffering, particularly for Jews, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and those individuals classified as asocial who had been arrested in 1938 as part of the operation “Arbeitsscheu Reich” (Reich work-shy) but also for political prisoners rated as “recidivist,” prisoners from occupied regions, and all other groups of prisoners that were supposed to be subjected to particularly oppressive measures and disrespect. After 12 hours of work, which in

principle had to be done at double time, the returning prisoners pulled a cart with the day’s deceased and injured back to the main camp. In particular, among the workers in the clay pits, there were hardly any survivors. According to the reminiscences of prisoner Harry Naujoks, one of the camp commandants, SS-Obersturmbannführer Hermann Heidrich, was fond of repeating the phrase: “People here are either healthy or dead.” On the firing range, SS privates used prisoners who had to do construction and earthworks in adjacent areas as living targets. “We had soon found out that the SS privates were far less interested in shooting at the targets than they were at us prisoners, and directly ‘hunted’ individuals pushing wheelbarrows.”<sup>3</sup> In one 1942 massacre, between 180 and 200 homosexuals were killed.

In 1941, the Klinkerwerk was given the status of an independent subcamp of Sachsenhausen, with its own administration. The prisoners had to build a barrack complex southeast of the workshop hall, which was surrounded by an electrified fence. After its completion in April 1941, only the prisoners of the Speer detachment came each day from the main camp. The stone-processing works, which was constructed by this detachment from 1940 on, was to hew Swedish granite and other valuable stones in order to produce clinker stones. It was, however, never completed, because the planning for the monumental “Germania” was deferred due to war developments. Instead, beginning in 1942, the prisoners of the Speer detachment had to disassemble salvaged material such as cables and mines from the occupied countries and to load any precious metals of military importance regained onto ships.

In 1942–1943, the brickworks was partly adapted for arms production. By the middle of 1944, 10,000 mortar shell slugs were produced in Lehnitz every day. To achieve that, a foundry was built, where the prisoners had to carry the molten metal in so-called bags from the smelters to the molds. This “bag carrying” resulted in horrible burns and was also calculatedly used to murder prisoners. The brick laboratory, which had initially developed alternative methods of processing clay to replace the failed dry-press concept, experimented now—in the interest of Speer, who since 1942 was also armaments minister—with the use of ceramics for explosives in order to save steel.

The exact number of prisoners at the Klinkerwerk subcamp, and likewise the number of deceased, is unknown. At the beginning, 1,600 to 2,000 prisoners worked in the factory and in the clay pit. About 80 prisoners were deployed in the bakery, established in 1939 next to the brickworks, which produced bread and baked goods for the SS troop camp and the SS duty stations in Oranienburg and the surrounding area, as well as for the Sachsenhausen and Ravensbrück concentration camps. These prisoners were also housed in the Lehnitz barracks. In 1944, the SS counted 3,600 prisoners in Lehnitz. The camp had been planned for 1,500 people. In 1943, however, about 3,000 prisoners were crowded together in the 10 lodging barracks. Early in 1944, a two-story brick building was added to the camp for the prisoners working in the mortar-shell foundry.



In the Cologne Trial against SS-Oberscharführer Otto Kaiser (1963–1965 and 1967–1970), it was established that there were two to three deaths every day in Lehnitz, although the dying who could still be carried back to the camp were not included in this figure. Many victims were buried on the spot; however, most of the corpses were cremated in the crematory of the main camp. Following an order issued in December 1944, stating that all traces of the cremated remains around the crematory were to be hidden, in late January 1945, 8 to 10 tons of human ashes were scattered into the canal in front of the brickworks. On April 10, 1945, an Allied bombing raid destroyed most buildings at the brickworks. More than 200 prisoners, perhaps even more than 270, lost their lives that day; the dismembered bodies in the bomb craters were never recovered. For this reason, the site of the brickworks became a large cemetery.

Following the bombing raid, the SS dissolved the Lehnitz subcamp and sent the prisoners back to the main camp. Upon its evacuation on April 20 and 21, 1945, the prisoners were forced to set out on a death march; the weak and sick remained behind and were liberated by the Soviet and Polish Army on April 22.

In the October 1947 Berlin Sachsenhausen Trial before the military tribunal of the Soviet military administration in Germany, the former commandant of the Lehnitz subcamp, Heinrich Fresemann, was sentenced to life imprisonment, together with 13 other principal defendants. They were sent to the Soviet Union, to Workuta on the Arctic Ocean, and used as forced laborers in the coal pits. Fresemann died there in the spring of 1948.

**SOURCES** The most intense research on the Lehnitz Klinkerwerk subcamp has been done by Joachim Müller. In the book that he and Andreas Sternweiler edited, *Homosexuelle Männer im KZ Sachsenhausen* (Berlin, 2000), one of the contributions deals with the cruel events at the brickworks: Müller, “‘Unnatürliche Todesfälle’: Vorfälle in den Aussenbereichen Klinkerwerk, Schiessplatz und Tongrube,” pp. 216–258. In two editions of the *GeRU*—10–11 (2001): 103–104—Müller summarized the results of his research: “Das Klinkerwerk Oranienburg: Aussenlager und Vernichtungsgelände des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen.” There is also brief information in the pamphlet offered by the Sachsenhausen Memorial, Kerstin Engelhardt, *Strafkommando und Aussenlager Klinkerwerk 1938–45* (Sachsenhausen, 1997). It is based upon the investigations by Müller. An open-air documentary prepared by Bernd Graff and sponsored by the Sachsenhausen Memorial, shown 2000–2001 in the courtyard of the Oranienburg Castle, presented the history of the Klinkerwerk in text and image; it will be shown at the memorial as *Geschichtspark KZ-Aussenlager Klinkerwerk*. Further information is to be found in Heinz Heger, *Die Männer mit dem Rosa Winkel*, 3rd ed. (1973; Gifkendorf, 1989); Albert Christel, *Apokalypse unserer Tage: Erinnerungen an das KZ Sachsenhausen*, ed. Manfred Ruppel and Lothar Wolfstetter (Frankfurt am Main, 1987).

Documents on the Klinkerwerk, both originals and copies, as well as eyewitness reports, were collected by the AG-S. Important documents are to be found above all at the BLHA. A

published prisoner testimony on the subcamp is Harry Naujoks, *Mein Leben im KZ Sachsenhausen 1936–1942: Erinnerungen des damaligen Lagerältesten* (Cologne, 1987), chapter 24.

Stefanie Endlich  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Report by the political prisoner Emil Büge on the situation in 1940, AG-S, I/3, p. 105.

2. Kurt Müller and Karl Raddatz, report from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, written on May 15, 1945, AG-S, D 30 A/34, p. 12, copy of the original at the BLHA.

3. Heinz Heger, *Die Männer mit dem Rosa Winkel*, 3rd ed. (1973; Gifkendorf, 1989), p. 52.

## LIEBEROSE [AKA "LIRO"]

Documents show that in June 1943 plans for four new training grounds were developed for the Waffen-SS. With a local garrison administration and headquarters in Jamlitz, a village with 300 inhabitants and the Lieberose state railway station, the SS training area “Kurmark” was only about 100 kilometers (62 miles) from Berlin.<sup>1</sup> According to his own account, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler wanted to set up the new SS garrison this close to Berlin so that in the event of a coup he would have been able to arrive quickly at the center of power of the SS troops.

A provisional SS development camp had existed since November 9, 1943, in a dance hall in Jamlitz. Technically, it reported to the section for “Häftlingseinsatz bei SS-Dienststellen”—deployment of prisoners at SS duty stations in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). In practice, however, it reported to the SS-Standortkommandant (garrison commander) and thus to the SS-Führungshauptamt (Leadership Main Office, FHA). The first prisoners arrived there from Sachsenhausen and were mostly German or foreign political prisoners and so-called professional criminals (BVs).<sup>2</sup> From the very beginning, the prisoners worked under the command of the Zentralbauleitung der Waffen-SS (Central Construction Administration of the Waffen-SS, ZBL) “Kurmark,” which reported to the SS-Standortverwaltung (Garrison Administration). The first project, completed by the end of March 1944, was to build 6 lodging barracks, a kitchen, and an infirmary between the railway station and the village. By December 1944, there were 18 barracks built. On April 12, 1944, the SS transferred 400 Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) and Polish political prisoners from the Gross-Rosen concentration camp to the camp, now called the Lieberose labor camp.<sup>3</sup> The prisoners called Lieberose “Liro.”<sup>4</sup> On June 5, 1944, the first transport of Jewish prisoners from Auschwitz arrived at Jamlitz, consisting of 2,400 Hungarian Jews.<sup>5</sup> Within the six months leading up to December 1944, an estimated 6,000 to 10,000 Jewish prisoners from more than 10 European countries were taken to Jamlitz, either directly or via Sachsenhausen. They were joined there by a total of

about 1,000 non-Jewish prisoners. They had to build roads, railway embankments, air-raid shelters, barracks, and firing ranges. Among their other tasks, they were also put to work at an SS-owned estate at Leeskow, in the fishery, at the sawmill, or with farmers. In the final stages of the war, they worked on the camp grounds and at an SS contractor's yard in a small workshop, manufacturing electronic products. The biggest labor detail, Unterkünfte Ullersdorf (Ullersdorf lodgings), meant walking about 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) north every day. The work, which had to be done with the most primitive tools and without proper rations, was lethal. The method of killing was "extermination by work." For example, the prisoners had to march barefoot to the construction site, carrying a hollow block on their shoulders. Survivors also reported that hangings took place in the roll-call area as punishment for turning cement sacks into underwear. The sick prisoners were gathered in recovery wards and periodically taken to Auschwitz II-Birkenau, where they were exterminated. Lists exist with the names of about 1,000 Hungarian Jews who suffered this fate.<sup>6</sup> It is estimated that 80 percent of the Jewish prisoners had lost their lives by the time the camp was dissolved, either because of exhaustion from work or at the gas chambers of Birkenau.

Prisoners from the Waffen-SS detachment at Jamlitz were deployed by companies from Berlin (Elektrolux Ltd., Hans Lautenbach Betonbau, Otto Quade Strassenbau, Bims- und Faserstoffbetonwerke Anton Racz), Cottbus (Richard Reckmann Gleis- und Tiefbau, Hermann Kircher Elektrotechnische Spezialwerkstätten, Hans Thiemann Sanitär und Heizung), Guben (Arno Schaefer Ingenieurbüro für Licht, Kraft und Radio), and Lieberose (Kölling Elektrikermeister, Wunderlich Bauingenieur), as well as by the firm Schnepfer & Isphording in Hamm/Westphalia. Those in Jamlitz viewed the Reckmann company as a "death detail." In the spring of 1944, the same company built the "ramp" for the arrival of the Hungarian Jews at the extermination camp Birkenau.<sup>7</sup>

Inside the Lieberose camp, the prisoners were subject to the whims of the camp leader, SS-Hauptscharführer Wilhelm Kersten, and his block leaders, whereas during work they reported to the ZBL and therefore to the FHA. SS block leaders as well as members of the ZBL supervised both the camp guards and the work of the individual detachments. The camp guards from the SS-Guard Battalion 4 Kurmark were recruited mostly from ethnic Germans in the Banat, who had been drawn to the SS-Freiwilligen-Division "Prinz Eugen." The guard force also reported to the Standortkommandant SS-Standartenführer Alexander Fick.<sup>8</sup>

The functionary positions among the barrack elders were divided roughly equally between political prisoners and professional criminals. The infirmary was dominated by the political prisoners and the kitchen by the BVs.

The activities of a small group of political prisoners at the infirmary created an element of solidarity. The group consisted of the Soviet camp doctor Dr. Viktor Brachnikow; the block elder Siegmund Sredzki, a German

Communist; the writer Gunther R. Lys; and a Jewish doctor, Dr. Hans Landshut. Among other things, they made an effort to limit the influence of the criminals on the camp leader. Improvement of the conditions for the Jewish prisoners was only partially possible (getting medicine from the main camp or letters attesting that prisoners were unfit for work and the double-edged establishment of the above-mentioned recovery wards in the summer of 1944, which for the SS were a collecting point for extermination transports to Birkenau). Some of the Jewish prisoners celebrated forbidden religious holidays. Singing and services for Shabbat, as well as a Sukkoth, are documented. Survivors reported that on Jewish holidays the SS block leaders were meaner and more cynical.

According to the accounts of former political prisoners, an attempted escape by Soviet prisoners was prevented by the activists around Sredzki, above all because the mass of Jewish prisoners would have suffered from the additional terror by the SS. On July 20, 1944, for fear of a mass jailbreak, the SS surrounded the camp with flamethrowers.<sup>9</sup>

A special case of solidarity among the Jewish prisoners was the so-called bread association (Brotbund), which consisted above all of Polish Jews who were brought to Jamlitz from the mason's school (*Maurer Schule*) at Auschwitz I in December 1944. These young people had complained about the unjust distribution of bread, and some of them got 25 lashes on their backs. Schmuël Cohn was almost beaten to death. He was able to survive only with the help of the group, which now shared their bread with him. The bonds among the members of the mason's school still exist.

Upon the camp's dissolution on February 2, 1945, about 1,200 convalescent prisoners began to be murdered. In an act of desperation, a Jewish ear specialist from Budapest, Dr. Erdősz, managed to seriously injure the camp leader, Kersten, with a spoon handle.<sup>10</sup>

Hugo Gryn, who later became a rabbi in London, reported that a small group of Jewish prisoners at Jamlitz killed an SS private from the guard force during their work.<sup>11</sup>

On February 2, 1945, approximately 1,600 prisoners were forced to march to Sachsenhausen. At least 40 weakened prisoners were killed by Rottenführer Erich Schemel, and dozens more died from exhaustion.<sup>12</sup> Of the about 1,200 Jewish prisoners who arrived at Sachsenhausen, the murder of 400 is documented.<sup>13</sup> In the course of the month, some Jewish prisoners from the Lieberose subcamp were taken from Sachsenhausen above all to the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria but also to Bergen-Belsen, Neuengamme, Flossenbürg, and Dachau.

The approximately 1,350 sick prisoners that had been left behind in Jamlitz were shot dead on the camp grounds between February 2 and 4, 1945, by SS guards, block leaders, and members of the SS-Bauhof, as well as camp leader Kersten and garrison commander Fick.<sup>14</sup> A mass grave with the bones of 577 dead bodies was found in 1971 a few kilometers east of Jamlitz in a gravel pit. The skeletons were exhumed and cremated, while the gold in their teeth, which

the SS had not been able to recover in 1945 in their rush, was then extracted by authorities of the German Democratic Republic.

Eight judicial inquiries were made on the Lieberose subcamp, both in the West German zones of occupation and in the Federal Republic of Germany. These resulted in five judgments from the denazification court and three at the regular court. Poland twice made petitions for extradition, which were refused, and once investigated on its own. The German Democratic Republic responded to two requests for information by the Federal Republic of Germany, and after the discovery of the mass grave, the Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Ministry for State Security, MfS) investigated between 1971 and 1975. There were five proceedings altogether against camp leader Kersten. For 22 months, he was held in the British internment camp Neuengamme, and in 1954 in Lübeck, he was sentenced to 7 months on probation. A second trial resulted in his acquittal in 1965, but he died during a procedure in 1970. At a trial in 1965 in Fulda, it was possible to sentence Corporal Schemel to four and a half years' imprisonment; however, he was released early. Even the investigations by the State Attorney's Office in Cottbus since 1998 could not solve the murder of about 1,200 Jewish prisoners at the Lieberose subcamp in Jamlitz.

In late 1945, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD) arrested the electrician Otto Maass from Cottbus, an eyewitness to the shootings between February 2 and 4, 1945, and interned him at Jamlitz and Buchenwald, although he had stood up for the persecution of the murderers by the Cottbus antifascism committee. In 1946–1947, at the Sachsenhausen Trial in front of a Soviet military tribunal in Berlin, Lieberose played almost no role. On the contrary, the prosecution of the perpetrators was neglected, although the NKVD knew several of the murderers by name and the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal was interested in the crimes committed at Jamlitz.

**SOURCES** The following secondary sources recount the history of the Lieberose subcamp of Sachsenhausen: Cordula Kappner: *Von Burgpreppach über Auschwitz in das Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen: Der Weg des Kindes Gerhard Eckmann; eine Spurensuche* (Hassfurt, 2001); Andreas Weigelt, "Die Asche der jüdischen Häftlinge auf 'Galgenberg' in Lieberose," in *Helden, Täter und Verräter: Studien zum DDR-Antifaschismus*, ed. Annette Leo and Peter Reif-Spirek (Berlin, 1999), pp. 37–64; Weigelt, *Zur Geschichte des jüdischen "Arbeitslagers Lieberose": 1943–1945 in Jamlitz, einem Nebenlager des KZ Sachsenhausen; ein Bericht* (n.p., 1997); Weigelt, "'Die Juden sollen zittern!': Zur Geschichte des jüdischen 'Arbeitslagers Lieberose' 1943–1945 in Jamlitz, einem Aussenlager des KZ Sachsenhausen sowie zur gleichnamigen Wanderausstellung," *GeRu* 82 (1998): 14–20; Weigelt, "Jüdischer Häftlingseinsatz für das SS-Führungshauptamt: Der SS-Truppenübungsplatz 'Kurmark' und das KZ-Nebenlager 'Arbeitslager Lieberose' in Jamlitz 1944–45," in *Zwangsarbeit während der NS-Zeit in Berlin und Brandenburg: Formen, Funktion und Rezeption*, ed. Winfried Meyer and Klaus Neitmann (Berlin, 2000), pp. 177–189; and Weigelt, "Konspirativ gesteuertes Gedenken:

Das Beispiel des KZ-Aussenlagers Lieberose," at [www.buergerkomitee.org/hug/h54-dateien/weigelt.html](http://www.buergerkomitee.org/hug/h54-dateien/weigelt.html).

Primary sources for the Lieberose subcamp of Sachsenhausen may be found in BA-B; AG-S; APMO; and Sta. Düsseldorf, Fulda, and Nürnberg/Fürth. An unpublished testimony is Gunther R. Lys, "KZ-Liro" (MSS, Haifa, 1976); and a published testimony is Hugo Gryn, *Chasing Shadows: Memories of a Vanished World* (London, 2000).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, NS 19/1373.
2. Report by Andrej Sarapkin.
3. List of transports, AMGR.
4. Gunther R. Lys, "KZ-Liro" (MSS, Haifa, 1976), n.p.
5. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 99.
6. AG-S, CAFSSRF.
7. APMO, D-2.Bau/2480.
8. BA-B, BDC, SSO-file Bruno Thurm.
9. Lys, "KZ-Liro," n.p.
10. Ibid.
11. Hugo Gryn, *Chasing Shadows: Memories of a Vanished World* (London, 2000).
12. Sta. Fulda, Ks 2/65.
13. Sta. Düsseldorf, 8 Ks 2/59.
14. Sta. Nuremberg/Fürth, 13 Js 21/65.

## LÜBBEN

The Lübben subcamp was established in April 1944. At the time, there were five prisoner-of-war (POW) camps known by name in the city. French prisoners were accommodated at inn Zum Wendenfürsten, while two POW camps for officers were located on the grounds of the state hospital and at Frauenberg Mountain. Soviet POWs were lodged in camps at the Südbahnhof (south railway station) and at the Wendt ammunition factory.<sup>1</sup>

Beginning in April 1944, the concentration camp prisoners of the Lübben subcamp were deployed at the Spiegelberge Mountains in Ostergrund, where they had to do heavy construction and concrete work for the Wehrmacht. They built bunkers for overflow bases of the headquarters, including a series of bunkers in the Bergstrasse in Lübben. In 1945, the bunkers were blown up by the Red Army, but their remnants still exist.

The subcamp itself, however, was located in Lubolz, about 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) from Lübben. By late April 1944, 60 concentration camp prisoners were accommodated there,<sup>2</sup> a number that remained relatively constant until October 1944. According to other statements, the subcamp was established only on July 1, 1944.<sup>3</sup> It appears that 200 prisoners at most were deployed in Lübben. In a later card index, the Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime (Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes, VVN) in the German Democratic Republic termed the food provided by the Wehrmacht as



“tolerable.”<sup>4</sup> On April 25, 1944, the construction officer of the army personnel branch petitioned the industrial inspection board at Cottbus for a raise for heavy work, which was granted on the grounds that it was a matter of “prisoners of war.” In doing so, the army personnel branch suppressed the fact that the prisoners reported to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and were administered from there. The June 8, 1944, letter of approval from the industrial inspection board at Cottbus to the army personnel branch based at Lübben, Jägerkaserne (Huntsmen’s Barracks), referred to the 60 concentration camp prisoners as Russian POWs who had to do concrete and earthworks as part of a special duty (z.b.V.) company.<sup>5</sup>

In November 1944, work on the bunkers at Lübben was included in the “minimum building program” of the Defense Ministry, which promised the delivery of 300 tons of cement in order to complete the bunkers as soon as possible. This was communicated by Armaments Minister Albert Speer to SS-Obergruppenführer Hans Jüttner on November 9, 1944.<sup>6</sup>

The guards probably were supplied by the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. In September–October 1944, 17 SS privates were transferred from the SS-Standortzug Lübben to the Waffen-SS Totenkopf-Wachbataillon Sachsenhausen at the main camp, while another group was transferred in the opposite direction from Sachsenhausen to Lübben.<sup>7</sup> It is not known whether this refers to members of the camp guard. On September 29, 1944, two Soviet prisoners escaped from the camp. Another Soviet prisoner, who managed to get away on October 2, 1944, was picked up again on October 3.<sup>8</sup>

It is not unthinkable that concentration camp prisoners were also deployed for the expansion of the branch office of the Göring Research Office (Forschungsamt). Located in the Postbauten in Lübben, not far from the Lieberoser Strasse, the office was part of the intelligence service for reconnaissance of enemy and neutral (nonmilitary) radio communications. The “B” and “C” offices had existed in Lübben since 1933 and intercepted Soviet radio transmissions in particular. In 1943, one of the main divisions of the Research Office was transferred from the Schillerstrasse in Berlin-Charlottenburg to Lübben. Early in 1944, they were searching for a site in Lübben to build the new main office of the Research Institute, and allegedly 130 barracks for it, a project that was not finished by the end of the war. In late 1944, Lübben was considered the most important radio reconnaissance office for the surveillance of the United States and Japan.

On February 12, 1945, there were still 45 prisoners at the Lübben subcamp.<sup>9</sup> The camp was dissolved on April 23, 1945, shortly before the Soviet Army entered the city.<sup>10</sup>

In the course of numerous judicial inquiries conducted in the Federal Republic of Germany on various subcamps of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, it was only determined that little was known about the Lübben subcamp.<sup>11</sup>

**SOURCES** Sparse archival documents on the history are located in the BA-B, ASt-Ctb, and AG-S. Records with infor-

mation on escapes and daily reports are preserved at the AG-S (CAFSSRF).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, SAPMO-DDR, Dy 55 V 278, 5/14, letter from the VVN district council of Lübben to the VVN state federation at Potsdam, June 23, 1950.

2. ASt-Ctb, A II, 7.3., vol. 22, Hk 494/6, NL bonus cards, Letter from the OKH/Bauoffizier to Gewerbeaufsichtsamt Cottbus, April 25, 1944.

3. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 100.

4. BA-B, SAPMO, Dy 55 V 278, 5/14.

5. ASt-Ctb, A II, 7.3., vol. 22, Hk 494/6, NL bonus cards.

6. BA-B, R 3/1584, Folio 141, Letter from Speer to the Chef der Heeresrüstung und Befehlshaber des Ersatzheeres, SS-Obergruppenführer Jüttner, November 9, 1944.

7. BA-DH, ZM 1514, File 1, Collective File fol. 21, 38, 58, and 62.

8. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 100.

9. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 101.

10. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 99.

11. AG-S, LAG XI/12, Letter from the ZLNW-K to Gsta. DDR, June 29, 1970.

## NEUBRANDENBURG

The 1949 International Tracing Service (ITS) catalog of SS camps listed a Sachsenhausen subcamp for male prisoners at Neubrandenburg, based on Belgian and German postwar accounts. According to a list drawn up by the Sachsenhausen Memorial, the subcamp existed between the summer of 1943 and the spring of 1945 and held about 300 male prisoners who were deployed at the Mechanische Werkstätten GmbH Neubrandenburg (MWN) armaments factory.<sup>1</sup> According to other information, though, the camp had already existed in 1942.<sup>2</sup> An investigating authority, meanwhile, determined that the camp was not established until December 1944;<sup>3</sup> however, the daily variation reports of the Sachsenhausen concentration camps for the years 1944 and 1945 do not mention the subcamp.

A subcamp of the Ravensbrück concentration camp for female prisoners at Neubrandenburg had already existed since the late fall of 1942. These women, up to 2,500, worked—as did other female forced laborers since 1939—at the MWN, which had been relocated from Berlin-Britz to Neubrandenburg in 1934. In March 1944, Heinrich Himmler intended to increase the number of prisoners to 4,000 women, but this goal was only partially met. Both groups of prisoners, the men from Sachsenhausen and the women from Ravensbrück, were held in the overcrowded barracks camp east (Barackenlager Ost) about 800 meters (875 yards) from the camp. The subcamp for women was in existence until April 27, 1945.

The workshop hall for the women adjoined the one for the men.

A transport of between 100 and 150 male prisoners is documented from the Ravensbrück concentration camp to Neubrandenburg in the late fall 1944.<sup>4</sup> It is possible that this was the first transport. Likewise, a transport from Sachsenhausen is documented for December 1944.<sup>5</sup> In late 1944, about 30 prisoners from Buchenwald arrived at the Neubrandenburg subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, apparently all metalworkers.<sup>6</sup> According to statements by the former commandant of the Ravensbrück concentration camp, Suhren, a total of 500 or 600 men were deployed at Neubrandenburg.

The prisoners were held day and night in two factory buildings near the east entrance, which they were permitted to leave only to receive supplies or for a short walk in the yard during the midday eating break. According to other statements, there were additional lodgings outside the workshop halls. This could refer to the former laundry next to the factory's east entrance.

The prisoners produced aircraft parts in several manufacturing halls. Allegedly, these included parts for the retaliatory weapons V-1 and V-2. According to a survey, bomb-release devices and "Fz. G. 76" were produced at Neubrandenburg. The work was done daily in two 12-hour shifts. Certain prisoners, particularly Jews, were also deployed at the metallography division in a chemical laboratory.

Except for 1 Czech, the prisoner-functionaries were Germans. There were prisoners of diverse nationalities and also Jews. Around January 10, 1945, 120 prisoners arrived at Neubrandenburg, mostly Polish and Soviet prisoners as well as Hungarian and Romanian Jews from Buchenwald, some of whom had previously been in Auschwitz.<sup>7</sup> At an unknown date, 65 of them were selected and then transported to an undetermined destination. By this time, there were apparently between 100 and 200 French, Dutch, Italian, and Belgian prisoners at the camp.<sup>8</sup> Some of the Poles who arrived there from Buchenwald had taken part in the August 1944 Warsaw Uprising.

In March 1945, one detachment disassembled metalworking machines at the MWN and reassembled them at the Ravensbrück subcamp for female prisoners at Neubrandenburg. This appears to have functioned as an alternative manufacturing site for a new program to produce control and regulator systems for the Fi 103 (piloted V-2). Construction had already started on it before June 1944.

Also in March 1945, a last transport arrived at Neubrandenburg, probably from Gross-Rosen.<sup>9</sup>

The block elder was German political prisoner Georg Flohr. He abused prisoners and stole food. Some of the foremen were Poles. A Sudeten German criminal who arrived from Gross-Rosen in March 1945 became first Kapo. He is likewise described as a sadist. It is said that he whipped Soviet prisoners who had tried to escape. It is possible that his name was Hans Wolfe. Through the barbed wire, women observed that as a punishment, on Sunday mornings, prisoners were drilled to the point of exhaustion.

It seems that the SS camp leader, who held the rank of *Sturmbannführer*, was simultaneously head of production at the aircraft factory.

It is said that the guards were supplied by the Wehrmacht, but it has not been possible to confirm this. The factory building was surrounded by an electrified barbed-wire fence and guard towers. According to other accounts, the guard force consisted of SS privates who originated from Croatia, Bessarabia, and Moldavia. They seem to have been particularly cruel to the prisoners.

Compared with Auschwitz and Buchenwald, the prisoners who arrived in January 1945 in particular regarded the conditions in Neubrandenburg as bearable, considering that there were heated accommodations and short roll calls. However, the food provisions, which were delivered from the women's camp, were insufficient even though civilian employees in the kitchen tried to give the men additional food. The barracks had bunk beds.

A Jewish prisoner died from stomach cramps in the sleeping area set up in the workshop hall after the guards had refused to help, even though there was a small infirmary in a factory building where a French prisoner served as orderly. Seriously ill prisoners seem to have been transferred to Ravensbrück.

Shortly before the camp was dissolved, the deputy camp leader punched and kicked a Russian who was bound with barbed wire. Because of the lack of health care, the prisoners fell ill with typhoid and phlegmon. It is believed that every week, about four prisoners died from the hardship of the work.

A few days before the dissolution of the camp, a Soviet officer and a Polish prisoner made plans to escape but were betrayed and arrested. However, nothing was done to them. Before the camp was evacuated, the Jewish prisoners appear to have been taken away.

On April 27, 1945, the male and female prisoners were forced by SS guards, who had just arrived, to march in the direction of the town of Lübz in Mecklenburg. Numerous prisoners were shot dead along the way, but some managed to escape. Prior to the march, the prisoners had been ordered to destroy the chemical laboratory and all of the documents in the factory. On May 6, 1945, the march was liberated by the Red Army in the area of Malchow.<sup>10</sup>

Hugo Zahn, born in 1904 in Erfurt, was interned in the British zone of occupation after 1945 and stated that he had been a concentration camp guard in the Neubrandenburg guard battalion.<sup>11</sup>

Criminal investigations in the early 1970s by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg in the Federal Republic of Germany brought no convictions, first, because it was not possible to identify the camp personnel, and, second, because no murders had been ascertained.<sup>12</sup>

**SOURCES** The only literature known specifically written about the Neubrandenburg subcamp is a pamphlet published in the DDR: Heinz Barche, *Mahnung und Verpflichtung: Leben,*

## 1330 SACHSENHAUSEN

*Ausbeutung und antifaschistischer Widerstandskampf weiblicher Häftlinge in den Konzentrationslagern Neubrandenburgs (1943–1945)*, *Dokumente Berichte Kommentare* (Neubrandenburg, n.d.). Neubrandenburg is listed in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 265.

Primary sources are located mostly at the BA-L and at the PRO.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. SBG, ed., “Die Aussenlager der Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen und Ravensbrück” (workshop papers of a conference held at the Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Ravensbrück, October 17–18, 2003).
2. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972, Folio 162, deposition of Zenon Miodynski on June 30, 1971.
3. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972, Folio 185, closing remark on January 17, 1972.
4. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972, Folio 170, deposition of Jozef Motylewski on August 30, 1971.
5. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972, Folio 106, deposition of Johannes Jacobus van Nieukerken on August 21, 1969.
6. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972, Folio 155, deposition of Edward Czarniecki on June 15, 1971.
7. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972, Folio 5, “prisoners’ office KZ Buchenwald, Weimar-Buchenwald, on January 10, 1945, transport Neu[branden]burg.”
8. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972, Folio 36, deposition of Kazimierz Kasprzak on June 26, 1968; Folio 50, deposition of Mieczysław-Jan Lenartowicz on August 20, 1968.
9. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972, Folio 51, deposition of Mieczysław-Jan Lenartowicz on August 20, 1968.
10. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972, Folio 162, deposition of Zenon Miodynski on June 30, 1971.
11. PRO, WO 309/1785.
12. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 10/1972.

## NEUDAMM

According to the International Tracing Service (ITS) catalog, a subcamp of Sachsenhausen was created in Neudamm (formerly Kreis Königsburg/Neumark), which was then located in Germany. Today “Neudamm,” or Dębno, is located in Poland, south of the city of Szczecin (Stettin).

**SOURCES** There are virtually no sources that chronicle any information about the subcamp in Neudamm. The listing for Neudamm in the ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Auslenkcommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979), provides no additional information except that a subcamp of Sachsenhausen existed in the town.

Similarly, listings of Sachsenhausen subcamps and work commandos in the indexes at the AG-S, for example, File

Group I/4, also provide no further information about this subcamp.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NEUHAMMER

The Neuhammer subcamp is not listed by the Sachsenhausen concentration camp as one of its subcamps. Nevertheless, it did exist, albeit for a short period of time. The Sachsenhausen change reports (*Veränderungsmeldungen*) refer to the camp for the period between January 20 and February 18, 1944. There were 54 prisoners, but on February 11, there were 63 recorded prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

Neuhammer in Silesia, not far from Sagan, was the site of the Wehrmacht troop training ground. Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler delivered a speech there on January 11, 1944, in the Führerheim Westlager to the commanders of the 13th SS-Freiwilligen-Gebirgsdivision (Kroatien) shortly before its deployment to Croatia.<sup>2</sup> It is possible that the prisoners were somehow connected with construction work for this or other SS units.

A few publications refer to the training ground as an SS troop training ground. After Himmler took over the Reserve Army following the failed assassination attempt on Hitler on July 20, 1944, Ukrainian and Hungarian SS divisions gathered there. They were reorganized, and from there they were sent to the front until the site was closed in the middle of February 1945.

There were many forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) working on the troop training ground. There is a report on the liberated POW camp in Neuhammer. On February 15, 1945, the Red Army discovered in a forest close to Neuhammer two graveyards for Soviet POWs. It found out that the graveyards held 18,000 Soviet soldiers. The prisoners had been shot. They included officers of the Red Army. An investigating commission exhumed bodies and questioned witnesses. Photos are included in the report. One shows a wooden fence at one of the cemeteries on which there is a large sign. The sign written by the Germans has the words: Russian Cemetery (Russien Friedhof). The Red Army added in Russian the following words: “The Fascists tortured here thirteen thousand Soviets to death.” Other photos show Soviet soldiers inspecting the cemetery and the exhumation and reinterment of Soviet soldiers. The material gives no clue how the investigations proceeded against the perpetrators.<sup>3</sup>

The International Tracing Service (ITS) refers to Neuhammer, Kreis Sprottau, Lower Silesia, for the period from June 9, 1944, to the beginning of March 1945. The camp is referred to as a subcamp of the Gross-Rosen concentration camp. The prisoners were used by the 13th Gebirgsdivision and at the beginning of March 1945 were evacuated to Stolzenhain near Karlsbad. A later ITS catalog does not refer to Neuhammer.

**SOURCES** There is no specific literature on the Neuhammer subcamp. The subcamp is listed in ITS, *Vorläufiges Verzeich-*



*nis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 1: 120; but not in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990).

The only sources are held in AG-S.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-S, JSU 1, Bd. 101.
2. BA-B, NS 19/4012, p. 6.
3. GARF, f. 7021/115, d. 2, l. 127.

## NIEMEGK

The subcamp at Niemegk, about 60 kilometers (37 miles) southwest of Berlin, was established in the summer of 1944. Initially, the prisoners were temporarily accommodated in a village gymnasium, but later a wooden barrack was built for them.<sup>1</sup> It appears that at the beginning between 40 and 50 prisoners were deployed at Niemegk, including 20 Norwegians as well as Dutch, Poles, French, and Czechs (including 1 “Gypsy”), Russians, and Germans (including 1 Jehovah’s Witness). Homosexual prisoners were held captive at Niemegk as well. A peculiarity among the prisoners was the British pilots who had crashed between Magdeburg and Genthin and who were imprisoned for a short time at the gymnasium and the Niemegk subcamp.<sup>2</sup> It seems that they were later shot in the forest.

Criminals and “asocials” served as prisoner-functionaries. The camp elder, Georg Pfriem, was transferred to the Kolpin subcamp in January 1945. Other prisoners termed him a “slave-driver” who would beat them. The camp recorder was a criminal from Berlin, Arthur Sasse, who stated that he had been in Niemegk since May–June 1944. The foremen were Rudolf Nawrotzki, an asocial prisoner, and Alfred Berger, a Jehovah’s Witness. A homosexual prisoner, Leo Classen, was the doctor.

In late August 1944, the camp was recorded for the first time in the main camp statistics as having 50 prisoners.<sup>3</sup> It reached its highest occupancy, with 60 prisoners, shortly before Christmas 1944.<sup>4</sup> This number remained constant until mid-February 1945.<sup>5</sup> Half of the prisoners were political, while others were Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), and 1 was a Jehovah’s Witness. There were also many petty or even dangerous criminals. According to statements made by their fellow prisoners, the Norwegians shared their Red Cross packages with the other inmates.

Between January and March 1945, there were 10 to 20 Polish children at Niemegk, the youngest of whom was seven years old. They were accommodated in a barrack that was separated from the subcamp by barbed wire. They were to be “Germanized” and adopted by German families.

The task of the Niemegk subcamp was to construct an overflow camp for the SS-Hauptamt (Main Office). Of 24 projected barracks, 12 were built, but only half of them were ever ready for occupancy. The barracks were set up in the forest behind the then sports field, and at this point the prisoners were also held there. Food was stored in 2 completed barracks, while in 3 others relatives who belonged to the Hitler Youth, or women in SS uniform, were accommodated as well as members of the so-called Germanische Legion of the SS. In 2 other barracks, regular SS members were quartered, possibly while recovering after various inpatient treatments. The leader of this overflow quarters appears to have been a certain SS-Obersturmführer Clausen. It is also reported that members of the “Vlassov” Army were transferred to this base for training purposes.

Due to the heavy labor, which included woodcutting, there occurred numerous injuries and illnesses. One Norwegian, Bergkvist, had an accident while felling trees and died from his injuries because the SS provided help too late. Of the 20 Norwegians, altogether 8 had to be taken to the infirmary at Sachsenhausen during the first months. From time to time, the camp elder ordered big piles of wood to be shifted from one place to another and then back again. He beat the prisoners as they did this work.

The camp leader was SS-Unterscharführer Johann Herfurth, who was born in Koblenz in 1902. He was shot dead at the end of the war by U.S. soldiers in Grieben.

The head of the SS training camp was SS-Hauptsturmführer Brockmann, who was also in charge of the German soldiers defending Niemegk.

Another officer belonging to the camp command is said to have been a former captain of the Wehrmacht from Hamburg who was transferred to the SS and who in 1946 was sentenced to death by a Soviet court.<sup>6</sup> This could refer to Hauptmann Gattermann, who was shot in Grieben on May 8, 1945, together with the camp leader, Herfurth. His adjutant was Hans Georg Schmidt, a factory owner from Pforzheim who held the rank of an officer. The guard force consisted of 30 SS privates, Hungarians, and Romanian Germans from the Banat region. The only prisoner barrack was secured with barbed wire and two guard towers.

According to statements from survivors, there were no abuses by the SS in the camp. A Polish child who was accommodated nearby, however, witnessed the killing of a prisoner at work by an SS-Unterrührer with the first name of Hubert. This same child also observed that during a roll call eight Russians and Ukrainians were hanged on gallows.<sup>7</sup>

According to statements from the camp recorder, the camp was dissolved on April 25, 1945, as the front approached. The prisoners were released with papers that had already been issued two days earlier by SS guards who led them across the German front line and let them go.<sup>8</sup> The above-mentioned document was signed by the foreman Rudolf Nawrotzki. According to other accounts, April 22 was the last day the camp existed. Only on May 2, 1945, did the Red Army take over Niemegk. In the meantime, the prisoners

either tried to get through with the release certificates or hid themselves.

Beginning in May 1945, the camp barrack was used for the imprisonment of alleged and actual former National Socialists. Responsible for this camp were the former foreman of the subcamp Niemegk, Nawrotzki, who also served as chief of police, and the former camp recorder (and by this time mayor), Sasse. It was planned that the camp would house up to 2,000 German prisoners.<sup>9</sup>

The preliminary investigations on the Niemegk subcamp by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) at Ludwigsburg were handed over after three years to the Central Office at Cologne, on April 30, 1970, for further action. But because of the “lack of sufficient factual evidence” and the death of the main suspect on October 14, 1970, the case was dismissed.<sup>10</sup> A corresponding request for assistance to the attorney general of the German Democratic Republic did not lead to any inquiries there.

**SOURCES** The only known publication on this subcamp is the report by Pierre van Kraay, in *Niemegk meldet Panzeralarm*, ed. Siegfried Dalitz (n.p., 1995).

Archival documents are located primarily at the BA-L and at AG-S.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2966/66, Folio 59, deposition of Arthur Sasse on November 28, 1968.

2. Ibid.

3. AG-S, JSU 1, vol. 100.

4. Ibid.

5. AG-S, JSU 1, vol. 101.

6. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2966/66, Folio 95, final remark dated April 27, 1970.

7. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2966/66, Folio 75, deposition of Tadeusz Tabor on May 20, 1968.

8. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2966/66, Folio 58, deposition of Arthur Sasse on November 28, 1968; and Folio 63, deposition of Wiktor Szabelski on May 13, 1968.

9. Chronicle of the city of Niemegk, vol. 7, supplement to Pierre van Kraay, *Niemegk meldet Panzeralarm*, ed. Siegfried Dalitz (n.p., 1995), n.p.

10. BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 51/67, note of dismissal by the Central Office at Cologne 24 Js 59/70 (Z) on October 14, 1970.

## ORANIENBURG (AUER-WERKE)

The Auer-Werke was the owner of two large factory buildings in the town of Oranienburg, 35 kilometers (22 miles) north of Berlin. One property was located close to Oranienburg's main station, and the other one was situated near Lake Lehnitz and close to a railroad track at the southeastern outskirts of the town. Initially organized as a limited liability company (GmbH) and led by the Jewish family Koppel, who

fled from Germany to Switzerland during the National Socialist era, Auer-Werke became a subsidiary of the Frankfurt am Main-based Degussa AG in 1933.

During World War II, scientists of the Auer-Werke were involved in a project to develop an atomic bomb. Nevertheless, their main products were military equipment for the navy and Luftwaffe as well as gas masks for civilians and the Wehrmacht.

The SS authorities connected the factory near Lake Lehnitz, the “Auerwerk II Seegelände,” with a subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. This subcamp on the grounds of the factory existed from July 1, 1943, to March 15, 1945. At first it was under the administrative control of the Ravensbrück concentration camp but only provided with Sachsenhausen prisoners. Sachsenhausen took command of the Auer-Werke subcamp in October 1944.

An electrified barbed-wire fence, about 2 meters (6.6 feet) high and under voltage, prevented escape attempts out of the camp, which was made up of about 10 wooden huts, including a separate hut for Jewish prisoners. The prisoners lived in 7 or 8 of these huts and slept in bunk beds of plain wood with shavings instead of mattresses. The subcamp also had a hut that was used as a kitchen and a laundry. In September 1944, workers built an infirmary with a capacity of 100 beds, where a Russian doctor, a Polish doctor, and a Russian first-aid attendant were on duty.

The first prisoners, about 50 in number, arrived from the concentration camps of Sachsenhausen and Ravensbrück. Most of them were women and girls from the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. The number of prisoners increased steadily: the guards counted 1,841 prisoners in February 1945. They were not only from Eastern Europe but also from France, Italy, Yugoslavia, and the Netherlands—only a few prisoners were German by origin.

The first chief of the approximately 20 female guards, who stayed in a separate hut outside the camp, was a woman called Gertraud Steisslinger, whose maiden name was Schöber.<sup>1</sup> She gave orders until July 1944, when she was relieved by her successor, a woman called Hesse who was chief of the female guards until the destruction of the Auer-Werke and parts of the neighboring subcamp by an Allied air raid on March 15, 1945. Hesse led the subcamp together with the Oberscharführer Karl Meinhardt, who commanded six to eight male guards.<sup>2</sup>

The prisoners had to work 72 hours a week, mainly in the production of gas masks. After the destruction of the Bygk-Guldenwerke chemical factory, which was situated nearby, SS authorities forced subcamp prisoners to help with clearing-up operations. They classified the work the prisoners were forced to do as easy manual work and underlined the reason why most prisoners were girls or physically weak women.

Eyewitnesses remembered 5 deaths in the subcamp until March 1945.<sup>3</sup> More than 300 prisoners died during the air strike of March 15, most of them because they did not have permission to leave their places of work during the attack. The Polish doctor and eyewitness Irena Cirsinska counted 60

dead and 120 injured prisoners.<sup>4</sup> Some women and girls tried to escape from the factory buildings and the subcamp area after the air strike had destroyed parts of the industrial and housing complex. SS guards collected survivors who could not flee and led them to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, which was about 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) away. The prisoners were sent to an area of the camp called “Kleines Lager,” which had previously been used for the isolation of Jewish prisoners until the end of 1942.

On April 21, 1945, SS authorities decided to evacuate the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, whose 3,000 unmovable sick prisoners—including a few women from the Auer-Werke subcamp—were liberated one day later by Red Army soldiers. The SS forced about 33,000 prisoners, including the majority of the former Auer-Werke subcamp, to march toward the Baltic Sea. This undertaking cost the lives of about 6,000 prisoners. On their march to the coastline, SS guards constructed a provisional camp in a forest near the town of Wittstock. Finally, they disbanded the camp and released the prisoners on April 29, 1945, because of dominant Allied military operations in this area. Within the following days and weeks, Soviet and U.S. soldiers picked up former Sachsenhausen prisoners from a territory stretched over the rural districts of the Mecklenburg towns of Parchim and Schwerin.

**SOURCES** Secondary references useful for this essay are Monika Knop, “Jüdische Häftlinge in den Aussenlagern 1944 bis 1945,” in Günter Morsch and Susanne zur Nieden, eds., *Jüdische Häftlinge im Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen 1936 bis 1945* (Berlin, 2004), for an updated overview of the status of research on the subcamp and with a focus on Jewish prisoners.

Primary documentation on the Auer subcamp is located in the AG-S, especially in the Box Auer, which contains a collection of testimonies collected by the ZdL (now at BA-L), and also in Sammlung Thomas Irmer, Inhalt Auer. Ordner No. 9.

Alexander Jossifidis

## NOTES

1. ZdL, Bd. III, p. 113 (Arbeitsdienstpäss mit Lichtbild), Abschlussvermerk betr. Frauennebenlager Auer-Oranienburg, Ludwigsburg, September 27, 1972 (IV 406 AR-Z 200/72).

2. ZdL, Bd. III, pp. 38R, 42, 47, 53, Abschlussvermerk betr. Frauennebenlager Auer-Oranienburg, Ludwigsburg, September 27, 1972 (IV 406 AR-Z 200/72).

3. ZdL, Bd. III, p. 384, Abschlussvermerk betr. Frauennebenlager Auer-Oranienburg, Ludwigsburg, September 27, 1972 (IV 406 AR-Z 200/72).

4. ZdL, Bd. III, Bl. 380, p. 400, Abschlussvermerk betr. Frauennebenlager Auer-Oranienburg, Ludwigsburg, September 27, 1972 (IV 406 AR-Z 200/72).

## ORANIENBURG (HEINKEL-WERKE)

The Heinkel-Werke GmbH had its headquarters in the town of Rostock at the Baltic coastline. But there was also a branch in the town of Oranienburg, about 35 kilometers (22 miles)

north of Berlin, which was established in 1937. The Oranienburg branch constructed two aircraft factories called “Werk I” and “Werk II” in the southeastern districts of the town. In the autumn of 1941, Heinkel Oranienburg was the first German aircraft company to start a close cooperative association with the SS. The SS sent small groups of prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp as temporary workers to the factory buildings. At first, the prisoners were forced to work during the day at the Heinkel factories and returned every evening to the concentration camp.

During the summer of 1942, authorities constructed a prison camp on the grounds of the Heinkel factory Werk I and ordered 15 SS members to guard its prisoners. The number of SS guards increased over time and reached 130 in the spring of 1943. Responsible for the guarding of the prison camp was the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann Sachsenhausen with Sturmbannführer Johannes Hassebroek as the first subcamp’s chief. He led the prison camp from August 29, 1942, to October 10, 1943, and was relieved by his successor Sturmbannführer Wilhelm Hermann Heidrich, who led the camp until its evacuation.

The increasing number of guards corresponded with the increasing number of prisoners: the Heinkel statistics included a count of 800 prisoners in September 1942; 1,900 prisoners in December 1942; 3,707 prisoners in March 1943; 5,479 prisoners in June 1943; 6,012 prisoners in September 1943; 6,026 prisoners in December 1943; 6,240 prisoners in March 1944; and 6,966 prisoners in June 1944. The Heinkel camp thus developed into the biggest of the approximately 96 Sachsenhausen subcamps and Kommandos that were all founded between 1938 and 1945.

The first prisoners had to live temporarily in the basement of a former dining hall near factory building number 8 and in converted changing rooms. Later, huts were built next to the factory buildings, each with a capacity of 500 prisoners. Most prisoners originated from the Soviet Union, Poland, and France, with fewer coming from Norway and Germany.

The prisoners were forced to work in the construction of the Heinkel (He) 177 fighter plane. They worked together with German workers and about 600 foremen. On December 31, 1943, the number of prisoners reached 43.8 percent of the whole workforce.

An Allied air strike destroyed the factory buildings on April 18, 1944, and killed 400 to 500 prisoners. From this time on, the SS authorities forced about 1,000 survivors to work at the so-called Klinkerwerk, a large brickworks that produced bricks for Albert Speer’s building projects in Berlin. Furthermore, the Heinkel subcamp developed into a reception camp for evacuated camps from the eastern regions. Most prisoners were first penned up in assembly shop number 8. The SS started a selection and an execution campaign aimed at those persons who were sick and worthless in the eyes of the authorities and guards.<sup>1</sup>

A huge number of prisoners were murdered, but it is not possible to give exact numbers. When Sturmbannführer Johannes Hassebroek was chief of the subcamp till October



1943, acts of sabotage were rare and punished with a minimum of three executions.<sup>2</sup>

On April 20, 1945, the SS organized the so-called evacuation<sup>3</sup> and led the prisoners to the communities of Kremmen, Löwenberg, Reinsberg, Buetzow, Parchim, and Krywitz, where the prisoners were liberated by Soviet soldiers on May 4, 1945.

**SOURCES** Primary documentation on the Heinkel subcamp is located in the AG-S, especially in the Box Heinkel, which contains a collection of testimonies collected by the ZdL (now at BA-L). For a broad overview of the SS cooperation with German aircraft companies, see Lutz Budrass, *Flugzeugindustrie und Lufttrüestung in Deutschland 1918–1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1998); and Rainer Fröbe, “Der Arbeitseinsatz von KZ-Häftlingen und die Perspektive der Industrie, 1943–1945,” in *Europa und der “Reichseinsatz”*: *Ausländische Zivilarbeiter, Kriegsgefangene und KZ-Häftlinge in Deutschland 1938–1945*, ed. Ulrich Herbert (Essen: Klartext, 1991).

Alexander Jossifidis

## NOTES

1. Zeugenaussage des ehemaligen Gefangenen Heinrich Hesshaus, wonach ca. 120 jüdische Häftlinge getötet wurden, LKA-N-W (Protokoll: Düsseldorf, September 21, 1967) [LKA-N-W Dez. 15].

2. Zeugenaussage von Erich Köpf, LKA-B-W (Protokoll: Kislau, October 5, 1967) [I/7 (NSG)-18-158/67].

3. Zeugenaussage des ehemaligen Gefangenen Heinrich Hesshaus, LKA-N-W (Protokoll: Düsseldorf, September 21, 1967) [LKA-N-W Dez. 15].

## POTSDAM-BABELSBERG

The International Tracing Service (ITS) catalog from the summer of 1949 states that the Potsdam-Babelsberg subcamp was assigned to Berlin and cites the Belgian Tracing Service as a source, thereby suggesting that Belgians were held there. According to information supplied at the time by the Berlin Office for the Registration of War Victims (Amt für die Erfassung der Kriegsoffer), the subcamp was described as a “camp for political.”<sup>1</sup>

A list of subcamps of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp prepared after the war describes Potsdam-Babelsberg as follows: “Red Cross, eighty men, bunker construction, weakened prisoners often brought to the camp in exchange for stronger ones, accommodation adequate, food the same.”<sup>2</sup> Other records estimate up to 200 prisoners.<sup>3</sup>

The existence of this subcamp can only be confirmed as of August 1944. At the end of August 1944, 100 prisoners were assigned to the camp, a number that did not change until the end of 1944. In mid-February 1945, only about 90 prisoners remained in the camp.<sup>4</sup> In addition to working at the headquarters of the German Red Cross (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, DRK), prisoners also worked in the studios of Universum Film AG (Ufa) Babelsberg. Both had contracted the private

construction company Bunkerbaufirma Polensky from Berlin to build bunkers. The prisoners were housed on the grounds of the German Red Cross depot, located at the intersection of the Berlin-Potsdam and Wetzlar railway lines.

A former German Red Cross employee has reported on the camp inmates’ work for the German Red Cross. Prisoners fared “relatively well,” guards did not interfere when they took food from the German Red Cross kitchen, and they “also all emerged well” from the camp.<sup>5</sup>

On September 8, 1944, German prisoner Otto Schenk was sent for six months to the “shoe-runner” (*Schubläufer*) punishment detail of the main camp. Though part of the detachment working at the German Red Cross, he had stolen items from a camp barracks.

According to German prisoner Walter Heinold, “Foreman Kurt as well as certain criminal prisoners” particularly stood out, in that they “beat Poles, Ukrainians, and political prisoners.”<sup>6</sup> This report underscores the tensions that existed between different groups of prisoners.

German prisoner Paul Felder was released on March 16, 1945. A few weeks thereafter, on April 27, 1945, the camp is thought to have been finally disbanded.<sup>7</sup> In the daily reports, the last reference to the camp dates from April 9, 1945, when it held 88 prisoners.<sup>8</sup>

The SS, who were in charge, are said to “have helped all prisoners who fell ill and needed food” inasmuch “as the [higher camp] administration had not fairly distributed [the supplies].”<sup>9</sup>

The names of the following SS camp personnel are known: SS-Oberscharführer and Kommando leader Max Bergholz (June to December 31, 1944); and the guards SS-Schütze Karl Bischof (May 1944 to March 1944), SS-Sturmmann Lorenz Bittenbinder (May 1944 to April 1945), SS-Schütze Anton Belt (October 1944 to April 1945), Rottenführer Michael Edling (June 1 to August 1, 1944), SS-Rottenführer Alexander Kiss (July 22, 1944, to May 3, 1945), Rottenführer Emil Offenhammer (November 12, 1944, to May 2, 1945), SS-Sturmmann Johann Schramm (July 1944 to March 1945), Johann Glatz, Valentin Jaromin, Erich Offenhammer, and Wilhelm Wiest. SS-Oberscharführer Bergholz, who served as Kommando leader of the Potsdam-Babelsberg subcamp until the end of 1944, later stated that he was commando leader of Schönholz, a subcamp located at the Argus Motorenwerk in Berlin-Reinickendorf, for two weeks starting on April 21, 1945. He may have accompanied the evacuation from that camp to Sachsenhausen.

While in British internment, former SS-Rottenführer Kiss, a Romanian guard at the subcamp in Babelsberg, said he had been a member of the Babelsberg Honor Company (Ehrenkompanie) from July 22, 1944, to May 3, 1945. Guards Bischof, Schramm, Glatz, Jaromin, Erich Offenhammer, and Wiest were also interned by the British.

In 1971 and 1972, the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg undertook an investigation of Babelsberg. However, even the ITS was unaware of the names of any prisoners. As a result, the investigation was dropped in 1972.

**SOURCES** An unpublished study that mentions Potsdam-Babelsberg is Uwe Hofschläger, “Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen” (Diplomarbeit, Freien Universität Berlin, 1997), and is available in AG-S, D.A. 5147. This subcamp is listed in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 262.

Archival material is mostly to be found at AG-S. Prisoner Paul Wittig is interviewed in the film *Missbrauchte Helfer: Das Deutsche Rote Kreuz 1921–1945*, Ein Film von Wolfgang Bergmann (45 minutes), at [www.lichtfilm.de](http://www.lichtfilm.de).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 262.

2. IfZ, Ed 106/77, Aufstellung des ehemaligen Häftlings des KZ-Sachsenhausen Walter Nowak, n.d.

3. Uwe Hofschläger, “Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen.” (Diplomarbeit, Freien Universität Berlin, 1997), available at AG-S, D.A. 5147.

4. AG-S, JSU 1, Band 99 und 101.

5. Paul Wittig, in *Missbrauchte Helfer: Das Deutsche Rote Kreuz 1921–1945*, Ein Film von Wolfgang Bergmann (45 minutes), at [www.lichtfilm.de](http://www.lichtfilm.de).

6. AG-S, D 30 A/10/1 B, p. 104.

7. According to Hofschläger, “Funktion und Bedeutung der Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Sachsenhausen.”

8. AG-S, JSU 1, Band 99 und 101.

9. AG-S, D 30 A/10/1 B, p. 104.

## PRETTIN (LICHTENBURG)

The Lichtenburg camp in Prettin on the Elbe (Saxony-Anhalt), established at the sixteenth-century Lichtenburg Castle, was originally one of the first early camps in the German Reich. Established in June 1933, the early camp had held male prisoners in “protective custody” until it was dissolved in 1937. A women’s protective custody camp (*Frauenschutzhaftlager*) was created in Lichtenburg from December 1937 to May 1939 (see Early Camp/Lichtenburg). A subcamp of Sachsenhausen was established there in early October 1941.<sup>1</sup> [For additional information on the evolution of the concentration camp system and the early camps, see Karin Orth’s introduction “The Genesis and Structure of the National Socialist Concentration Camps.”] The number of prisoners allocated to the subcamp was relatively low, and although it remained in operation for nearly three years, there is little official documentation pertaining to the subcamp.

Prior to its use as a camp during the Nazi era, the Prettin Lichtenburg Castle had a long history of serving as a deten-

tion facility. Plans for the castle date from the fourteenth century, and by 1582, it was fully constructed. During the Napoleonic wars, the French built a prison cell for about 800 prisoners on the grounds of the castle; another cell block was erected there in the late 1870s. Later, during the political turmoil of the 1920s, hundreds were imprisoned at the castle for their participation in left-wing armed uprisings in the district.

Prior to its establishment as a Sachsenhausen subcamp, Lichtenburg Castle operated as an early camp for political prisoners, homosexuals, Jews who had committed “race defilement” (*Rassenschande*) crimes, and other “enemies of the state.” In 1937, during the Nazi government’s attempts to reorganize and consolidate the camp system, they transferred the inmates from the men’s camp to Sachsenhausen and Buchenwald. Following this liquidation, women, mostly Jehovah’s Witnesses, were brought to Prettin from a camp in Moringen. The women were transferred to Ravensbrück in 1939, and the camp remained empty until 1941.

The Second Replacement Battalion (Ersatzbataillon) of the SS-Death’s Head Formations (Totenkopfverbände), elite units of the SS that guarded the camps, was then stationed at the Lichtenburg Castle. The unit remained there until it was summoned to Prague to prepare for combat on the Eastern Front in the winter of 1941. About 10 SS men stayed behind to staff the clothing production camp (*Bekleidungs-lager*) that had been established for the troops at the castle.<sup>2</sup> In early October 1941, the SS were allotted 15 prisoners from Sachsenhausen to work at clothing production. Independent from the clothing plant, there were 40 more SS officers stationed at the castle in the main administrative Arsenal Office (Hauptzeugamt).

By March 1942, an additional 50 inmates from Sachsenhausen were transported to the Lichtenburg Castle to be used for labor in the Arsenal Office. The inmates were housed in the *Zellenbau*, a cell block on the grounds of the castle located near the SS quarters. Most testimonies from former prisoners from the Sachsenhausen Memorial Archives (AG-S) have emphasized that they received decent treatment. The prisoners were permitted to circulate around the Lichtenburg area throughout the day, and at night they were locked in the block. The same kitchen that provided for the SS men also supplied the inmates’ food. The prisoners were occupied with loading and unloading work, workshop, and office duties. One exception to the general reports of fair treatment can be found in the testimony of former inmate Oskar Blömer, who recalled that during an inspection of the camp, SS-Scharführer Otto Kaiser beat a prisoner to death. Kaiser was tried in 1967.<sup>3</sup>

There is little information about the prisoner culture or demographics of this camp’s population, if it changed over the course of the camp’s three-year existence. From a short list in the judge’s final injunction (*Abschlussverfügung*) in the AG-S, many of the prisoners were from the German Reich and ranged in ages from 35 to 45.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, there is scant information about individual SS men who staffed the clothing production camp and the

armaments office. The chief of the clothing camp was Obersturmführer Germann Cristel, who was appointed in September or October 1941. After he was transferred to another SS division on an unknown date, Cristel was replaced by Sturmführer Hans Koch. Hauptscharführer Ludwig Viehmeyer acted as adjutant to the chief of the armaments office; he also supervised the prisoners' living quarters. Rottenführer Willi Thiessen oversaw the prisoner work division of the armaments office. Sturmscharführer Kaspar Wallner was appointed head of the clothing production camp, and he remained in this position until the end of the war. Unterführer Anton Blobner oversaw the prisoners' work in the clothing production camp; he died in January 1945. Rottenführers Josef Echle, who died in June 1948, and Fritz Pedeyn also guarded the prisoners while they worked. The SS guard staff at the Prettin subcamp ranged in ages from 31 to 46.

The subcamp at Lichtenburg Castle functioned until late April 1945, when the Soviet Army invaded the area and the SS guards retaliated and were forced to evacuate. The remaining prisoners escaped, although there is no record of how many inmates survived this ordeal.

**SOURCES** The main secondary source of information for this entry is Klaus Drobisch, *Konzentrationslager im Schloss Lichtenburg* (Wittenberg: Kreisverwaltung Wittenberg, 1997), which focuses predominantly on the history of the castle and its uses as an early camp. Drobisch also provides a brief overview of the subcamp. For similar broad information and a brief description of the subcamp, see also Stefanie Endlich, "Das Konzentrationslager Lichtenburg," in *Verfolgung, Terror und Widerstand in Sachsen-Anhalt, 1933–1945: Ein Wegweiser für Gedenkstättenbesuche* (Berlin: Metropol, 2001); and the Lichtenburg entry, this volume. Further analysis of the shift in administration and restructuring of the Lichtenburg camp prior to World War II can be found in Charles W. Snyder Jr., *Soldiers of Destruction: The SS Death Head's Division* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990); and Jan Erik Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung: Das Wirtschaftsimperium der SS: Oswald Pohl und das SS-Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt 1933–1945* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 2001). Information about the opening and closing dates of the Prettin subcamp, the types of prisoners, and nature of prisoner work can be found in the (ITS), *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten*, vol. 1 (Arolsen: Der Suchdienst, 1979).

Primary source material about the Lichtenburg concentration camps and the Sachsenhausen subcamp is located in the archives of the AG-L in the Museum Schloss Lichtenburg (Prettin). Photographs from these archives are reprinted in the accounts of both Drobisch and Endlich. Information about the WVHA, which most likely administered the work in the clothing production camp, can be found in the records of the BA-K—for example, File Group 415, Verwaltungschef SS: "Neubau des FKL-Ravensbrück—Anregungen des Direktors des FKL Lichtenburg, March 1939." The LHSA-Ma

contains files related to the establishment of a concentration camp at Lichtenburg Castle. Other primary documentation can be found in the AG-S, especially in the general reports on the subcamps in LAG FB 653, "Sachsenhausensammlung der 'Lagerarbeitsgemeinschaft Sachsenhausen,'" in particular, File XII/9, which contains partial copies of investigations conducted by the ZdL.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## NOTES

1. The ITS catalog lists the opening date of the subcamp as October 3, 1941. Klaus Drobisch, in *Konzentrationslager im Schloss Lichtenburg* (Wittenberg: Kreisverwaltung Wittenberg, 1997), has cited the date October 4, 1941.
2. Abschlussverfügung des Kölner Staatsanwaltes Pfeufer (n.d.), reproduced in the AG-S, LAG XII/9, p. 1.
3. Ibid., pp. 4–5.
4. Ibid., pp. 3–4.

## RATHENOW

The town of Rathenow an der Havel is situated about 60 kilometers (37 miles) west of Berlin. A subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp existed there between September 20, 1944, and April 25, 1945. The prisoners—at first about 500 in number—worked in the nearby Arado airplane factory. The company was founded in Warnemünde at the Baltic coast in 1917 and established a branch in the town of Brandenburg in 1934. The National Socialist authorities nationalized the whole company one year later. A new headquarters in the town of Nowawes (present-day Babelsberg) and a factory building in Rathenow/Heidefeld were founded in the fall of 1936. Workers of the Rathenow factory manufactured Heinkel aircraft under license. The Rathenow branch specialized in the construction of wings for fighter planes up to 1944. During World War II, the Arado company established 24 new production centers all over Europe.

After the evacuation of more than 2,000 prisoners from the Herzogenbusch concentration camp (Dutch: Kamp Vught) in the Netherlands to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp at the beginning of September 1944, SS authorities deported nearly 300 of these prisoners to the Rathenow subcamp, who then made up the majority of the subcamp prisoners. Most Rathenow prisoners had a Dutch, Belgian, or French background, although there were also prisoners from Poland, the Soviet Union, Norway, and Germany. On February 20, 1945, about 150 to 200 Polish Jews from the evacuated Glöwen subcamp were deported to Rathenow, and guards counted nearly 1,000 prisoners altogether. About 50 of the 250 Dutch prisoners were Jehovah's Witnesses, and between 12 and 15 prisoners were German. The average number of prisoners was between 500 and 800, while a maximum figure was reached with about 1,000 to 1,200 prisoners in February 1945. The Jewish prisoners were housed in a separate hut. They also had to work under extremely hard conditions: the SS au-



thorities did not allow them to work inside the factory building, which had an underground production center. Even during the cold winter, the Jewish prisoners had to rivet wings with air pressure outside the factory building.

Authorities usually transported sick prisoners to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp or created so-called Kartoffelschälkommandos in the subcamp, where sick persons had to do the housework instead of working in the factory.

The subcamp included about 4 hectares (10 acres) and was located south of the town of Rathenow in a district called Heidefeld. The subcamp was made up of one large hut, eight medium-sized huts, and two small buildings placed in a five-cornered area. They included a hut for the prisoner-functionaries (*Funktionshäftlinge*)—mostly Germans who represented a connecting link between other prisoners and the subcamp command as well as the kitchen hut. The subcamp was surrounded by two electrified barbed-wire fences with a footpath 4 meters (13 feet) wide between the fences. Five wooden watchtowers marked the corners of the subcamp. Two huts outside the camp were reserved for the guards.

The prisoners were forced to work in two 12-hour shifts. They had to work not only in the construction and planking (*Beplankung*) of wings for fighter planes but also in the construction of wings for rockets of the “revenge weapons” (*Vergeltungswaffen*) and in the production of screws.

About 30 to 50 SS guards controlled the camp as well as the prisoners on their way from and to the factory building, which was 500 meters (547 yards) away. The chief of the subcamp was Otto Schulz (other sources said that the chief of the subcamp was a man called Vahle).<sup>1</sup>

An Allied air strike destroyed large parts of the factory building on April 18, 1945. Up to this time, camouflage battle dresses were produced there until the liberation of the subcamp by Red Army soldiers on April 26, 1945.<sup>2</sup>

Eyewitnesses reported the murder of 12 prisoners, but beyond all doubts, 2 prisoners from Belgium were shot dead because of sabotage,<sup>3</sup> and about 40 prisoners died because of malnutrition in the last weeks of the subcamp’s existence.

**SOURCES** For an updated overview of the status of research on the subcamp with a focus on Jewish prisoners, see Monika Knop, “Jüdische Häftlinge in den Aussenlagern 1944 bis 1945,” in *Jüdische Häftlinge im Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen 1936 bis 1945*, ed. Günter Morsch and Susanne zur Nieden (Berlin, 2004).

Primary documentation on the Rathenow subcamp is located in AG-S, especially in the Box Rathenow, which contains a collection of testimonies collected by ZdL (now at BA-L).

Alexander Jossifidis

## NOTES

1. ZdL, pp. 268, 270, 321, 456, 467, 483, 493, Abschlussvermerk betr. Nebenlager Rathenow (KL Sachsenhausen), Ludwigsburg, October 4, 1971 (IV 406 AR-Z 141/71).

2. ZdL, pp. 128, 171, 433, 434, 442, Abschlussvermerk betr. Nebenlager Rathenow (KL Sachsenhausen), Ludwigsburg, October 4, 1971 (IV 406 AR-Z 141/71).

3. ZdL, pp. 169, 538, Abschlussvermerk betr. Nebenlager Rathenow (KL Sachsenhausen), Ludwigsburg, October 4, 1971 (IV 406 AR-Z 141/71).

## SCHÖNEFELD [AKA AL HENSCHEL]

The Schönefeld subcamp with about 600 female prisoners existed from July 1944 to April 1945 on the grounds of today’s Berlin-Schönefeld airport. The women had to do forced labor in the Henschel-Flugzeug-Werke (HFW), a company founded by Oskar R. Henschel in 1933. The site of the main aircraft works and test runway were at Schönefeld, then a suburb located at the southeastern outskirts of Berlin.

After Allied air raids in the fall of 1943 had led to losses in production, the central goal of National Socialist armaments policy became to redouble efforts and force increased production, particularly in aircraft armaments. In the summer of 1944 and as part of this effort to compensate for production losses caused by the air raids, the HFW asked for female prisoners from the Ravensbrück concentration camp in order to deploy them in the Schönefeld works.

In July 1944, part of the Schönefeld factory was converted into a Ravensbrück subcamp.<sup>1</sup>

Under the supervision of SS-Scharführer Fritz Giese, a group of 12 male concentration camp prisoners set up a kitchen, washroom, and living quarters in Production Hall No. 7. Prisoner quarters, initially with 150 beds but later increased, were located on the first floor of the factory building (No. 7a). It would eventually be surrounded by an electrified fence, and in addition, a detention cell was installed in September 1944. The SS took over the new camp on July 26, 1944, once the installation was complete.

Soon thereafter, about 500 female prisoners were transported by truck to the subcamp from the Ravensbrück concentration camp.<sup>2</sup> At the end of August, another group of 120 female prisoners was brought by the SS from the Ravensbrück subcamp at Barth near Rostock, arriving at Schönefeld on September 1, 1944.<sup>3</sup> On the same day, Schönefeld came under the jurisdiction of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and was thenceforth called the “Henschel external camp” (AL Henschel) in the SS.<sup>4</sup> When, on March 1, 1945, 14 more women were brought from Ravensbrück to Schönefeld, the total number of prisoners employed at HFW reached its high point of 634. Most of them came from France, Poland, and Russia, though there were also German Roma (Gypsies), Yugoslavs, a Belgian, a Latvian, and a German woman labeled by the SS as “asocial” and “political.” There may have been at least 7 Jews among the women prisoners.<sup>5</sup>

The first SS-Lagerführer, Giese, aged 34 in 1944, was ordered to Eberswalde to again assume command of the construction of a Ravensbrück subcamp soon after the female prisoners arrived. He was replaced by 45-year-old SS-Oberscharführer Emil Rieder.<sup>6</sup> He was replaced in January 1945 by SS-Oberscharführer Schulz, who was about 35.

The SS guard staff consisted of about 10 SS men, most of whom were said to have been ethnic Germans from Romania and Hungary.<sup>7</sup> Most of the female SS guards, in the summer of 1944, had been assigned to do service with the SS by the companies for which they previously worked. In all, there were at least 15 female SS guards who saw service at the Schönefeld subcamp, under the command of a senior female guard, of whom 12 are known by name. SS personnel were probably accommodated in a barracks outside the camp proper.<sup>8</sup>

The female prisoners primarily produced wings for the Messerschmitt (Me) 109 aircraft. Half the women were awakened around 5:00 A.M. and had to work a 12-hour shift. According to survivors, those women who had to work the night shift from 7:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. hated it more because of the cold.<sup>9</sup> The survivor Henriette Cartier-Worms described her working conditions in a statement she made for the trial against the major war criminals that was held at the International Military Tribunal in Nürnberg: "My work involved drilling eight-mm holes in steel or hardened aluminum with a heavy, seven kilo [15.4-pound] steam hammer. I had to use this steam hammer for the entire shift, which means twelve hours long. . . . We worked on an assembly line whose output was continually being increased. At the beginning, the line came around every three hours, but at the end of our stay, it was every forty minutes, which left hardly a free moment. . . . I was forbidden to sit down in the factory. . . . We could only go to the latrines at fixed times. That was especially bad for us, because we all suffered from diarrhea."<sup>10</sup> A duralumin alloy was applied to harden the airplane wings, which ate into the skin on the women's hands and caused abscesses. Cartier-Worms also mentioned that while at work the women prisoners suffered at the hands of the German civilians who worked for Henschel.

By the end of 1944, much of the production in other areas of the HFW Schönefeld had either stopped or had stagnated, but the "camp in assembly hall 7 was a last bastion of what could be called conventional industrial production."<sup>11</sup> In its report for the month of October 1944, the HFW notes how "good has been the production of Me 109 wings by concentration camp prisoners."<sup>12</sup> However, according to survivors, production ceased in mid-January 1945 due to breakdowns in energy supply and the lack of raw materials and was not resumed. From then on, the women were used for heavy and dangerous physical work outside the camp, including cleanup work in Berlin and digging antitank ditches to defend the city.

Rations sank dramatically once production at HFW ceased in January 1945. The hygienic conditions also dramatically deteriorated, as the water supply system broke down.

"Many young women died very quickly of tuberculosis. Usually the ill, and those whose performance at work was insufficient, were sent back to the camp and I subsequently learned of their deaths,"<sup>13</sup> Cartier-Worms reported. There was a sick ward in Assembly Hall 7, attended to by two women prisoners, but it only dealt with minor illnesses and injuries.

The seriously ill were taken at first to Ravensbrück and, beginning in 1945, to the women's subcamp of Sachsenhausen called Oranienburg (Auer-Werke).

There were probably multiple deaths on the grounds of the Schönefeld subcamp, and a former female guard remembers at least one. The SS change of status reports noted that on March 6, 1945, 21-year-old German Roma Anna Baramysi had died in the subcamp. Those who had died were to be cremated at the Baumschulenweg crematorium in Berlin-Treptow.

The total number of inmates in the subcamp sank dramatically in its last weeks, as larger groups of female prisoners were either evacuated or escaped. A female Polish prisoner was transferred to Sachsenhausen on April 8, 1945, and from there she and 5 other prisoners were released two days later. On the same day, 2 female Soviet soldiers whose prisoner-of-war (POW) status the SS had converted into concentration camp detention, managed to escape from the subcamp. On April 18, 1945, 65 women prisoners were taken to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.<sup>14</sup>

When the Red Army reached the Berlin city limits on April 21, 1945, the SS camp commander ordered the subcamp dissolved. That afternoon, the remaining 537 women were divided into several groups and forced to head in the direction of Oranienburg. The first stage involved a night march through bombed-out Berlin. According to a French survivor, prisoners who during the march remained behind out of exhaustion were shot by the SS. Close to Nauen, the SS abandoned the majority of the women, and it is here that they were liberated by Soviet soldiers on April 24, 1945.<sup>15</sup>

At least four SS members of the Schönefeld subcamp were interned by the Allies after the war. They were all released by 1947. A former female SS guard was extradited to Poland and sentenced to a three-year prison term for being a member of the SS.<sup>16</sup> The only sentence that was explicitly related to crimes committed in the subcamp was handed down on December 22, 1949, by a French military court in Rastatt. The former camp guard Hildegard Glimpel was sentenced to a three-month jail term for mistreating prisoners.<sup>17</sup> Investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg ceased investigating in 1971, as there was no evidence of the premeditated murder of camp inmates.

**SOURCES** The principal secondary source of information for this entry is an essay by Lutz Budrass and Manfred Grieger, "Die Moral der Effizienz: Die Beschäftigung von KZ-Häftlingen am Beispiel des Volkswagenwerks und der Henschel Flugzeug-Werke," *JWg* 2 (1993): 89–136, which provides a brief overview of the camp and an in-depth analysis of the history of HFW, its use of slave labor, and a history of its administration in relation to the Nazi government.

Primary source materials about the Schönefeld subcamp of Sachsenhausen are stored at the AHFW and at AG-S. For a detailed account of life in the Schönefeld camp complex, see the second volume of Christian Bernadac's *Le camps des femmes: Ravensbrück*, vol. 2 of *Mannequins nus* (Paris: France-

Empire, 1971–1973), which is based on the unpublished manuscripts of two former inmates. Testimony from another former inmate, Henriette Cartier-Worms, has been published in Peter Neitzke and Martin Weinmann, *Konzentrationslager Dokument F321 für den Internationalen Militärgerichtshof Nürnberg* (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1988); however, Cartier-Worms's testimony is edited and separated under thematic headings, and therefore it is not a straight narrative about her experience in the Schönefeld camp (she was also interned in Ravensbrück). For detailed information about work conditions at the HFW factory, see the USHMMA, RG-02.038, J.H., "Montluc-Ravensbrück: A Record of Imprisonment Testimony" (October 15, 1945). This is a memoir written by an anonymous survivor who, although she did not necessarily live in Halle 7 at Schönefeld, performed slave labor for Henschel and describes the work conditions there.

Alexander Korb  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. The factory topography and the camp can be seen in Allied air photographs taken on February 22, 1944, and in two sketches by a former supervisor. The photos can be seen at [www.bvbb-ev.de/assets/images/Schfd1944-beschriftet-2.jpg](http://www.bvbb-ev.de/assets/images/Schfd1944-beschriftet-2.jpg) (September 16, 2003); the sketches at Preliminary Investigation by BA-L, ZdL, October 10, 1969, IV 406 AR 645/69.

2. J. H., "Montluc-Ravensbrück: A Record of Imprisonment Testimony" (October 15, 1945), USHMMA, RG-02.038/1, p. 10. Lutz Budrass and Manfred Grieger estimate the arrival of the prisoners as being between July 26 and 31, 1944: "Die Moral der Effizienz: Die Beschäftigung von KZ-Häftlingen am Beispiel des Volkswagenwerks und der Henschel Flugzeug-Werke," *JWg* 2 (1993): 122. Another 80 women reached the camp on September 7, 1944: Stärke und Veränderungsmeldungen, September 7, 1944, AG-S, D 9A.

3. The transfer lists hold the names and prison numbers of the transferred women; see USHMMA, RG-04.006M, Reel 20.

4. Stärke und Veränderungsmeldungen 1945, AG-S, D 9A.

5. Preliminary Investigation Result, BA-L, ZdL, October 10, 1969, IV 406 AR 645/69.

6. Bernhard Strebel, *Das KZ Ravensbrück: Geschichte eines Lagerkomplexes* (Paderborn, 2003), p. 447.

7. Preliminary Investigation Result, BA-L, ZdL, October 10, 1969, IV 406 AR 645/69.

8. Marquardt [\*8.1916 in Wolfenbüttel], May 12, 1969, in Clausthal-Zellerfeld, BA-L, IV 406 AR 645/69, p. 34.

9. J. H., "Montluc-Ravensbrück," p. 11.

10. See the statement by Henriette Cartier-Worms, in Peter Neitzke and Martin Weinmann, *Konzentrationslager Dokument F321 für den Internationalen Militärgerichtshof Nürnberg* (Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1988), p. 105.

11. Budrass and Grieger, "Die Moral der Effizienz," p. 131.

12. Technical Report, Entry 2.10./b, MB October 1944, AHFW, cited in *ibid.*, p. 132.

13. Cartier-Worms, in Neitzke and Weinmann, *Konzentrationslager Dokument F321 für den Internationalen Militärgerichtshof Nürnberg*, p. 112.

14. Stärke und Veränderungsmeldungen 1945, AG-S, D 9A.

15. J.H., "Montluc-Ravensbrück," p. 18

16. BA-L, IV 406 AR 2488/66, p. 227.

17. Record of Interview Hildegard Glimpel [\*5.1923 in Säbischdorf], May 12, 1969, in Leverkusen, ZdL, 406 AR 2488/66, p. 69.

## SCHWARZHEIDE

In the summer of 1944, the SS set up a subcamp of Sachsenhausen at Schwarzheide, close to the Dresden-Berlin autobahn. It held 1,000 Czech Jewish prisoners from Auschwitz, and they worked at the Braunkohle-Benzin AG (Brabag) lignite hydrogenation factory. It is likely that less than half of the prisoners survived the Schwarzheide subcamp and the subsequent death marches.

The Schwarzheide factory was located in southern Brandenburg at the edge of the Lausitz coal-mining district. It was the third of four hydrogenation plants built by Brabag, an enterprise founded in 1934 at the request of the Reich Economics Ministry but with the compulsory cooperation of the coal and mineral oil industry. The conversion of lignite into gasoline, into diesel oil, and in particular into high-octane aircraft fuel was to be forced so as to reduce dependence on imported oil, the key raw material needed to arm for war.

According to Fritz Kranefuss, the spokesman for the Brabag board of directors, plans were laid by the end of 1943 to use concentration camp prisoners as forced laborers in the hydrogenation plants.<sup>1</sup> Production was to be relocated underground, but the expertise provided by Prof. Carl Krauch, IG Farben director and designated specialist for chemistry, concluded it was technically impossible.<sup>2</sup>

In June 1944, the Armaments Ministry, following increased Allied air raids, established a working group to coordinate the reconstruction of those hydrogenation works that had been destroyed.<sup>3</sup> Concentration camp prisoners did the work.<sup>4</sup> After May or June 1944, about 10,000 concentration camp inmates, mainly Hungarian Jews, were forced to do the cleanup and construction work just at the four Brabag plants.<sup>5</sup>

By the end of 1944 or the beginning of 1945, the Schwarzheide works had become the most important supplier of fuel to the Wehrmacht's Army Group Center, hence also a "main strategic target" in Brandenburg for Allied long-distance bombers.<sup>6</sup> The first air raid on the Schwarzheide works took place on May 28, 1944. After six additional raids during the summer of 1944, production at Schwarzheide fell by 30 percent, according to the Armaments Ministry.<sup>7</sup> By early 1945, shortly before Germany's defeat, it was thought about 75 percent of the works had been destroyed.

In June 1944, the SS disbanded the "Theresienstadt Family Camp" in Auschwitz II-Birkenau. This block of the camp



was in sector B II b, an area where Czech Jews from the evacuated Theresienstadt ghetto were held. Several thousand men and women under 40 were selected to do forced labor; the remaining 10,000 or so (comprising older men, women, and children under 16) were murdered in the gas chambers. Some 1,000 Czech Jews were sent, in boxcars, to Schwarzheide to do forced labor and arrived on July 1, 1944.

The Schwarzheide subcamp was established in a former housing barracks near the Dresden-Berlin autobahn. In May 1944, the SS transferred an advance work detail to it, composed of non-Jewish prisoners, mainly German Communists, who had been held at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. They assumed leading positions among the prisoners, including camp elder and chief of the infirmary.

The SS camp leader and certain SS men were deemed particularly brutal. One SS man wanted to shoot a concentration camp prisoner who had been injured outside the grounds of the camp during an air raid. A prisoner foreman was shot by a different SS man because he interceded on behalf of weakened fellow prisoners in his work detail.<sup>8</sup> Another concentration camp prisoner was beaten to death by an SS man because he had picked up a cigarette butt off the ground.

Approximately 20 different work Kommandos were employed at the Schwarzheide works, constructing bunkers and production facilities as well as a power plant. The work included lugging 50-kilogram (110-pound) cement sacks or loading and unloading trucks. Each Kommando worked a 12-hour shift, either day or night, and per shift were allowed only one half-hour break.<sup>9</sup> To shield weaker prisoners, camp elder Paul Bergmann assigned those of a stronger constitution to the more physically demanding work.<sup>10</sup> Prisoners were also used to clear rubble and do repair work after air raids, with one Kommando laying new cables and lines. There were bomb disposal details that had to disarm many of the 113 duds among the approximately 3,000 bombs dropped on the works, and each detail consisted of 10 concentration camp prisoners.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to persecution by the SS and the exhausting or deadly dangerous work, air raids themselves also endangered prisoners, as they were wholly unprotected and not allowed to enter the air-raid shelters. Instead, they were locked in the subcamp's barracks. Aerial photos taken by the Royal Air Force at the beginning of March 1945 clearly show that during the carpet bombing of the grounds, efforts were made to spare the nearby subcamp.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, it was hit once.

Yet prisoners had ambivalent feelings about air raids, for though they were dangerous, they also were a symbol of coming liberation. Survivor Pavel Stransky said: "We looked forward to the next air raid! It meant a sweet rest for us. We had reached a point where we no longer feared the bombs. It was more important to have a break from the work, though we underestimated the danger. . . . Shrapnel bombs were dropped at the time, and a few prisoners were injured by them in the legs."<sup>13</sup>

At times, as many as one-third of the prisoners were in the subcamp's infirmary, though it had no medical equipment. Prisoner doctor, and gynecologist, Herbert Lewin later said: "We had to carry out emergency amputations with a disinfected carpenter's saw, and instead of an anesthetic, we held the prisoners down."<sup>14</sup> Lewin was one of the few Berlin doctors active in public health matters during the Weimar Republic and was particularly concerned to improve the basic health care and nutrition of underprivileged women.<sup>15</sup> Lewin founded the Association of Jewish Workers (Bund Jüdischer Arbeiter), though it would be banned by 1934. In 1941 he was deported from Cologne, where he had worked since 1937 as head of the Jewish Hospital's Gynecology Department, to the Łódź ghetto and from there, in 1944, to Auschwitz. That same year, Lewin was moved from Auschwitz to the Sachsenhausen Heinkel subcamp and from there to the Schwarzheide subcamp.

The SS transported the corpses of 114 concentration camp prisoners to the city crematorium at Dresden-Tolkewitz.<sup>16</sup> Dead prisoners also had been hurriedly buried in mines and bomb craters. It is possible that the SS began, as they probably also did at the Falkensee subcamp, to construct a crematorium on the grounds of the subcamp. Survivors suspect it could also have been a gas chamber.

At the beginning of February 1945, the SS had the concentration camp prisoners begin constructing tank traps in the area around the Brabag works and transferred certain prisoners to other work assignments at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. At the end of February or the beginning of March 1945, about 300 Jewish concentration camp prisoners "incapable of working" were transported to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp and were replaced by about 300 non-Jewish prisoners from the Heinkel subcamp. It is also alleged that exhausted concentration camp prisoners were brought from Schwarzheide back to Auschwitz and to Bergen-Belsen in February and March 1945.

In March 1945, SS-Gruppenführer Hans Kammler ordered the former commander of the SS-Central Construction Administration (Zentralbauleitung, ZBL) Auschwitz, SS-Sturmbannführer Karl Bischoff, to implement Special Measure (*Sondermassnahme*) I/7 (Schwarzheide).<sup>17</sup> This special project probably had something to do with the use of prisoners by Bischoff for construction, though it never came to pass.

During the disbanding of the Schwarzheide subcamp, 40 concentration camp prisoners who could no longer walk were taken in two buses, on April 17, 1945, to Sachsenhausen—and then forced on the death march from there; 1 inmate who remained behind in the Sachsenhausen infirmary was freed by the Red Army on April 22.<sup>18</sup>

The remaining 500 prisoners from the Schwarzheide subcamp, Jews and non-Jews alike who could still walk, were forced from Schwarzheide on a death march in the direction of Theresienstadt. Prisoners marched in rows of five and to begin with; those in the outside positions had to carry a

fence made of palings and rope.<sup>19</sup> During this death march, which went via Kamenz, Sebnitz, and the mountainous region of the Sächsische Schweiz, about 80 men died either from exhaustion or at the hands of SS men who shot prisoners who tried to escape or who could no longer walk.<sup>20</sup>

When the SS seized a starving French prisoner who had stolen food, they shot—as “punishment”—4 other prisoners.<sup>21</sup> In the Czech town of Varnsdorf, the SS hanged a Polish prisoner after he unsuccessfully tried to escape into a factory building.<sup>22</sup> On April 28, 1945, in Varnsdorf, Jewish and non-Jewish prisoners were separated, and the non-Jewish prisoners later were freed near Langenau. The Jewish prisoners had to climb into open freight cars that otherwise transported coal and were taken, standing, to Leipa (Ceska Lipa in Bohemia). Along the way, some exhausted prisoners even drowned in the water that had pooled at the bottom of the cars after several days’ rain;<sup>23</sup> 17 prisoners starved to death during the two days the train stood in Leipa, as they were given no food to eat.<sup>24</sup> From Leitmeritz (Litomerice), on May 7, 1945, the prisoners had to march in the direction of Terezin, though a few kilometers before reaching it, the SS guards fled.<sup>25</sup> About 227 concentration camp prisoners had at this point survived the death march;<sup>26</sup> 3 former prisoners would still die between May 8 and 10, after liberation, due to the aftereffects of the death march.<sup>27</sup>

**SOURCES** The author researched the history of the Schwarzheide subcamp and a number of individual concentration camp biographies to prepare the permanent exhibits at the Sachsenhausen Memorial titled “Die Baracke 38—Jüdische Häftlinge im KZ Sachsenhausen 1936–1945” and “Die Baracke 39—Der ‘Alltag’ der Häftlinge des KZ Sachsenhausen 1936–1945.” Some of this work appeared in the essay “Zwangsarbeit von jüdischen KZ-Häftlingen in der Rüstungsproduktion in der Region Berlin-Brandenburg in der Schlussphase des Zweiten Weltkrieges—Die Aussenlager Glöwen und Schwarzheide des KZ Sachsenhausen,” in *Zwangsarbeit während der NS-Zeit in Berlin und Brandenburg—Formen, Funktion und Rezeption*, ed. Winfried Meyer and Klaus Neitmann (Potsdam: Verlag Berlin-Brandenburg, 2001), pp. 163–175.

The AG-S holds interviews with the survivors Jacov Tsur and Jiri Lom as well as five ring binders containing the results of the author’s research. They include biographical documents and survivors’ letters to the research group “Internationale Spurensucher,” detailing the death march. Other documents can be found in the AG-T and at Beit Terezin in Israel. Documents on the Brabag-Werk Schwarzheide are held in the BHLA and the A-BASF (BASF is the owner of the former Brabag factory). An unpublished memoir by Tsur and Richard Svoboda, “Das Aussenlager Schwarzheide des KZ Sachsenhausen,” can be found in USHMM, Schwarzheide Collection, Acc. 2001.214. The archival collection was put together in the A-VEB-S in the DDR. In *The Book of Alfred Kantor. An Artist’s Journal of the Holocaust*, preface by John Wykert (1971, repr., New York: Schocken Books, 1987), Auschwitz and Schwarzheide survivor Alfred Kantor shows in impressive colored drawings, completed

after liberation while he was in the Deggendorf DP camp, the persecution and everyday life in Theresienstadt, Auschwitz, and Schwarzheide. Former Schwarzheide prisoner Jiri Fränkl published his account *Der brennende Himmel* (Prague, 1995), which concentrates on Auschwitz. The autobiography of Pavel Stransky, *Als Boten der Opfer: Von Prag durch Theresienstadt, Auschwitz, Schwarzheide und zurück. Tschechisch-jüdische Schicksale 1939–1997* (Konstanz, 1997), gives a forceful depiction of Schwarzheide. Tsur’s biography also figures in the CD-ROM the author compiled for the AG-S, titled *Gegen das Vergessen—Der Alltag der Häftlinge im KZ Sachsenhausen 1936–1945*. Tsur also published the report “Der Transport” about the transport from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz; it can be found in the narrative written by Nea Wiessberg-Bob and Thomas Irmer, *Heinrich Richard Brinn (1874–1944): Fabrikant-Kunstsammler-Frontkämpfer. Dokumentation einer ‘Arisierung,’* with Michel Friedman, Hermann Simon, and Jacov Tsur (Berlin: Lichtig Verlag, 2002), pp. 214–219.

Thomas Irmer  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Schreiben Fritz Kranefuss an SS-Obersturmbannführer Brandt, December 21, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/1677, p. 2.
2. Schreiben GBChem Prof. Krauch an Himmler, December 18, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/1677, p. 3.
3. Rundschreiben RMfRK June 8, 1944, Betr.: Generalkommissar für die Sofortmassnahmen, BA-B, NS 19/3592.
4. Schreiben Edmund Geilenberg/Arbeitsstab an SS-Standartenführer Gerhard Maurer/SS-WVHA, July 10, 1944, BA-B, R 3112/179.
5. Tobias Bütow and Franka Bindernagel, *Ein KZ in der Nachbarschaft: Das Magdeburger Aussenlager der Brabag und der ‘Freundeskreis Himmler’* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2003).
6. Olaf Groehler, “Der Luftkrieg gegen Brandenburg in den letzten Kriegsmonaten,” in *Brandenburg im Jahr 1945. Studien*, ed. Werner Stang and Kurt Arlt (Potsdam, 1995), pp. 9–37.
7. Aufstellung Produktion der Werke in Prozentsatz der Normalproduktion, November 20, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/1677.
8. Statement by Frantisek Glückner at the Kolin District Court, September 9, 1969, in AG-S, LAG XIII/16.
9. Statement by Richard Meisl at the Tabor District Court Tabor, September 10, 1969, AG-S, LAG XII/16; Aussage von Pavel Kubie vor dem Kreisgericht Prag-Ost, October 21, 1969, AG-S, LAG XII/16.
10. Interview with Jacov Tsur by Eva Brücker and Thomas Irmer, AG-S, Bestand B 38.
11. The numbers come from the A-BASF.
12. LVerma Brandenburg Luftbild Schwarzheide, Film Nr. 046, Bild-Nr. 4036, March 24, 1945.
13. Pavel Stransky, *Als Boten der Opfer: Von Prag durch Theresienstadt, Auschwitz, Schwarzheide und zurück. Tschechisch-jüdische Schicksale 1939–1997* (Konstanz, 1997), p. 31.
14. Prof. Dr. Herbert Lewin, “Erlebnisse 1933/45” (Bericht von Herbert Lewin vom März 1955, aufgenommen von

H.G. Adler), IfZ, MZS 1/7 (Wiener Library P III Au [Lodz-Theresienstadt] Nr. 8).

15. Lewin worked in the Reichsverein für Volksernährung and was a member of the SPD.

16. Einäscherungsregister 1944/45 Urnenhain Krematorium Dresden-Tolkewitz.

17. Schriftstück "Vollmacht Nr. 7," March 26, 1945, BA-B, NS 3/457, Bl. 5.

18. Report by Oldrich Stransky, AG-S, R 66/22.

19. Stransky, *Als Boten der Opfer*, p. 33.

20. The numbers are based in part on the lists of prisoner orderly Heinrich Roeder who kept notes during the death march. See the statements by the brothers Jiri und Richard Meisl before the Tabor District Court on August 28 and September 10, 1969, AG-S, LAG XII/16.

21. Statement by Pavel Kubie at the Prague-East District Court, October 21, 1969, AG-S, LAG XII/16.

22. Statement by Frantisek Glückner before the Kolin District Court, September 9, 1969, AG-S, LAG XIII/16.

23. Statement by Pavel Kubie before the Prague-East District Court, October 21, 1969, AG-S, LAG XII/16; Bericht über den Marschweg des Todesmarsches von Schwarzheide nach Terezin by Marek Poloncarz, AG-S, R 61/25.

24. Report by Karel Karlovsky, Prag 1996, AG-S, Sammlung Thomas Irmer.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Bericht über den Marschweg des Todesmarsches von Schwarzheide nach Terezin by Marek Poloncarz, AG-S, R 61/25.

## SPREENHAGEN

Beginning in the summer of 1943, the network of SS duty stations in the area around the German capital became more dense, both through establishing the SS garrison headquarters at Bad Saarow and with setting up an SS troop training area called "Kurmark" in the Jamlitz region about 100 kilometers (62 miles) from Berlin. That same summer, the SS-Leadership Main Office (Führungshauptamt, FHA) also began two institutionally interconnected projects in the Fürstenwalde/Scharmützelsee area east of Berlin.

One of the FHA projects was to relocate SS offices out of the bomb-endangered capital city and move them to the region of Bad Saarow. The other was to begin building a large subterranean intelligence center in the Rauen Mountains south of Fürstenwalde. The two projects were apparently linked. In the second half of 1943, in this area, an overflow camp for SS duty stations was established as well as a large intelligence bunker. As of the end of July 1943, the project to relocate the SS duty stations out of the capital city of the Reich was known by its cover name "Siegfried."<sup>1</sup>

The SS garrison headquarters Bad Saarow was established for these two projects and included the area from Fürstenwalde to south of Beeskow, as well as from Storkow to the Schlaubetal.<sup>2</sup> The SS garrison administration Bad Saarow existed as of August 9, 1943, and the Sachsenhausen subcamps of Bad Saarow (also known as Ketschendorf), Fürstenwalde,

Storkow, Kolpin, and Spreenhagen fell within the area this garrison headquarters administered.

The Spreenhagen subcamp was closely connected to the Bad Saarow subcamp. The administrative office Bad Saarow for SS construction was headed by SS-Untersturmführer Hans-Gustav Bauer (born 1912) from Nürnberg. Administrative suboffices for construction were located at Storkow, Trebnitz, Kolpin, and Spreenhagen, as well as at the main location near Bad Saarow. These were also subcamps of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. SS statistics show Bad Saarow as a labor camp, while Trebnitz, Storkow, and Spreenhagen are reported as labor Kommandos. According to German ethnologist Hellmut Draws-Tychsen, who recorded roll calls at the Bad Saarow subcamp until April 1944, the Bad Saarow, Storkow, Kolpin, and Spreenhagen subcamps were called a "unified labor camp."

The Spreenhagen subcamp was probably established in May 1944, initially with 50 prisoners, though by August this number had nearly doubled, and by the end of 1944, 133 prisoners were housed at Spreenhagen.<sup>3</sup> The prisoners were employed to construct the SS overflow duty stations. In the autumn of 1944, the SS-First Armored Infantry Training and Reserve Battalion (Panzergrenadier-Ausbildungs- und Ersatzbataillon) was stationed in Spreenhagen.<sup>4</sup> On September 23, 1944, 2 Soviet prisoners and a Polish prisoner successfully escaped from the camp.<sup>5</sup> By February 12, 1945, the camp was no longer mentioned in the SS statistics.

Labor Kommandos that most likely came from this camp worked to build SS provisional quarters, following three designs, on Spreenhagen communal land during 1944–1945. In part, however, construction could not be completed.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** A few archival documents are held at the BA-B (Collection NS 33) and at BLHA. Documents giving the number of inmates as well as escapees can be found at AG-S (CAFSSRF).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, NS 33/108, p. 224.

2. BA-B, NS 33/107, p. 180, Map of the SS-Standortverwaltung, Bad Saarow, n.d.

3. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 100.

4. BA-DH, ZM 11514, File 1, Sammelakte, p. 35.

5. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 99.

6. BLHA, Pr. Br. Rep. 204A, Nr. 2286a.

## STORKOW

Beginning in the summer of 1943, the network of SS duty stations in the area around the German capital became denser, both through establishing the SS garrison headquarters at Bad Saarow and with setting up an SS troop training area called "Kurmark" in the Jamlitz region about 100 kilometers (62 miles) from Berlin. That same summer, the SS-Leadership



Main Office (Führungshauptamt, FHA) also began two institutionally interconnected projects in the Fürstenwalde/Scharmützelsee area east of Berlin.

One of the FHA projects was to relocate SS offices out of the bomb-endangered capital city and move them to the region of Bad Saarow. The other was to begin building a large subterranean intelligence center in the Rauen Mountains south of Fürstenwalde. The two projects were apparently linked. In the second half of 1943, in this area, an overflow camp for SS duty stations was established as well as a large intelligence bunker. As of the end of July 1943, the project to relocate the SS duty stations out of the capital city of the Reich was known by its cover name "Siegfried."<sup>1</sup>

The SS garrison headquarters Bad Saarow was established for these two projects and included the area from Fürstenwalde to south of Beeskow, as well as from Storkow to Schlaubetal.<sup>2</sup> The SS garrison administration Bad Saarow existed as of August 9, 1943, and the Sachsenhausen subcamps of Bad Saarow (also known as Ketschendorf), Fürstenwalde, Storkow, Kolpin, and Spreenhagen fell within the area administered by this garrison headquarters.

The Storkow subcamp was closely connected with the Bad Saarow subcamp. The administrative office Bad Saarow for SS construction was headed by SS-Untersturmführer Hans-Gustav Bauer (born 1912) from Nürnberg. Administrative suboffices for construction were located at Trebnitz, Kolpin, Spreenhagen, and Storkow,<sup>3</sup> as well as at the main location near Bad Saarow. These were also subcamps of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. SS statistics show Bad Saarow as a labor camp and Trebnitz, Storkow, and Spreenhagen as labor Kommandos. According to German ethnologist Hellmut Draws-Tychsen, who recorded roll calls at the Bad Saarow subcamp until April of 1944, the Bad Saarow, Storkow, Kolpin, and Spreenhagen subcamps were called a "unified labor camp." Former prisoners have estimated the number of prisoners at the Storkow subcamp at 250.

The Storkow subcamp existed as of April 1944. As with Spreenhagen, it was first intended as a branch of the Bad Saarow subcamp and only later became an independent subcamp.<sup>4</sup> In mid-April 1944, the subcamp held 120 prisoners, though that number continued to be reduced until there were only 69 left by the end of the year.<sup>5</sup> Prisoners worked to build the SS overflow duty stations. One of the offices known to have been relocated to Storkow was Department XVII of Office Group D of the SS-FHA.

From March 15, 1944, to February 2, 1945, SS-Unterscharführer Karl Schlote (born 1912), a member of the SS-Totenkopf-Wachbataillon Sachsenhausen, commanded the Storkow subcamp.<sup>6</sup> After war's end in 1945, Schlote was held by the British at the Esterwegen internment camp together with former SS-Rottenführer Josef Kranebitter, who admitted to having been a guard at the Storkow subcamp between September 6, 1944, and February 3, 1945.<sup>7</sup> His statement suggests the camp may have been established already on March 15, 1944, and one must assume the camp was closed on February 2 or 3, 1945, inasmuch as the subcamp is no longer men-

tioned subsequently in the Sachsenhausen change of status reports.

In the 1960s, West German judicial authorities investigated crimes potentially committed at the Storkow subcamp.<sup>8</sup>

**SOURCES** A few archival documents may be found at the BA-B (Collection NS 33) and at the BLHA. Documents giving the number of inmates as well as escapees can be found at AG-S (CAFSSRF).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, NS 33/107, p. 224.
2. BA-B, NS 33/107, p. 189, Map of the SS-Standortverwaltung, Bad Saarow, n.d.
3. BA-B, NS 3/1072, p. 139R.
4. AG-S, LAG XI/12, Letter from the ZLNW-K to the Gsta.-DDR, June 29, 1970.
5. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 100.
6. BA-DH, ZM 1564, A.13, p. 8, AG-S, LAG X/3, List of former SS members of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp held in the British internment camp at Esterwegen.
7. AG-S, LAG X/3, List of former Sachsenhausen concentration camp members interned in the British internment camp at Esterwegen.
8. AG-S, LAG XI/12, Letter from ZLNW-K (Az. 24 AR 186/68 (Z)) to the Gsta.-DDR, June 29, 1970. The camp is not mentioned in the memoirs of a Storkow Communist—Franz Becker, *Vom Berliner Hinterhof zur Storkower Kommandatura* (Berlin, 1985).

## STRAUSBERG

A camp for female prisoners existed in Strausberg, Oberbarnim District, Brandenburg Province (present-day Märkisch Oderland District in the State of Brandenburg), between November 15, 1944, and April 20, 1945. It was administered from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, and the prisoners worked at the Märkische Walzwerk GmbH (Mark [Brandenburg] Rolling Mill, Ltd.) in Strausberg.

The Fritz Werner AG machine factory in Berlin-Marienfelde had been founded in 1914 and developed out of a small firm that primarily manufactured technical equipment for munitions factories. Once the arms limitations imposed by the Versailles Treaty were lifted, the company specialized in making machines that manufactured light arms, as well as machine-tool and munitions machines. In 1934, Fritz Werner AG complied with a request from the Army Armaments Office that it build its own munitions factory. The Berlin machine company established a subsidiary with the cover name Märkische Walzwerk GmbH and by the end of 1934 began building a munitions factory at the southeastern edge of Strausberg, on Hegermühlenstrasse. Between 1935 and 1939, this became an efficient factory, producing ammunition for 7.92mm-caliber guns as well as munitions parts up to 2

centimeters (0.8 inches) in length. Modern munitions machines built in the Berlin-Marienfelde plant were used for this production, and the Strausberg munitions factory served as a testing ground for these newly developed munitions machines.

During World War II, the Märkische Walzwerk substantially increased its production. Foreign forced laborers particularly from the Netherlands, Poland, Italy, and the Soviet Union began to be used by 1941 to help manufacture munitions. By the fall of 1944, the works employed approximately 1,500 foreign forced laborers, 720 of whom were women; by the end of 1944, a total of about 3,200 workers were employed in the munitions factory.

The ever-increasing demands for ammunition led to an expansion of the production plant at the works. After mid-1943, the Märkische Walzwerk took over the property and the manufacturing building of the neighboring shoe factory Wilhelm Reichenwallner KG. This shoe factory had been acquired in 1931 by Berlin manufacturer Herman Diamant and, until 1938, operating under the name Herman Diamant-Schuhfabrik (HEDIA), had made evening and luxury shoes for women partly for the domestic but primarily for the export market. Diamant was a Jewish entrepreneur, however, and the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front, DAF) of the Gau administration Kurmark forced him to sell his factory to the Wilhelm Reichenwallner KG, with SS-Hauptsturmführer Wilhelm Reichenwallner, from Munich, taking over control of the enterprise. Herman Diamant emigrated in 1939 to the United States, via Copenhagen.

The Märkische Walzwerk established a materials depot and quarters for foreign female forced laborers in the former shoe factory. The lower floors were converted into a production area, used after mid-1944 for the manufacturing of 7.92mm short ammunition for the Sturmgewehr 44 (assault rifle). However, neither German nor foreign forced laborers were available for this new production area, so Fritz Werner AG demanded female labor from a concentration camp through the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA).

The Sachsenhausen concentration camp established a subcamp for 100 women in the Märkische Walzwerk in mid-November 1944.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners had begun to arrive by transports from the Ravensbrück concentration camp beginning in April 1944 and, by the beginning of November, were transferred to the administrative control of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

The national composition of the prisoners cannot be definitively established, though on the basis of available information, the Strausberg subcamp held prisoners from the Soviet Union, Germany, and Poland.

Within the complex of the munitions plant, the prisoners were housed in the main building of the former shoe factory. The munitions and loading machines had been installed on the lower two floors of the shoe factory; a room where the prisoners slept was located immediately above the production halls. The prisoners' kitchen was located on the first floor,

right next to the munitions machines. Prisoners did not need to leave the building to get from their quarters to the munitions machines or to eat. Most workers at the plant were not allowed to enter this production area, so as a result what went on in the former shoe factory remained hidden to them as well as to the inhabitants of Strausberg. Only foremen, suppliers, and technicians were permitted to enter this isolated part of the munitions factory.

The commander of the Strausberg subcamp was SS-Oberscharführer Hellmut Stahl (born 1892), a clerk from Berlin. In May 1944, he was transferred from the Wehrmacht to the Sachsenhausen SS-Totenkopf-Wachbataillon and, after training, was appointed leader of the Kommando.

Beginning in 1943–1944, the most important production sections of the Strausberg munitions factory worked two 12-hour shifts a day, and one can assume the female prisoners in the subcamp were not exempt. However, the production targets for the Märkische Walzwerk in the old shoe factory evidently were not met, inasmuch as additional labor was called for. On March 10, 1945, the Sachsenhausen concentration camp transferred an additional 52 prisoners from the Oranienburg (Auer-Werke) subcamp to the Strausberg subcamp, which now held 150 prisoners.<sup>2</sup>

One contemporary witness reported on the extreme lack of medical care for the women. He recalled that a makeshift sickroom had been installed next to the dormitory where the prisoners slept. The room also served to isolate patients so as to prevent the spread of infection and thereby to avoid losing further working hours. A female prisoner had the task of providing care but had no medical equipment or medicine at her disposal; the factory doctor forbade the SS from providing any sort of medical care for the prisoners. The woman prisoner charged with providing care built her own electric cooker from bits of electrical material lying around the factory so as to be able at least to prepare hot tea for the sick women. The female guards would not enter the sickroom because, in their opinion, "the plague" raged there.<sup>3</sup>

By April 1945, the front was getting closer to Strausberg every day. The munitions factory had removed some of its machines to Berlin, but munitions production continued in Strausberg. The order to evacuate the city was given on April 19 or 20, 1945. No reliable information remains on what then happened to the 150 female prisoners. According to statements by the director of the munitions factory, the Nazi administration at Eberswalde gave orders to march the women to Wandlitz, north of Berlin. The Strausberg subcamp is last mentioned on April 19, 1945, in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp reports of total daily strength.

**SOURCES** In the literature, one finds the camp mentioned but without further information. There are brief mentions of the Strausberg subcamp in Rolf Barthel's *Geschichte der Stadt Strausberg* (Berlin, 1987), p. 198; and in Günter Matthes's "Zwangsarbeit in Strausberg während des zweiten Weltkrieges," *VRDA* 12 (2002): 6–7.

There is very sparse primary information about the Sachsenhausen subcamp at Strausberg. No surviving prisoners have contacted the AG-R or AG-S. No former prisoners have written their memoirs. No postwar trials are known in which male or female guards were charged, or in which former prisoners at Strausberg gave statements. There are no surviving written records of the former Märkische Walzwerk in Strausberg. Only scattered references to the existence of the subcamp or to individual, mostly foreign prisoners can be found in the museums and at the memorials at Sachsenhausen and Ravensbrück.

Günter Matthes  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. AG-S, R 229 M 142.
2. Ibid.
3. Details from witness G. Leske, Strausberg, November 20, 1998.

## TREBNITZ

Beginning in the summer of 1943, the network of SS duty stations in the area around the German capital became more dense, both through establishing the SS garrison headquarters at Bad Saarow and with setting up an SS troop training area called “Kurmark” in the Jamlitz region about 100 kilometers (62 miles) from Berlin. That same summer, the SS-Leadership Main Office (Führungshauptamt, FHA) also began two institutionally interconnected projects in the Fürstenwalde/Scharmützelsee area east of Berlin.

One of the FHA projects was to relocate SS offices out of the bomb-endangered capital city and move them to the region of Bad Saarow. The other was to begin building a large subterranean intelligence center in the Rauen Mountains south of Fürstenwalde. The two projects were apparently linked. In the second half of 1943, in this area, an overflow camp for SS duty stations was established as well as a large intelligence bunker. As of the end of July 1943, the project to relocate the SS duty stations out of the capital city of the Reich was known by its cover name “Siegfried.”<sup>1</sup>

The SS garrison headquarters Bad Saarow was established for these two projects and included the area from Fürstenwalde to south of Beeskow, as well as from Storkow to the Schlaubetal.<sup>2</sup> The SS garrison administration Bad Saarow existed as of August 9, 1943, and the Sachsenhausen subcamps Bad Saarow (also known as Ketschendorf), Fürstenwalde, Storkow, Kolpin, and Spreenhagen fell within the area administered by this garrison headquarters.

While not part of the SS garrison administration Bad Saarow, the Trebnitz subcamp in the Seelow district was part of the project to relocate SS offices to locations east of the capital city. The Trebnitz subcamp was closely connected with the Bad Saarow subcamp.

The administrative office Bad Saarow for SS construction was headed by SS-Untersturmführer Hans-Gustav Bauer

(born 1912) from Nürnberg. As of May 1944, administrative suboffices for construction were located at Storkow, Trebnitz,<sup>3</sup> Kolpin, and Spreenhagen, as well as at the main location near Bad Saarow. These were also subcamps of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. SS statistics show Bad Saarow as a labor camp, while Trebnitz, Storkow, and Spreenhagen are reported as labor Kommandos.<sup>4</sup>

The subcamp was probably established in May 1944. As of the end of March 1944, 120 prisoners were put to work at Trebnitz, a number that had increased to 301 by the beginning of October 1944.<sup>5</sup> A few prisoners had been transferred from the Fürstenwalde subcamp to Trebnitz.<sup>6</sup> In forested areas, the prisoners had to construct alternative quarters for an SS office. They were housed in a camp surrounded by four guard towers. One of the barracks contained a two-room infirmary as well as a storeroom. The kitchen and toilets were in two, separate wooden buildings.

Many Norwegians, who were used as workmen or craftsmen, were among the prisoners, along with Poles, Germans, and Soviets. One of the prisoner foremen was Erich Reuter, probably there as a Special Detachment Wehrmacht (Sonderabteilung Wehrmacht, SAW) prisoner.<sup>7</sup> According to other sources, three barracks for the prisoners existed inside the camp, and a guards’ barracks and the camp office were located outside the camp. A Polish prisoner doctor and medical orderly were also said to have worked in the camp.

After September 1, 1944, the leader of the camp was SS-Untersturmführer Albert Dallwitz.<sup>8</sup> According to survivors, he was in command of about 20 SS men, ethnic Germans from Yugoslavia, Romania, and Hungary.<sup>9</sup> Known names of guards include SS-Schütze Wilhelm Gutermuth, Alfred Münker, and Josef Padberg; Oberschütze Andreas Rutter-schmidt and Julius Schiff; Sturmmann Karl Assmuss and Johann Pelger; Rottenführer Heinrich Philipp and Daniel Rossmann;<sup>10</sup> as well as Jakob Grag, Jakob Sumser, Martin Trontch, and Johann Zink.<sup>11</sup> Other guards included Franz Heist, Paul Marzahn, Mathias Schäfer, and Franz Steiner.<sup>12</sup>

At the end of December 1944, there were still 264 prisoners in the Trebnitz subcamp. Once the Red Army broke through German defenses at Küstrin at the beginning of February 1945, the camp was evacuated to Sachsenhausen. According to statements by the SS guards held after 1945 at the British internment camp at Esterwegen, the last date for the Trebnitz subcamp most often mentioned was February 1.<sup>13</sup> The prisoners were to have been marched by foot, but after one day they were brought by train to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.<sup>14</sup> The Sachsenhausen daily reports no longer mention the Trebnitz subcamp after February 12, 1945. For the most part, by then the prisoners had been moved to the Heinkel Works subcamp in Oranienburg.<sup>15</sup>

On March 15, 1945, one prisoner was transferred from Trebnitz to the SS-“Dirlewanger” Division in Jamlitz for training. This was the location of the Lieberose subcamp that had been dissolved at the beginning of February 1945. That prisoner saw action at the front at the Oder River and was captured and imprisoned by the Soviets until 1949.<sup>16</sup>



After the war, the Bielefeld denazification court investigated camp commander Dallwitz. However, there was insufficient evidence to start a prosecution.<sup>17</sup>

Investigations by the Central Office in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia in Cologne carried out from 1968 to 1970 in Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the Soviet Union remained unsuccessful. No grounds were found to suspect that prisoners had been killed.<sup>18</sup>

**SOURCES** A few archival documents are held at the BA-B (Collection NS 33) and in the BLHA. Documents giving the number of inmates as well as escapees can be found at AG-S (CAFFSRF) and at the PRO.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BA-B, NS 33/107, p. 224.
2. BA-B, NS 33/107, p. 180, Map of the SS-Standortverwaltung, Bad Saarow, n.d.
3. BA-B, NS 33/1072, p. 139R.
4. AG-S, CAFFSRF, N-19092, vol. 100.
5. Ibid.
6. BStU, RHE-West 458-463 (alt RHE 105/68 and RHE V 102/68), pp. 461–463.
7. AG-S, LAG II/12, p. 1, Letter from NWZS-K to Gsta.-DDR, October 10, 1968.
8. AG-S, LAG II/12, p. 5, Letter from the NWZS-K to Gsta.-DDR, June 25, 1970.
9. BStU, RHE-West 458-463 (alt RHE 105/68 and RHE V 102/68), p. 463.
10. AG-S, LAG X/3, List of former SS members of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp interned in the British internment camp at Esterwegen.
11. PRO, all references from Collection WO 309.
12. AG-S, LAG II/12, p. 6, Letter from the NWZS-K to Gsta.-DDR, June 25, 1970.
13. AG-S, LAG X/3, List of former SS members of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp interned in the British internment camp Esterwegen.
14. AG-S, LAG II/12, p. 3, Letter from the NWZS-K to Gsta.-DDR, October 10, 1968.
15. Ibid.
16. AG-S, Collection BLHA Pr. Br. Rep. 35H, Collection D 30 A/14/1B, pp. 107–188, Prisoner confirmation for Willy Jaeger 1950/51.
17. AG-S, LAG II/12, p. 5, Letter from the NWZS-K to Gsta.-DDR, June 25, 1970.
18. AG-S, LAG II/12, p. 7, Letter from the NWZS-K to Gsta.-DDR, June 25, 1970.

## USEDOM

From January 15, 1945, to April 23, 1945, a subcamp of Sachsenhausen was established in the northern Pomeranian town of Usedom, on the coast of the Ost-See. The subcamp or Kommando may have also been known as the Kommando

Ongart, although it is unclear if this refers to a specific locality, company, street, or person.

**SOURCES** There are few primary or secondary sources on the Sachsenhausen subcamp established in Usedom. The principal source of information for this essay is the Usedom entry in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979). Although not always consistent with other sources, the ITS catalog provides brief statistical information about the camp, such as opening and closing dates, type of prisoner work, and so on. For brief mention of the “Kommando Ongart,” see *Sachsenhausen: Dokumente, Aussagen, Forschungsergebnisse und Erlebnisberichte über das ehemalige Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen* (Berlin [East]: VEB Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1986), p. 74.

Christine Schmidt van der Zanden

## VELTEN

Soon after the National Socialists took power in 1933, the SA set up a torture center at the Meissnershof, an uninhabited manor lying between Velten and Hennigsdorf in the Hohenschöpping forest district. To hide the brutal treatment of prisoners, it was given the cover name “SA Driving School.” It was one of the early concentration camps established by the SA that later became part of the Oranienburg concentration camp. The Meissnershof center lasted only from March until December 1933, at which point the remaining prisoners were transferred to the Oranienburg concentration camp.

By April 1943, 14 camps housing forced laborers from throughout Europe existed in Velten. They had been established as part of the program to support armaments production during World War II. In the summer of 1941, an additional camp was set up next to the Velten Maschinenbau GmbH Ikaria to house approximately 1,000 forced female laborers from the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup>

The latter Velten subcamp, a women’s camp, was first under the control of Ravensbrück, but control was later transferred to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Depending upon the source consulted, this camp was set up either in March 1943 or only in October 1944 and was located between Berliner Strasse and the Hohenschöpping commuter railroad station, close to the Velten Maschinenbau, an armaments producer.

Female prisoners were used at this plant to assemble airplane parts, and they also manufactured the aircraft cannon Oerlikon for the Heinkel airplane works in Leegebruch.<sup>2</sup> Prisoners worked in Hall G, right next to the street, and were supervised by female SS guards.<sup>3</sup> Another place prisoners worked, according to the literature, was the Havelschmelzwerk GmbH on Berliner Strasse 8. Prisoners worked 12-hour days.<sup>4</sup>

About 125 women were crammed together in a single barracks.<sup>5</sup> Between 500 and 800 women are said to have been in the camp, and they came from the Soviet Union, Romania,

Hungary, France, and Germany.<sup>6</sup> The camp elder was a Pole named Wanda.<sup>7</sup>

A Communist resistance group operating inside Maschinenbau had taken up contact with the Soviet forced laborers in the Velten women's subcamp. Young women who belonged to this resistance group could listen to Radio Moscow at the home of Fritz Meissner, a Communist member, and they translated the news. Meissner, who had access to one of the concentration camp barracks, was able to pass the information on to the female inmates. In addition, the resistance group was said to have collected money and rations and brought them into the camp.<sup>8</sup> The group was also supposedly successful in helping a woman named Lydia to escape, either in March or April 1945.<sup>9</sup>

At the beginning of October 1944, the Sachsenhausen records showed 669 women at the Velten subcamp.<sup>10</sup> On March 30, 1945, it held 709 women.<sup>11</sup>

SS-Unterscharführer Loose headed the Kommando; his deputy was a certain de Ries.<sup>12</sup> At least in part, the guards were ethnic Germans. One of them was SS-Schütze Hans Bitto (born 1900 in Julwes, Romania), who served at Velten from August 1943 to September 1944 and then at the Sachsenhausen subcamps at Briesen [aka Falkenhagen] and Berlin-Lichtenrade.<sup>13</sup> Siegfried Schubert was part of the Kommando and remembers serving with Rottenführer Paul Bloss, Balzer, and Bürger, men named Wlepinski and Grawschewski, and an ethnic German from Croatia, Robert.<sup>14</sup>

The prisoners are said to have been evacuated on April 20, 1945, in the direction of the Lübeck Bight. They were liberated by the Soviet Army on May 11, 1945.

**SOURCES** The secondary sources are contained in the essays in Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, ed., *Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus: Eine Dokumentation*, vol. 2, Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen-Anhalt, Sachsen, Thüringen (Bonn, 1999); and Siegfried Katzorreck and Günter Wehner, *Der illegale Kampf in den Jahren 1933–1945 auf dem Territorium des heutigen Kreises Oranienburg* (Oranienburg, 1973).

The few archival sources dealing with the history of the camp are in BA-B (Collection NS 33). Other documents relating to the perpetrators and with details of the daily rates are in the AG-S (CAFSSRF) and in the PRO.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Siegfried Katzorreck and Günter Wehner, *Der illegale Kampf in den Jahren 1933–1945 auf dem Territorium des heutigen Kreises Oranienburg* (Oranienburg, 1973), p. 44.

2. Ibid., p. 42.

3. Ibid., pp. 44, 58.

4. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092 BD. K 500571, p. 36, Record of interview of the accused Siegfried Schubert, October 28, 1946.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.

8. Katzorreck and Wehner, *Der illegale Kampf*, p. 45.

9. Ibid., p. 58.

10. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092, vol. 100.

11. Ibid., vol. 101.

12. Ibid., BD. K500571, p. 37, Record of interview of the accused Siegfried Schubert, October 28, 1946.

13. PRO, WO 309/1760; AG-S, LAG X/3, List of former Sachsenhausen concentration camp SS interned in the British internment camp Esterwegen.

14. AG-S, CAFSSRF, N-19092 BD. K 500571, p. 37, Record of interview of the accused Siegfried Schubert, October 28, 1946.

## WERDER

The Werder subcamp was one of the smallest of the Sachsenhausen subcamps. It was first identified in the International Tracing Service (ITS) catalog of 1949. The subcamp is first mentioned in contemporary records on March 20, 1943, with 4 prisoners, and the same information also appears in a Sachsenhausen daily report of March 22, 1943. A publication assembled by former prisoners also refers to only 4 prisoners at Werder. The Sachsenhausen Memorial states that Werder was an outside Kommando with 10 male prisoners and that it existed from March 20, 1943, to June 27, 1944.<sup>1</sup> The Sachsenhausen change of status reports for the period between May and June 1944 always refer to 6 male prisoners at Werder, though the camp is no longer mentioned in these reports by the end of August 1944.<sup>2</sup>

Local inhabitants say the prisoners were housed in the so-called Lichau-Keller on the Friedrichshöhe and on a barge on the Havel River.

The camp leader was SS-Unterscharführer Oskar Hoffmann (born 1908 in Rehau), a porcelain painter. According to his statement, at other times he also had been detachment leader of the subcamps at Biesenthal and Fürstenwalde.

After 1945, Hoffmann was at first held at the British internment camp at Esterwegen. In 1948, pursuant to the Law on the Liberation from National Socialism and Militarism (Gesetz zur Befreiung von Nationalsozialismus und Militarismus) of March 6, 1946, a denazification court at the U.S. internment camp at Nürnberg-Langwasser categorized him as “less incriminated” (*Minderbelasteter*), fined him 500 Reichsmark (RM) in reparations, and gave him a six-month sentence on probation.<sup>3</sup> It stood in his favor that former prisoners attested that as head of various Kommandos, and in Werder as well, he had not committed any crimes against humanity. Hoffmann was immediately released from the internment camp by order of the court.<sup>4</sup> He died in Wunsiedel in 1961. No court proceedings were ever conducted against those responsible for the Werder subcamp.

**SOURCES** The Werder subcamp is mentioned only in Regina Scheer's *Der Umgang mit den Denkmälern. Eine Recherche in Brandenburg* (Potsdam, 2003); and *Das nationalsozialistische*

*Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 62. For the number of prisoners, see KaW-DDR, ed., *Damals in Sachsenhausen* (Berlin, 1967).

The few other details here came in part from BA-L and from the AG-S.

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. SBG, ed., Tagungsmappe Workshop “Die Aussenlager der Konzentrationslager Sachsenhausen und Ravensbrück” (Internationale Jugendbegegnungsstätte Ravensbrück, October 17–18, 2003).

2. AG-S, JSU 1, Band 99–101.

3. AG-S, LAG X/3, Esterwegen-Liste der internierten SS-Angehörigen des KZ Sachsenhausen.

4. BA-L, IV 406 AR 734/67, pp. 11–13.

## WITTENBERG

By the summer of 1944, the Arado Aircraft Works had a severe labor shortage. Many of the men had been called up to serve in the Wehrmacht, and 20 percent of the civilian women had quit because the work was too heavy. Management decided to replace them with about 1,200 prisoners from Ravensbrück, the women’s concentration camp. However, 30 women already working at Arado had to be recruited first to serve as guards for the concentration camp prisoners; once selected, they were sent to Ravensbrück and there were trained for about 14 days.

Two barrack camps were set up in August 1944. One camp, directly next to the factory, was fitted out for 750 prisoners. Beforehand, it had held forced laborers who were transferred to another camp. The second camp, intended for about 500 prisoners, lay in an open field about half an hour away by foot. A nearby housing development had a good view into the camp, and residents would have seen from there how a woman was found on the electrified perimeter fence. Both camps were encircled by two electrified fences. The three prisoner barracks in the camp on the open field had no flooring, just bare earth. There was only one toilet and one sink for 500 women.

Ernst Schmaedig, the National Socialist works manager at Arado, was in overall command and determined what work the women did. Life in the subcamp itself was determined by its commandant, Rudolf Schneider.

In September 1944, about 750 prisoners arrived at the Arado subcamp; in October, 500 more, about 250 of whom were Jews. Kurt Kummer, the Arado Aircraft Works’ doctor, selected the women himself at the Ravensbrück roll-call grounds, though administratively this camp was under the control of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The daily reports on the numbers of prisoners, arrivals and departures, and reports of deaths were sent to Sachsenhausen.

The approximately 250 Jews came overwhelmingly from the Łódź ghetto, having been sent to Ravensbrück after the ghetto was disbanded. They arrived in August 1944 and were then sent on to subcamps. The other prisoners came from Germany and 12 other nations, mainly Eastern Europeans, though some Western Europeans as well.

Under the direction of a civilian foreman, the women worked in a large production hall, assembling aircraft parts, or they dug trenches as protection against shrapnel during bombing raids. Shifts were 12 hours long, the day shift lasting from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Regardless of the weather, a group of about 120 female prisoners was forced to march the 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) to the Faserfabrik (Fiber Factory) Mühlanger. There, they worked on aircraft parts machine presses; one female German prisoner lost three fingers while working here. She was taken to Dr. Kummer at the works’ infirmary, where, without anesthetizing the woman, he gave the orderlies he was training (young anti-aircraft artillery helpers) a didactic presentation in first aid.

Camp prisoners included those labeled political, criminal, “asocial,” and Gypsy. (There was no underground organization within the camp itself.) The prisoners’ only thought was to survive, and in that they were encouraged by a few of the civilian workers who would keep whispering, “Hold out—the Russians are coming!” to the exhausted prisoners, a message that was a great boost to their morale. Survivors have said that a few civilian workers even secretly helped them by hiding food or socks or underwear in the aircraft parts at the factory.

As was generally the case in the subcamps, a great deal of mistrust existed between the prisoners, as the women barely knew one another. The strongest solidarity existed between the Jewish prisoners, as they were acquainted from their time in the ghetto. On one occasion, the SS accused the Jews of having stolen something and as punishment deprived them of food for a whole day. Two of the women who spoke a little German were chosen, in the name of all the Jewish prisoners, to complain to the head engineer in the factory building they labored in, for without food they would be completely unable to work. The engineer thereupon ordered a ration of soup to be served, and because of the complaint, the SS guards did not punish the workers on that day. The engineer in charge was responsible for meeting production targets for Arado, Heinkel, Junker, and Messerschmitt aircraft, and he did not care to have unproductive workers simply because they were being punished. On the part of a courageous skilled worker, this example indicates that prisoners could have been helped more often than they were.

However, prisoner solidarity at Arado was made difficult due to the system of informers the concentration camp leaders had put in place. Franziska Bellrich, a woman convicted several times for engaging in fraudulent marriages, had assumed the role of camp elder, among other things administering punitive beatings in the evenings to those prisoners the female guards indicated. Bellrich also was accused of em-



bezzling prisoners' money, did a lively trade in laundry and clothing, and organized the informers among the criminal prisoners. Even in 1994, Bellrich was still being sought by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg for the crimes she had committed against the prisoners; she went underground after 1945 in West Germany and was not located.

The camp commandant Schneider and head guard Margarete Kässner also regularly administered punishments in the evenings. The female guards also took the opportunity to punish the women brutally during the day for the slightest misbehavior, such as drinking water in the toilet room or talking while at work. The female guards reported such infringements in the evenings, or after the night shift, so prisoners were then often punished a second time. Collective punishments for all prisoners, such as standing at roll call regardless of the weather or being deprived of food, were also common.

One shooting, of a Russian prisoner who tried to escape, also took place while the camp was in existence, though it occurred outside its grounds. Another prisoner died as a result of a beating he received from Dr. Kummer. No exact death statistics exist, though the Sachsenhausen concentration camp files show 10 deaths between January and April 1945. My own research showed 18 deaths, overwhelmingly through exhaustion. The files also indicate that small groups of two to five women were periodically being sent back to Ravensbrück, with new women replacing them.

In January 1945, a truck transport took 23 women to Ravensbrück, where they were murdered in the gas chamber. Deaths were not to take place in the subcamp, however, since for every dead prisoner, forced laborer, or prisoner of war (POW), the Arado management had to pay 16 Reichsmark (RM) to the mortuary. To keep payments at a minimum, a mobile crematorium was built at Arado. It was discovered after liberation, though it never went beyond the experimental phase. The subjects of the experiments were dead Jews and maltreated Russian POWs; their bodies showed signs of mistreatment.

The Arado camp had another peculiarity. The works' medical doctor, Dr. Kummer, was also the doctor for the forced laborers, POWs, and concentration camp prisoners. He established an infirmary but did not treat any of the Jews. To ensure that the prisoners would remain productive, he selected a Polish Jew, the pediatrician Dr. Miriam Litwin (born January 1, 1914), as the camp doctor. She had to work in the infirmary and took responsibility for caring for the sick and in that manner could also help the Jewish prisoners.

By the end of April 1945, the Red Army was getting close to Wittenberg. By this time, the managers had fled, and the aircraft works had shut down. Before he fled, camp commandant Schneider discharged the concentration camp personnel, and only a few guards remained to watch over both camps.

The water was turned off in both camps, but the electrified fences remained live. There was nothing left behind to eat. On April 21, the camp in the field was liberated by the

Red Army. They found three dead prisoners in the camp. All the barracks were taken over by the Russian soldiers, who needed to use them either as a hospital or as a base of operation. The women were ordered to make their way east, into liberated territory, though they did so under constant attack by the Wehrmacht, as it still believed Wittenberg could be defended successfully.

The camp immediately next to the Arado works liberated itself. A courageous skilled tradesman from the factory was permitted by a guard to disconnect the electrified fence so that the prisoners could seek their freedom. A few prisoners remained in the camp, as they did not know where they should go. In August 1945, these women lodged complaints with the Wittenberg police against the concentration camp personnel.

Interrogations of the female concentration camp guards, to the extent they could still be found in the Wittenberg area, began in early 1946. In 1949, the so-called Wittenberg Concentration Camp Guards Trial was held before the Halle District Court. The accused at this trial included camp commandant Rudolf Schneider (born January 5, 1891), head guard Kässner (born June 5, 1904), and seven other female guards. Schneider, a fish merchant by trade, was married with two children and had been transferred as a guard on May 14, 1943, to Sachsenhausen and then to Wittenberg, where he was promoted to *Sturmscharführer* on February 1, 1944. According to the Berlin Document Center, he had no blemishes on his service record and was described as a good leader. Though charged in 1949, the search for him proved unsuccessful.

Kässner, a housewife, had been employed at the Arado Aircraft Works and was a member of the SS. She was sentenced by the court in 1949 to two years' imprisonment for beating the prisoners. The other seven female guards on trial were given lesser sentences, and one was acquitted, as she had behaved properly toward the prisoners.

Supervisor Margot Kunz (born June 21, 1921), charged with administering aggravated beatings, was tried by a Soviet military tribunal in Berlin and given a 25-year sentence. She remained in jail for 10 years during the German Democratic Republic and was released following an amnesty.

Kunz subsequently married, becoming Mrs. Pietzner, and following German reunification in 1990, she sought to be formally recognized as a victim of Stalinism. In 1993, this rehabilitation was granted by then German Justice Minister Kanther. Mrs. Pietzner was thereupon granted compensation amounting to 63,000 Deutsche Mark (DM). Ongoing protests in Germany and abroad forced a rescinding of this rehabilitation by 1996, when she was again declared guilty. She died in 1998.

Camp doctor Kummer (born December 1, 1910) had become a member of the SS in 1937. He fled Wittenberg in 1945. The Soviet Military Administration found him living in a village; he was taken to the jail at Bautzen and died there.

Works manager and engineer Schmaedig (born July 2, 1900) was unmarried and lived in a hotel. Witnesses at the

trial said “Schmaedig was a pig” whom even the civilian workers feared. In 1945, he fled to the West and committed suicide.

**SOURCES** There is one book by Renate Gruber-Lieblich, “... und morgen war Krieg...”: *Arado Flugzeugwerke GmbH Wittenberg, 1936–1945; Ein KZ-Lager entsteht* (Wittenberg: Self-pub., 1995). This subcamp is listed in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 573.

The author worked up the history of the subcamp between 1991 and 1995, the first time it had been researched. The ZdL (now BA-L) had the protocols of 36 interviews with Jewish survivors—IV 40 6 AR 857/67 (November 5, 1970). The BA-B holds the files that formerly were part of the BDC. Here one can find the SS personnel files for those who served at the Arado factory and the concentration camp. The archive also contains documents about the armaments production at the Arado Flugzeugwerke GmbH. The BA-B holds the papers of MfS, and there one can find documents related to the trial of supervisor Kunz/Pietzner as well as the files of the 1949 Wittenberg Concentration Camp Guards Trial before the Halle District Court. The AG-S has a list of arrivals and departures from the Wittenberg subcamp as well as lists of the deaths. The AG-R has lists of those recruited as female guards as well as the movements of the prisoners. The private archive of Renate Gruber-Lieblich has records of interviews with Dr. Miriam Litwin, the camp doctor, who lives in Israel, and the prisoner Genia Zonabend, who worked in the factory and lives in Sweden. Both women came from the Łódź ghetto, and the interviews were conducted in 2000.

Renate Gruber-Lieblich  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## WULKOW

At different times, two subcamps existed near Wulkow, a village close to the Oderbruch, former marshlands about 50 kilometers (31 miles) to the east of Berlin. From 1942 on, a subcamp that was probably part of the Sachsenhausen complex existed on the road to Hermsdorf. Prisoners held there had to load and unload airplanes at the nearby Neuhardenberg airfield.

A second camp was established in March 1944 in the forest between Wulkow and Neuhardenberg. Starting in April 1944, a group of about 40 Jewish prisoners from the Theresienstadt ghetto was used to construct a secret, partly subterranean barracks complex for the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA).<sup>1</sup> The RSHA administrative offices were to be relocated and secret documents stored here. One of these offices was Adolf Eichmann's Gestapo bureau. At his trial in Jerusalem, Eichmann testified that he took “a whole group of engineers, architects and workers with [him] from Theresienstadt to the Mark Brandenburg in the summer of 1944, when it became

necessary to build an overflow office for the Gestapo (Amt IV).”<sup>2</sup>

Eichmann was known to the Wulkow prisoners, though one can assume they were unaware of the full extent of his activities. He was seen a few times together with the camp leader, Stuschka, and spoke with prisoners, using Yiddish expressions only the initiated would know. “One part of the camp, with its additional buildings, was soon called just ‘Eichmannndorf.’”<sup>3</sup> The project, initially planned as Gestapo overflow quarters, later was expanded to be able to accommodate the Führer's headquarters, as a replacement for the “Wolf's Lair” (Wolfsschanze) located in East Prussia.<sup>4</sup> The project was known by its cover name “Barracks' Construction Zossen” (*Barackenbau Zossen*), even though Zossen itself lay south of Berlin.<sup>5</sup>

Two Wehrmacht sites also existed near the RSHA alternative quarters and the prisoners' camp. One was a secret building site for a subterranean bunker, located to the south of the RSHA overflow quarters, probably intended for the Wehrmacht. Workers at this site were prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The other site, north of the prisoners' camp, was constructed in the winter of 1944–1945.

On March 2, 1944, the first group of 50 male prisoners was brought to Wulkow, via the Trebnitz railway station, from the Theresienstadt ghetto. These were German and Czech Jews; some accounts put their number at 200 or 235. The men had volunteered to work in the Reich proper. The talk in Theresienstadt had been of working at “Zossen,” with assurances given that dependents of these workers would not be deported. According to witnesses, the Gestapo kept its promise. The Czech engineer E. Kosiner was the leader of this group of prisoners, and it is said that these workers brought a tractor, a field kitchen, and parts of barracks with them from Theresienstadt.<sup>6</sup>

The camp was finished in five and a half weeks, and when completed, an additional 40 men were then sent from Theresienstadt.<sup>7</sup> Altogether, 235 workers, mostly skilled tradesmen, were said to have been brought from Theresienstadt to Wulkow in three transports. According to other reports, the high point was reached in August 1944, when the camp held 360 men and 20 women.<sup>8</sup> In the summer of 1944, 25 women arrived from Theresienstadt; their task was to keep the barracks clean and wash the prisoners' clothes. The first prisoners apparently enjoyed a degree of freedom and even guarded themselves.

SS-Obersturmführer Franz Stuschka (born 1910), from Graz, Austria, and a member of the SD, was the brutal camp leader and building foreman. Oberscharführer Stiasny, Hanke, and Proschek and an SS-Unterscharführer were in charge of security; all four of them came from Vienna.<sup>9</sup>

Camp leader Stuschka persecuted the prisoners above all on their free Sunday afternoons, granted only once a fortnight. The men had to carry tree logs from one part of the camp to the other, and the women were forced to carry rocks for no purpose. Stuschka would have the prisoners stand for

hours, and for no reason, at the roll-call area. He later placed a metal cage in the shape of an egg here and would punish prisoners by locking them in it, regardless of the weather. On one occasion, using only their bodies and without implements, women were forced to clear the mud from the roll-call area. Stuschka had about 45 prisoners sent to Berlin and to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp for punishment. About nine youths, apprehended for stealing food, were first imprisoned in the bunker and mistreated by Stuschka, then transferred to Sachsenhausen in late November 1944, and shot there.

The prisoner Leo Neumann was also murdered at Sachsenhausen. As an adolescent, he had forged his documents in order to pass as an "Aryan" and later joined the Waffen-SS. A chance inspection of the records showed discrepancies, and he was dismissed from the SS and sent as a Jew to Wulkow, via Theresienstadt.

It is also reported that Stuschka, angered at being denied a promotion, took it out on the prisoners on November 9, 1944, and there was mourning for the "dead and the many injured."<sup>10</sup> Stuschka had a room, known as the "Chamber of Laughter," located in one of the barracks near his command office, and he mistreated prisoners there. Stuschka also shot a Berlin Jew, Horst Prinz, whom he had first beaten because Prinz had defied Rafaelsohn, the camp elder. Prinz overpowered Stuschka while he was being tortured and fled the room; Stuschka shot him down, in full sight of the other prisoners. Stuschka also had an earthen bunker constructed next to his barracks, and there he imprisoned up to 20 half-naked prisoners for more than a week.

SS-Oberscharführer Hanke, on the other hand, was described as the complete opposite, never verbally abusing prisoners or modifying the word "Jew" with any vile descriptors. He addressed prisoners formally ("Sie" rather than the informal "Du") and indirectly saved their lives.<sup>11</sup> It is said that he later committed suicide out of a sense of guilt and shared responsibility for the crimes perpetrated by the SS.<sup>12</sup>

There were 10 SS guards, ethnic Germans from Romania (Siebenbürgen). They were commanded by SS-Obergefreite Schmidt.<sup>13</sup>

There were successful escapes from Wulkow. In the winter of 1944–1945, two men and a woman escaped, during a heavy frost, and were successfully hidden by friends in the Niederlausitz region until the end of the war. A Jew from Stettin who had escaped was recaptured and taken to Sachsenhausen. He did not survive. Other prisoners killed themselves on the electrical fence.<sup>14</sup> It is thought that of all the prisoners brought to Wulkow, a total of 50 died, whether through murder, suicide, as a result of being transferred to Sachsenhausen, or during escape attempts.<sup>15</sup>

Prisoners were brought supplies by a freight car that came twice a month from Theresienstadt. Average rations were said to be 10 percent higher in Wulkow than at Theresienstadt. Flour was brought at least once from nearby Letschin. There was occasional contact, arranged by private firms, between prisoners and relatives from Berlin or the surrounding area.

Initially, the SS deployed a camp guard composed of prisoners, and they were first commanded by Georg Einstein, a nephew of Albert Einstein. Perhaps partly due to this, prisoners were not fearful of "being transported to Auschwitz." Einstein was later succeeded by Willy Görner. The Wulkow guard staff was augmented, in April 1944, by a troop of Theresienstadt ghetto guards. In the fall of 1944, Paul Rafaelsohn, from Gelsenkirchen, was appointed head of the prisoner guards; he had been living in a "privileged mixed marriage." He became Stuschka's assistant, and for that reason, he was condemned to death in Prague in 1947.

In the first days of August 1944, a second construction site, known as "Building Site Z—Intelligence," was opened by the SD, using a "Jewish work detail."<sup>16</sup> The Nazi Party Chancellery had issued the construction order to build this alternative site for the Berlin office. Intelligence-gathering equipment was to be housed here, and intelligence gathering was to continue unabated: "This site was to ensure as high a degree of protection from incendiary bombs and near misses as possible." It was surrounded by an earthen wall, and the roof was protected by a layer of sand. The site itself consisted of living, working, and kitchen barracks, as well as a bunker for the files and an intelligence bunker made entirely of concrete.

The central construction here was the intelligence barracks called "Bärau," also known as "alternative camp Bärau." The firm Max Treder & Co, Berlin-Charlottenburg, was the main contractor for the electric installations.<sup>17</sup> The Building Site Z is said to have been occupied by October 1944, among others by a Berlin architect named Zeichner.<sup>18</sup> A Berlin police unit assumed the responsibility to guard this construction site by the beginning of October 1944.<sup>19</sup>

The RSHA began to transfer its offices, in part, to Wulkow in the fall of 1944 but never completed the transfer due to the advance of the Red Army. SS-Obergruppenführer Heinrich Müller, head of the Gestapo, is said to have commanded from here. One prisoner who had to repair exterior blackout coverings described Müller's quarters as a room with a large writing table in the middle, a life-size picture of Hitler behind it, and numerous paintings with Jewish religious themes. Martin Bormann, head of the party Chancellery, inspected Building Site Z on numerous occasions.

Work apparently ceased for the Wulkow prisoners by the end of 1944, and the SS were withdrawn from Building Site Z. On January 10, 1945, the thunder of the artillery on the front at the Oder River could be heard in Wulkow.

On January 18, camp leader Stuschka gave the order to nail the windows of the prisoners' barracks shut. Prisoners now could only leave the barracks to relieve themselves. On January 19, all the prisoners were forced to march into a section of the forest, where an execution squad awaited them. But at that moment, a Wehrmacht unit appeared, and the planned massacre could not be carried out. The prisoners had to march back into the camp.

In the night from February 2–3, 1945, 198 male and 17 female prisoners were sent back to Theresienstadt in railway



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cattle cars, via Trebnitz, Jüterborg, Halle, and Würzburg. They arrived on February 10, 1945.

**SOURCES** The Wulkow subcamp is listed in BPB, ed., *Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus: Eine Dokumentation*, vol. 2, Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen-Anhalt, Sachsen, Thüringen (Bonn, 1999), p. 374.

Unpublished memoirs about Wulkow can be found at YVA. The BA-B holds documents dealing with the construction at Wulkow. The following memoirs have been published: Klaus Scheurenberg, *Ich will leben: Ein autobiographischer Bericht* (Berlin, 1982) and Walter Grunwald, *Drei Vergangenheit: Autobiographie eines jungen Menschen. Erster Teil 1919–1947* (n.d.). Former prisoners have also published a brochure titled *Das Konzentrationslager Wulkow 1944–1945* (Prague, 1995). Excerpts of the Eichmann Trial quoted in this essay are from Jochen von Lang, *Das Eichmann-Protokoll* (Vienna, 1991).

Andreas Weigelt  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Klaus Scheurenberg, *Ich will leben: Ein autobiographischer Bericht* (Berlin, 1982), pp. 179–180.

2. Jochen von Lang, *Das Eichmann-Protokoll* (Vienna, 1991), p. 164.

3. Scheurenberg, *Ich will leben*, p. 196.

4. Ibid., p. 195.

5. BPB, ed., *Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus: Eine Dokumentation*, vol. 2, Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sachsen-Anhalt, Sachsen, Thüringen (Bonn, 1999), p. 374.

6. Walter Grunwald, *Drei Vergangenheit: Autobiographie eines jungen Menschen. Erster Teil 1919–1947* (n.d.), p. 70.

7. Ibid., p. 71.

8. Scheurenberg, *Ich will leben*, p. 180.

9. YVA, 02/443, Report by Willy Groener, 1949, p. 10.

10. Scheurenberg, *Ich will leben*, p. 184.

11. Ibid., p. 185.

12. Grunwald, *Drei Vergangenheit*, p. 78.

13. YVA, 02/443, Report by Willy Groener, 1949, p. 10.

14. Scheurenberg, *Ich will leben*, p. 223.

15. Ibid., p. 288.

16. YVA, 02/443, Report by Willy Groener, 1949, p. 10.

17. BA-B, NS 6/59.

18. Scheurenberg, *Ich will leben*, p. 192.

19. YVA, 02/443, Report by Willy Groener, 1949, p. 12.

## **SS-BAUBRIGADEN AND SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADEN**



SS-Baubrigade II prisoners remove debris from the destroyed residence of a Nazi Party leader in Bremen after an Allied bombing raid, 1944.

USHMM WS #29406, Courtesy OF BPK

The SS-Baubrigaden and SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigaden should be viewed as particular types of subcamps. First established in the autumn of 1942, they were the first larger prisoner detachments deployed in major cities of the German Reich, thus exposing for the first time the living conditions of the concentration camp prisoners to a broader German public. As a rule, an SS-Baubrigade consisted of 1,000 prisoners, while an SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade consisted of around 500 prisoners, each having SS leaders and guards. Table 1 (p.1357) lists all 13 Baubrigaden existing at the end of the war. There were around 9,500 prisoners in the Baubrigaden before the evacuation transports and death marches began in the spring of 1945. The total number of those who went through the Baubrigaden between 1942 and 1945 is estimated to be at least 17,000 male prisoners.

Prisoners and SS personnel came mostly from the Buchenwald, Neuengamme, and Sachsenhausen concentration camps. While administratively the SS-Baubrigaden remained subordinated to these three camps, in the early summer of 1944 four of the five existing SS-Baubrigaden at this time were concentrated in the area around what was to become the Mittelbau [aka Dora] concentration camp. The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigaden, which were established in the late summer of 1944, utilized prisoners mostly from Auschwitz and Dachau. The transfer of control of all Baubrigaden to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in the summer of January 1945 was of a purely formal nature and did not alter the relationships between the main camps and the subcamps.

The conceptual origins for the Baubrigaden can be traced back to planning in the SS office "Haushalt und Bauten" (budget and buildings) at the end of 1941. Heinrich Himmler, in view of the successful war of conquest in the East, gave the order to develop a plan for a peace-building program (*Friedensbauprogramm*), with a view to supporting his plan to "Germanize" the East.<sup>1</sup> The SS would largely rely on its own resources when constructing SS and Police bases, including settlements, camps, and supply depots in the conquered territories. On February 10, 1942, the head of the Amtsgruppe C-Bauwesen in the recently formed SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), doctor of engineering and later Generalleutnant der Waffen-SS Hans Kammler, submitted his "Suggestions for the Establishment of SS Construction Brigades" (*Vorschlag für die Aufstellung von SS-Baubrigaden*). According to this paper, an SS-Baubrigade, each consisting of 4,800 "prisoners, prisoners of war [POWs], Jews and foreign auxiliary labor," would be established in each area under the control of a Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF). Kammler assumed a construction volume of between 20 and 30 billion Reichsmark (RM) and the need for 175,000 prisoners, which as mobile labor detachments would be dispatched to construction sites.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of developments in 1942—the Wehrmacht's advance in the East had come to a halt, the murder of the European Jews had begun, and the armaments industry had started to prepare itself for a long war of attrition and demanded prisoner labor—the SS construction program had to

be changed radically. In light of the intensified bombing of German cities, reaching its first climax in the summer of 1942, Himmler changed the nature of the SS-Baubrigaden project for defensive purposes. At the end of August 1942 and the beginning of September 1942, he personally inspected the extent of the destruction. Convinced of the threatening crisis of legitimacy for the National Socialist regime, he ordered that SS-Baubrigaden be put together, to be deployed in cities targeted by aerial attacks.<sup>3</sup>

The establishment of prisoner detachments to clean up the destroyed cities was closely coordinated with Reich Minister for Armament and Munitions (Reichsminister für Bewaffnung und Munition) Albert Speer, who had been in office since February 1942. On September 15, 1942, under Speer's chairmanship, high-ranking representatives from the Armaments Ministry and the WVHA discussed the year's pressing problems: the destruction of the Jews, the increase in armaments production, and the management of the damage in the bombed cities. A day later, Speer's representatives worked out with the chief of the WVHA, Oswald Pohl, the details for the establishment of an initial three SS-Baubrigaden, each with 1,000 prisoners.<sup>4</sup> Speer kept both Adolf Hitler and Himmler constantly informed about the plans. Until the end of the war, Speer repeatedly intervened in the use of the Baubrigaden.

Starting in September 1942, the first Baubrigaden, each with 1,000 prisoners, were sent to Bremen, Osnabrück, Düsseldorf, Duisburg, and Cologne. Close cooperation between the cities' administrations and the SS became the camps' characteristic element. The cities not only supplied the necessary infrastructure; in addition, "leaders of the immediate measures" (*Leiter der Sofortmassnahmen*) attached to the municipal construction administrations coordinated the rubble removal and the use of the prisoners. In so doing, the cities accepted the visible brutality with which the SS treated the laborers and at times expressly praised the SS terror. The Bremen construction senator (*Bausenator*) wrote to the WVHA in January 1943: "I will not miss the opportunity to state my recognition of the extraordinary work done by the Baubrigade in removing the air-raid damage in Bremen. I especially would like to emphasize the appropriate work deployment, which I attribute in the first instance to the strict supervision by the SS leaders and men."<sup>5</sup> The strong demand by mayors and regional party leaders (*Gauleiter*) for prisoner laborers resulted in the deployment of the Baubrigaden being extended several times and the establishment of the first subcamps in larger cities.

The SS-Baubrigaden were commanded by SS officers, who for the most part had the rank of Obersturmführer and who had similar powers to those of camp commanders. These SS-Führer were mostly trained architects or engineers and had worked already for a long time in SS construction projects, reporting to the Amtsgruppe C. Additionally, there was a Lagerführer, 5 SS noncommissioned officers (Unterführer), and 25 men from the Amtsgruppe D who acted as guards. They were complemented by guards from the local police and Auxiliary Police and, from 1943 on, by Wehrmacht soldiers.





SS-Baubrigade III, Köln, takes a break from clearing rubble in October 1943, taken by Josef Fischer. The annotation reads: "View from our kitchen window. A work column takes a rest. They are inmates from one of the concentration camps, which were erected en masse. Ca. Oct. 1943."

NS-Dok

The prisoner detachments moved into the cities for up to a week at a time. They mostly did heavy physical labor such as breaking up and transporting away the rubble, loading and unloading, and recovery of reusable materials, or they constructed bunkers or emergency accommodations. They were often assigned to the physically demanding Corpse Detachments (*Leichenkommandos*) that had to recover bodies from the rubble and place them in coffins. Work in the bomb detonation detachments (*Bombensprengkommandos*) was feared because many prisoners were killed while recovering unexploded bombs. With inadequate tools and poor clothing, working up to 12 hours a shift, lack of food, and almost nonexistent medical care, the prisoners in the Baubrigaden were also subject to a high degree of terror from the SS guards and *Kapos*.

In 1943, the emphasis for the Baubrigaden shifted from working for the cities' administrations to benefiting German industry. Indicative of this transformation was the establishment of the SS-Baubrigade IV, which was sent in August 1943 to Wuppertal following an aerial offensive against the Ruhr. The Armaments Ministry had determined that it was less the

damage than the absence of workers after bombing raids that caused a decline in armaments production. The SS-Baubrigade IV would create dwellings for the workers in the Ruhr as well as reestablish the companies' infrastructure.<sup>6</sup>

Since the autumn of 1942, shootings and execution of concentration camp prisoners for real or supposed escape attempts or for looting took place increasingly under the eyes of the German public. The Düsseldorf poet Emil Barth is one of the few to document in writing the prisoner columns. He noted in his diary on December 7, 1943, on the prisoners in an SS-Baubrigade: "Out of the silence of those rooms built almost air-tight into the social structure and to which Dostojewsky in his time gave the name of the charnel house . . . already for a long time a gloomy army has been drawn into our cities to clean up the rubble: a cursed shadow people, dishonored, enslaved, lost, like figures in the twilight of the underworld, swaying on the rubble and stones, almost melting into the colorless mass of the ruins."<sup>7</sup> The surrounding community reacted with a mixture of disgust, fear, and withdrawal to the SS-Baubrigaden camps, which were mostly established in the center of the cities. To be sure, there were gestures of sympathy vis-à-vis the prisoners, such as secretly giving them food. However, substantial help during an escape or direct intervention during visible acts of violence was an exception. The attitude toward the SS-Baubrigaden shows that the city population had to a large degree accepted the concentration camp system, thereby providing a basic factor for the preservation and expansion of the central instruments of National Socialist rule.

Nevertheless, the prisoners regarded the majority of the SS-Baubrigaden as better camps. The work in the deserts of rubble was difficult to guard and gave the prisoners an opportunity to find food, which was of central importance to survival. In addition, in the largely destroyed cities there were better opportunities to escape, especially during bombing raids. Information on events at the front was easier to gather, and illegal communication much easier to organize in the Baubrigaden than in the main camps, due to outside contacts. Escape attempts were supported by those who were determined opponents of the regime, above all by male and female foreign forced laborers who would organize false papers or refuge.

The SS-Baubrigaden consisted as a rule of male non-Jewish prisoners. An exception is the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade X, which consisted overwhelmingly of Hungarian Jewish men who had escaped destruction in Auschwitz II-Birkenau. Based on the system of prisoner self-administration (*Häftlingsselfverwaltung*) in the main camps, German prisoners usually formed the thin layer of leaders as prisoner-functionaries, while the large majority of the prisoners were of Polish or Soviet nationality. There were often internal struggles in the SS-Baubrigaden, lasting for months, over who would occupy one of the functionary positions. To the extent that the prisoners were able to act with solidarity and to remove violent or especially collaborative functionaries, they managed to limit abuses and lower the death rate.

An analysis of the death rate in the SS-Baubrigaden shows that at times it was higher than the death rate in the main camps. There were also considerable differences between individual SS-Baubrigaden camps. At one extreme was the sub-camp of the SS-Baubrigade II in Osnabrück, where 86 out of 250 prisoners died within six months; the other end of the scale was the SS-Baubrigade IV in Wuppertal with only 1 recorded death within a nine-month period, out of 600 prisoners.<sup>8</sup> Diverse death rates resulted from the behavior of the SS leadership, the type and length of the work, the prisoners' food supply, the internal relationships of violence, and the behavior of the outside community.

The more the German Reich was pushed into a defensive position, the more the SS-Baubrigaden were deployed in areas crucial to the war effort. The SS-Baubrigade I took the lead in March 1943, when it was relocated to the occupied British Channel Island of Alderney. Hitler had ordered that the Channel Islands, the westernmost German outpost facing Great Britain, were to be converted into unconquerable fortresses. The prisoners worked with Wehrmacht soldiers, Organisation Todt (OT) units, and forced laborers on the inhabited island in converting it into a fortress. The first plans were developed here to murder all prisoners in the event of an Allied advance. In August 1943, Himmler instructed the leaders of the SS-Baubrigade I: "If during an attack the prisoners give the slightest indication of creating difficulties, you are to intervene immediately and shoot the guilty ones. If turmoil persists, then without a moment's hesitation you are to shoot all the prisoners."<sup>9</sup>

In the spring of 1944, Kammler relocated just about all SS-Baubrigaden to his new areas of responsibility, the V weapons construction program and the underground relocation of the armaments industry. From March 1944, 2,500 prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade I and IV had to build sites for the V weapons at various locations in northwestern France,

under the direction of the Army and Luftwaffe. Beginning in May 1944, the SS-Baubrigaden III and IV, and later the SS-Baubrigaden I and V after being recalled from the West, worked on relocation projects in the Harz Mountains and were subordinated to the Dora concentration camp, which became independent in October 1944.

In the autumn of 1944, Kammler appointed the commander of the SS-Baubrigade V, SS-Sturmbannführer Gerhard Weigel, as Inspector of All Baubrigaden (Inspekteur sämtlicher Baubrigaden), as Kammler was no longer capable of fulfilling this role due to his many special tasks. At this time, the Allied offensive had substantially damaged the rail network, especially the marshaling yards. The Amtsgruppe C with its SS-Baubrigaden was in a position to react quickly. In close cooperation with the Armaments Ministry and the local railway directorates, the SS established nine SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigaden by the end of the war, whose prisoners had to live in converted goods wagons. In these concentration camps on rails, the prisoners were sent to strategically important railway junctions to restore destroyed facilities. The guards included a range of railway employees who underwent a short training course in Dachau.

The first signs of the dissolution of the SS-Baubrigaden appeared with the last phase of the evacuation of the concentration camps in the Reich, although the functioning of the SS-Baubrigaden was to be maintained until the end. Kammler directed the SS-Baubrigaden to the area of the planned Alpine Fortress (Alpenfestung), where the Germans meant to make a last stand to hold Bavaria, Upper Italy, and Upper Austria. The objective of the weeks-long evacuations, which began in March 1945 and were marked by shootings and mass escapes, was the Mauthausen subcamp system, but not all of the 10 SS-Baubrigaden sent there would reach their destination. The dissolution of the remaining 3 SS-Baubrigaden occurred as part of the evacuation of Mittelbau (III, IV) and Neuengamme (V).

None of the SS leaders commanding SS-Baubrigaden were convicted after the war. They argued, successfully, that as architects or engineers they had only been in charge of technical matters. Some convictions occurred as part of denazification proceedings for membership in the SS. For crimes committed in the SS-Baubrigaden, mostly lower SS ranks or a few prisoner-functionaries were sentenced in cases in which their direct involvement could be proven.

**SOURCES** Before becoming the subject of a dissertation—Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005)—the SS-Baubrigaden were, for the most part, only referred to briefly in monographs on concentration camps. Only a few construction brigades have been dealt with in regional studies; for the SS-Baubrigade I: Andreas Kussmann, *Ein KZ-Aussenlager in Düsseldorf-Stoffeln* (Düsseldorf: Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf, Bezirksverwaltungsstelle 3, Stadtarchiv, 1988); SS-Baubrigade III: Karola Fings, *Messelager Köln. Ein KZ-Aussenlager im Zentrum der Stadt* (Cologne: Emons, 1996); for a few SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigaden: Bernd Boll, "Konzentrationslager auf



SS-Baubrigade II removes corpses from the Hammerbrook section of Hamburg, following the Allied bombing raids of July 1943.

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Schienen. Eisenbahn-Baubrigaden der SS in Offenburg 1944/45," *Ortenau* (1993): 480–514; and Gerhard Köhn, "Das Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme bei Hamburg in Soest und Bad Sassendorf (11. SS-Baubrigade) 1945," *SoZe* 98(1986): 101–124. Little attention was paid to early survivor memoirs, such as by Willy Kreuzberg, *Schutzbefehlingle erleben die Invasion* (Weimar: Thüringer Volksverlag, 1947); or Fritz Bringmann, "Häftlinge in der 2. SS-Baubrigade Osnabrück," in *KZ Neuengamme. Berichte, Erinnerungen, Dokumente*, by Bringmann (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg, 1981), pp. 38–50. Further references are included in Ursula Fisser-Blömer, "Zwangsarbeit in Osnabrück. SS-Baubrigade, Kriegsgefangenen- und 'Arbeitserziehungslager,'" *Antifa-Bericht* 6(1982): 23–29; Rainer Fröbe, "Hans Kammler. Technokrat der Vernichtung," in *Die SS. Elite unter dem Totenkopf. 30 Lebensläufe*, ed. Ronald Smelser and Enrico Syring (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000), pp. 305–319; T.X.H. Pantcheff, *Alderney. Fortress Island-The Germans in Alderney, 1940–1945* (Sussex: Phillimore & Co., 1981).

In addition to the fact that subcamps became the subject of research only relatively late, and that local camps were taboo topics for local city histories for a long time, the poor state of

research is largely due to the extreme lack of primary sources. In the absence of a coherent central collection on the SS-Baubrigade, there are only a few conceptual sketches and reports in the BA-B (NS 19/14, NS 19/771, NS 19/1572, NS 19/2065, NS 4 Buchenwald). In the archives at German memorial sites one can find only memoirs of former prisoners of the SS-Baubrigaden. For the Buchenwald concentration camp, the THStA-W holds a relatively detailed contemporary report (KZ Buchenwald und Haftanstalten). One of the most important sources comprises the investigation files and court proceedings at the BA-L, which holds not only problematical interrogation records but sometimes also diary sketches by former prisoners or copies of prisoner lists. The files in the former BDC as well as the files of the denazification proceedings (*Spruchgerichts-* or *Entnazifizierungsverfahren*) in the BA or in German state archives are of importance in reconstructing administrative relationships. Also useful are holdings of city archives, especially those dealing with building construction as referred to in the notes to this entry.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

Table 1  
The SS-Baubrigaden and SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigaden

Name	Date Created	Prisoners from/Subordinate to Main Concentration Camp	Locations
SS-Baubrigade I (SS-BB I)	October 1942	Sachsenhausen	Düsseldorf, with a camp in Duisburg
		Neuengamme (March 1943)	Alderney (March 1943)
		Buchenwald (August 1944)	Kortemark (July 1944), with a camp in Proven
SS-Baubrigade II (SS-BB II)	October 1942	Mittelbau (October 1944)	Sollstedt (September 1944), with a camp in Hohlstedt
		Neuengamme	Bremen, with camps in Osnabrück and Wilhelms-Haven
		Sachsenhausen (April 1944)	Hamburg (August 1943), with a camp in Bremen Berlin (April 1944)
SS-Baubrigade III (SS-BB III)	September 1942	Buchenwald	Nürnberg (February 1945, as an Eisenbahnbaubrigade)
		Mittelbau (October 1944)	Landshut (March 1945)
			Cologne, with camps in Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Essen, and Bensberg
SS-Baubrigade IV (SS-BB IV)	August 1943	Buchenwald	Wieda (May 1944), with camps in Nüxei, Osterhagen, and Mackenrode
		Mittelbau (October 1944)	Wuppertal
			Ellrich (May 1944), with a camp in Günzerode

(continued)

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Table 1 (continued)

Name	Date Created	Prisoners from/Subordinate to Main Concentration Camp	Locations
SS-Baubrigade V (SS-BB V)	March 1944	Buchenwald	Amiens, Aumale, Doullens, Hesdin, Lille, Rouen, as well as additional camps in the French Departements Haute-Normandie and Nord-Pas-de-Calais Returned to the Mittelbau camp in Nordhausen (September 1944)
		Mittelbau (October 1944)	Shared out to various subcamps, then formation of SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade V
SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade V (SS-EBB V, created from Baubrigade V)	September 1944	Buchenwald	Sangershausen
		Mittelbau (October 1944)	Osnabrück
SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VI (SS-EBB VI, created from SS-EBB I)	September 1944	Buchenwald	Berga-Kelbra
		Mittelbau (October 1944)	Bingerbrück Cologne
SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VII (SS-EBB VII, created from SS-EBB II)	September 1944	Auschwitz	Karlsruhe
		Buchenwald (October 1944) Mittelbau (October 1944)	Stuttgart
SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VIII (SS-EBB VIII, created from SS-EBB III)	November 1944	Mittelbau	Heringen
			Stuttgart Offenburg Darmstadt
SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade IX (SS-EBB IX)	November 1944	Sachsenhausen	Stuttgart
			Offenburg Darmstadt
SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade X (SS-EBB X)	December 1944	Buchenwald	Offenburg Haslach

Name	Date Created	Prisoners from/Subordinate to Main Concentration Camp	Locations
SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XI (SS-EBB XI)	February 1945	Neuengamme	Soest
SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XII (SS-EBB XII)	December 1944	Sachsenhausen	Bad Sassendorf Kamp am Rhein
SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XIII (SS-EBB XIII)	January 1945	Dachau	Bad Kreuznach Reichertshofen  Neuhof bei Fulda Oberlahnkreis

Source: Compiled from Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2004).

## NOTES

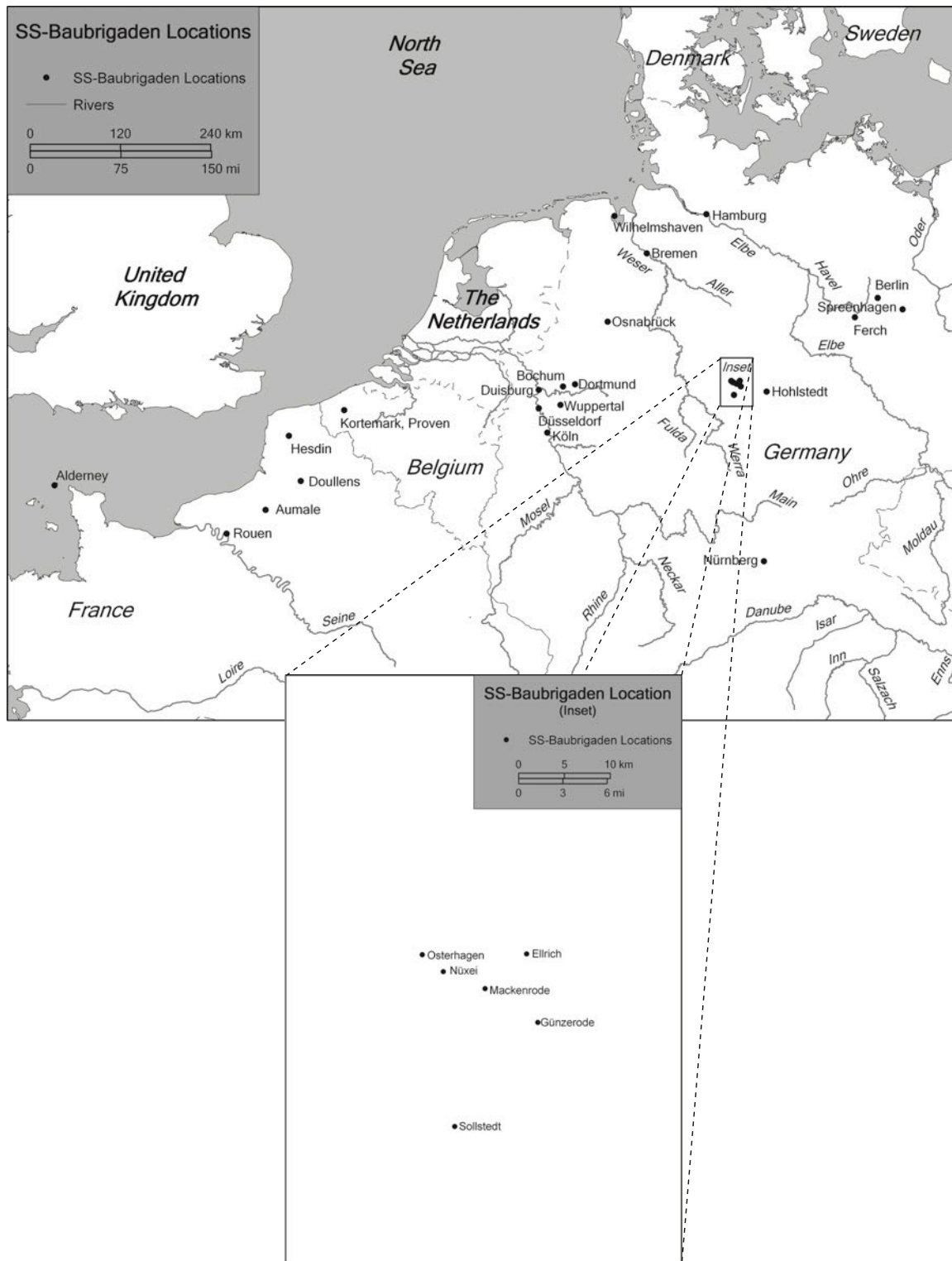
1. Reichsführer-SS, January 31, 1942, BA-B, NS 19/2065, pp. 8–9.
2. SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt Amtsgr. Ch. C 65/Sei., February 10, 1942, BA-B, NS 19/2065, pp. 20–33.
3. Reichsführer-SS, September 9, 1942, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 11.
4. See Protokoll der Sitzung: Der Chef des SS-WVHA Ch. Po./Sa. VS-3314/42, September 16, 1942, *ibid.*, pp. 131–133.
5. Der Senator für das Bauwesen, January 13, 1943, in StA-Br, 4, 29/1-1307.
6. SS-Gruppenführer Dr. Ing. Kammler, Bericht Nr. 6, February 14, 1944, to SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt

re “Einsatz der SS-Baubrigaden,” BA-B, NS 19/14, pp. 33–36 (quoted: p. 33).

7. Emil Barth, *Lemuria. Aufzeichnungen und Meditationen* (Hamburg: Claassen & Goverts, 1947), p. 85.

8. Figures for Osnabrück from “Totennachweis Häftlinge,” May 4, 1942, to December 16, 1942; December 17, 1942, to February 27, 1943, FGNS-H, Hans-Schwarz-Archiv; Ast-Os, Heger Friedhof; Russisches Ehrenfeld 1939–1945, Gräberliste dated January 7, 1971, AG-NG; BA-B (also at HSTA-W), NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a, Nr. 160, Nr. 161.

9. Reichsführer-SS, Tgb. Nr. 1722/43, August 19, 1943, quoted from T.X.H. Pantcheff, “Britain’s Only SS Concentration Camp,” *WWII-I* (May 1988): 31–35.1





## ALDERNEY (KANALINSEL) (SS-BB I)

The only concentration camp on British soil existed between March 1943 and June 1944 on the Isle of Alderney, one of the Channel Islands lying off the coast of Normandy. The Wehrmacht occupied these islands at the end of June 1940, and Alderney was the base for the SS-Baubrigade I. Adolf Hitler paid special attention to the military fortifications of the islands and ordered that they should be made into impregnable fortresses as part of the “Atlantic Wall.”

The SS-Baubrigade I was assigned to Alderney as a result of an agreement between Hans Kammler, head of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) construction bureau, and Xaver Dorsch, head of the Organisation Todt (OT) and under Albert Speer.<sup>1</sup> The background to the use of concentration camp prisoners was the decision made in mid-1942 that, if possible, only those foreign workers would be deployed on the Channel Islands who could be placed under particularly close guard, thereby eliminating the possibility of sabotage or espionage. As it was, the harsh living and working conditions on Alderney meant that many forced workers from the East soon died or became incapacitated and had to be replaced.

Alderney, which is only eight square kilometers (three square miles) large, is the third largest Channel Island after Jersey and Guernsey. Other than a handful of locals, all 1,500 inhabitants had been evacuated to Great Britain before the German troops occupied the island. In the spring of 1943, around 3,800 Wehrmacht soldiers and 4,000 workers from the OT lived on Alderney. Of the latter, as many as 3,000 were foreigners, most of them Soviet forced laborers, and they were quartered in four barracks camps distributed across the island. Each camp was named after an island in the North Sea.

Sylt, one of these barracks camps, was constructed in August 1942 for workers from the East and was occupied by the prisoners of SS-Baubrigade I. They had been sent from Düsseldorf on February 22, 1943, in a transport holding 730 prisoners from Sachsenhausen and 270 from Neuengamme, and they arrived on the island on March 5, 1943. The barracks camp construction, located on the grounds of the former British airfield, was not completely finished, so many prisoners had to live outside for a longer time. In the first months, the water supply was very inadequate.

When the SS took control of the Sylt camp, they strengthened the security measures, enclosing the interior of the camp, which included the prisoners' barracks, with an electrified barbed-wire fence. Around that was a fenced-in exterior ring, and the SS barracks and offices were in the western part of this exterior ring.

Camp commandant Maximilian List lived in a newly constructed building outside the fences. More than 60 SS men were assigned to guard the construction brigade, half of them Germans from the Reich, the other half SS men recruited from Alsace, Croatia, Poland, the Sudetenland, and Slovakia.

Dr. Otto Panzer, the OT-Frontführer and head of construction administration for the OT-Section “Adolf,” coordinated the work deployment of the forced laborers and thereby also the deployment of concentration camp prisoners on the island. The engineer Leo Ackermann, an OT construction supervisor, replaced him, most likely in September 1943. Such supervisors allocated the prisoners to the work sites, while the SS was responsible only to guard them.

Concentration camp prisoners had to work 12 hours a day and once a month had a half-day on Sunday off. They were almost exclusively employed in heavy physical labor, building tunnels or roads, and excavating material used for construction purposes. When they worked on building fortifications during 1943, their work was supervised directly by OT companies.

The prisoners were terrorized at their work by the SS, certain violent Kapos, workers of the OT, and Wehrmacht officers. In a November 1943 report from Kammler about the SS-Baubrigade I, one reads: “During the construction of the fortifications, there was a sixty percent increase in productivity during the first nine months of 1943 as compared to 1942. This was accomplished with the concerted and combined efforts of all participating parties.”<sup>2</sup> Kammler attributed this to the high productivity shown by the concentration camp prisoners, in which he had a vested interest, though it is also true that the presence of these prisoners increased the pressure on the other forced laborers. The OT used the Sylt camp as a labor education camp (*Arbeitserziehungslager*) once the sub-camp was in place.

The SS-Baubrigade I was Germany's westernmost sub-camp and, in the case of an invasion, would have fallen into the hands of the British and the Americans. Already in August 1943, Commandant List was given directions from Heinrich Himmler personally on how he was to deal with the prisoners to avoid this eventuality at any cost. A secret order of August 19, 1943, reads: “In the event of an attack, if there are prisoners who give the slightest signs of making difficulties, you are immediately to intervene and shoot the guilty parties. If this does not quell the disturbance, then you are to shoot all the prisoners without hesitation.”<sup>3</sup>

The situation for the concentration camp prisoners was oppressive on this island, occupied as it was solely by military personnel and members of the paramilitary OT. Aid to prisoners was expressly forbidden, and one could not even consider trying to flee from this heavily mined island. Poor hygienic conditions, malnutrition, and heavy physical labor led to the quick spread of disease. A number of sick prisoners are said to have been taken out of the infirmary by SS men and shot dead. In June 1943, 200 prisoners were classified as unfit for work, and on instruction from the military commander of the island, List ordered that they be returned to the Neuengamme concentration camp.<sup>4</sup> In early July 1943, about 150 prisoners were taken to Cherbourg, and several of them were able to escape once they reached French soil. Himmler opened disciplinary proceedings against List, as well as

against Kurt Klebeck, head of the guard troop, but dropped them again by October 5, 1943.<sup>5</sup>

List and Klebeck were replaced in the spring of 1944, as they were needed for other tasks, and SS-Obersturmführer Georg Braun took command of SS-Baubrigade I in March 1944.<sup>6</sup> Braun was 32 at the time, a surveyor by profession, and had served at the French and Polish front before being transferred for a 4-month stint at the central construction office in Lublin. In April 1942, he was transferred to Oranienburg (Amtsgruppe C), where he worked in various departments, including for 10 months as adjutant to Hans Kammler. A former prisoner described Braun as an unpredictable, mostly drunken SS officer who remained a fanatical Nazi to the very end.<sup>7</sup>

At the end of 1943, the construction brigade was assigned to help build launching ramps for the V-2 rocket at St. Omer and, to that end, was transferred on December 17, 1943, to the “Rommel Barracks” in Cherbourg on the French mainland. However, Dorsch successfully intervened with Himmler, and the construction brigade was transferred back to Alderney on January 7, 1944.<sup>8</sup>

When, during the night of June 24–25, 1944, the SS-Baubrigade I was finally withdrawn from the island, only 636 of the 1,000 original prisoners remained.<sup>9</sup> Some 54 had escaped during the transport to Alderney, and about 210 prisoners had been selected to be transported back to Neuengamme. About 100 deaths can be reconstructed from the surviving records, many of which can be ascribed to malnutrition and epidemics. But other killings can be identified as the result of violent crime: numerous prisoners were shot.<sup>10</sup> Among the dead, one also finds the victims of a “prisoners’ war” that raged on Alderney. Several prisoner-functionaries turned out to be particularly brutal and corrupt; some were murdered by other prisoners, others by the SS.

After an odyssey through the English Channel lasting several days, the construction brigade reached St. Malo on July 1, 1944.<sup>11</sup> From there, they continued on by train on July 4, 1944. As rail transport in France had come almost to a standstill due to precision bombing attacks, the train had to make a wide detour around Paris and travel via Rennes, Nantes, Angers, Tours, Dijon, Nancy, Toul, Namur, and Ghent to its final destination at Kortemark, Belgium. The SS officers in charge, Georg Braun and Otto Högelow, showed ruthless severity during this flightlike relocation. Will Kreuzberg wrote of the evacuation: “Yes, we got to know the bloodhound and his sidekick in their naked form during the following weeks.”<sup>12</sup>

Högelow threatened that for every Russian who escaped he would shoot another Russian, and for every escaped German, another German. Yet the prisoners were encouraged in their resolve to escape by the openly sympathetic French population they encountered. In Angers, where the train rolled slowly through and where a prisoner who had died was buried at a railway embankment, the French had yelled out to the SS: “You murderers! Take your corpses with you!”<sup>13</sup> When the train finally arrived at Kortemark on July 28, 1944, only 572

prisoners of the original 634 remained; 27 had managed to escape, 9 had died during the trip, and 26 had been shot, 17 of them during an escape attempt in the Toul area on July 26, 1944.

Because Alderney was “the only concentration camp on British soil,” speculation about unimaginable acts of cruelty, even of gas chamber killings, that might have taken place on this Channel Island began in Great Britain soon after the war. T.X.H. Pantcheff, a military intelligence officer, was sent by the British War Office to the liberated Channel Islands already in May 1945 to investigate, and his subsequent publications indicated the subcamp was not an extermination camp. In fact, a comparison of the Düsseldorf and Alderney locations is particularly instructive, as the key members of the SS were identical in both places, and the replacement of List and Klebeck did not lead to any qualitative changes at Alderney. Every sixth prisoner died in Düsseldorf, while it was every tenth prisoner who died on Alderney. That means significantly fewer prisoners died in a relatively closed-off area populated only by German military units than did in a camp in the middle of a large German city.

After the war, not a single SS member was convicted for crimes committed on Alderney. List lived on, undisturbed, in the Federal Republic of Germany, into the 1980s.

**SOURCES** T.X.H. Pantcheff published a study that paid particular attention to the Alderney subcamp: *Alderney, Fortress Island* (Sussex: Phillimore & Co., Ltd. 1981); and also an article about his subsequent research, “Britain’s Only SS-Concentration Camp,” *WWII-I* (May 1988): 31–35. In 1982, Solomon H. Steckoll collected a series of articles that had been published in the newspaper *The Observer* into a book, *The Alderney Death Camp* (London, 1982). It would only be 20 years later that a German publication addressed this subcamp in more detail, and this permitted some of the factual errors in earlier works to be corrected: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmler’s SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

The archival sources are relatively plentiful. Former prisoner Willi Kreuzberg published his memoirs about Alderney just after the war, *Schutzhäftlinge erlebten die Invasion* (Weimar: Thüringer Volksverlag, 1947). In addition to the reminiscences collected by Pantcheff after the war, the ZdL (now BA-L) also holds numerous eyewitness reports (IV 404 AR-Z 57/67 and 410 AR 63/77). Other reports are held at the Hans Schwarz Archive in the FGNS-H, and here one can also find the originals of the reports of prisoner deaths. This information and a list of burials, which can also be found at the ASM and the AG-NG (which contain data on deceased prisoners), provide important sources of information.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. SS-WVHA, Report No. 5 about the deployment of the SS-BB, November 9, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 24; and telegram from Kammler to the RFSS, Persönlicher Stab, in *ibid.*, NS 19/1572, 1.

2. SS-WVHA, Report No. 5 about the deployment of the SS-BB, November 9, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 26.

3. RFSS, Tgb. Nr. 1722/43, 19.8.43, cited in T.X.H. Pantcheff, "Britain's Only SS-Concentration Camp," *WWII-I* (May 1988): 35.

4. Discipline Proceeding Files of Maximilian List, born February 9, 1910, in BA, BDC/SSO.

5. Letter from the RFSS Adjutant, October 7, 1943, *ibid.*

6. See the files in *ibid.*, BDC/SSO Georg Braun, born November 15, 1911.

7. Report by Erich Frost, April 17, 1950, in *ibid.*; BA-L, ZdL IV 404 AR-Z 57/67, p. 248.

8. Report by Curt Hille, March 10, 1950, in BA-L, ZdL IV 404 AR-Z 57/67, p. 250f; and SS-WVHA, Report No. 6 about the deployment of the SS-Baubrigaden, February 14, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 33.

9. Calculations by Fings based on the literature referred to in the source essay, trials, and death lists.

10. Interview by Manfred Faust and Karola Fings with Roman Melnyk on December 15, 1999, ASt-Hü; Report by Helmut Knöller, AG-NG, Nr. 1317; ZdL, IV 404 AR-Z 57/67, p. 265, and IV 404 AR-Z 57/67, p. 27.

11. See diary entry in the Marinekommando West Ktb., July 1, 1944, BA-MA, RM 35 II/64, p. 4.

12. Willi Kreuzberg, *Schutzhäftlinge erlebten die Invasion* (Weimar: Thüringer Volksverlag, 1947), p. 11.

13. Witness statement by Walter H., June 1, 1967, ZdL, 410 AR 63/77, p. 695.

## AUMALE ("INGA") (SS-BB V)

Between April and August 1944, there was a subcamp for the SS-Baubrigade V stationed in Doullens in Aumale, which lies between Rouen and Amiens in northwestern France. The prisoners worked for the Luftwaffe constructing launch pads for V-1 rockets. The code name of the Aumale subcamp was "Inga."

The guards, the majority of whom were soldiers, were quartered in an abandoned castle. A barracks' camp was constructed on the grounds of the castle. In July 1944, there were 571 prisoners in the camp; in August there were 541.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners were taken to work daily in the surrounding forests by truck, at times traveling distances of up to 50 or 60 kilometers (31 to 37 miles).

Władysław Wikler, the prisoner's doctor in Aumale, reported that the sick from the Hesdin and Rouen subcamps were also brought to Aumale. He also stated that prisoners committed acts of sabotage so that the V-1 rockets could not be launched. A few prisoners were killed detonating the rockets, and some prisoners were hanged for sabotage.<sup>2</sup>

Numerous prisoners in Aumale, as in the other camps of the SS-Baubrigade V, tried to escape and make contact with the French resistance. Kazimierz S. remembers that as a result the SS implemented punishment actions in the camp: "I would also like to add that I often saw prisoners' bodies at the camp gate in Aumale. I heard they were the corpses of prisoners that had been shot because others had escaped from the

camp. As a result, the prisoners, fearful of being shot, kept an eye on each other to make sure no one tried to escape from the camp."<sup>3</sup>

Toward the end of August 1944 the camp was dissolved. The prisoners were transported, via Doullens, to the Harz, where, in October 1944, they were placed under the control of the newly established Mittelbau concentration camp.

**SOURCES** There are only a few files and survivors' reports that provide information about the Aumale camp, which can be found in THStA-W, NS-Dok, and BA-L. The Doullens subcamp's archival and secondary sources offer some starting points for further research.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. SS-BB V (=Field Post Nr. 15.566), July 30, 1944, and August 25, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald, Nr. 54.

2. Władysław Wikler, n.d., in NS-Dok, Z 10.561.

3. Kazimierz S., April 7, 1970, BA-L, ZdL Ludwigsburg IV 429 AR 1938/66, p. 2194.

## BERLIN (SS-BB II)

In the spring of 1944, Amtsgruppe C of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) relocated all SS-Baubrigaden to the Harz Mountains. From this point on, the emphasis was to be on the construction of subterranean armament facilities and no longer on removing rubble in the larger cities. Only SS-Baubrigade II was sent to a metropolis—to the capital of the Reich, Berlin.

Preparations for relocating this brigade began in March 1944. On March 30, Amtsgruppe D of the WHVA ordered the relocation of the SS members of this brigade from the SS-Death's Head Unit at Neuengamme to Sachsenhausen.<sup>1</sup> The construction brigade arrived in Berlin in mid-April 1944.

Though he was being investigated on charges of corruption in Hamburg at the time, Johannes Karger remained SS commandant of this construction brigade until at least the end of 1944.<sup>2</sup> Shortly before the brigade left Berlin on February 14, 1945, SS-Obersturmführer Karl Raab assumed command.<sup>3</sup> The SS guard contingent was augmented by reservists made available by the city of Berlin.

The Sachsenhausen concentration camp remained responsible for the prisoners even after their transfer to Berlin, and they were assigned new numbers without having to be processed through that camp. According to the final quarterly report of the SS-WVHA, the SS-Baubrigade II comprised 1,055 prisoners at the end of March 1944.<sup>4</sup>

The construction brigade moved into the bombed-out administrative offices of the Auergesellschaft AG, located at 24/25 Friedrich-Krause-Ufer in the Moabit district of Berlin.<sup>5</sup> SS-Oberscharführer Anton Stockmeier was head of the Kommando, and his room and the guards' office were on the ground floor.<sup>6</sup> Prisoner dormitories were on the first floor,



and accommodation for the guards was on the second. Windows facing the street or the Berlin-Spandauer-Kanal were bricked up to prevent escapes.<sup>7</sup>

From this location, prisoners were taken into the city, under guard and by tram, to remove piles of corpses and to clean up rubble, principally at the Hansa-Ufer (embankment) on the Spree River. Prisoners pulled down buildings that had been destroyed and reinforced walls that were threatening to collapse—dangerous and difficult work, according to survivors. Stones or bricks that could be reused were sorted from the rubble, cleaned, and then loaded onto ships. Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko remembered the advertising slogans he had read in the Berlin trams even more than 50 years later: “Respecting others in traffic reduces your cares” and “Well lathered is half-shaved.”<sup>8</sup>

Gradually, more and more prisoners were transferred to a construction site at Müggelheim, and by October 1944 at the latest, the SS-Baubrigade II was divided. Some prisoners, the so-called Auer Kommando, remained at the building of the Auergesellschaft AG and were formally designated as SS-Baubrigade IIa, while others were part of the Müggelheim Kommando, formally designated as SS-Baubrigade IIb, under the command of SS-Oberscharführer Christan Thode. Two smaller subcamps existed at Ferch and Spreenhagen.<sup>9</sup>

Müggelheim lies in the Köpenick district of Berlin, and according to survivors, prisoners had to build makeshift housing and small apartments for soldiers and SS members, and their dependents, who had been bombed out of their homes. Thus, one can conclude that this construction brigade was acting on behalf of the Berlin SS-Bauinspektion. In June 1944, the SS-WVHA (Amtsgruppe C) had issued an order, following a directive from Heinrich Himmler, according to which the Waffen-SS and Police Construction Inspection Offices were to build makeshift housing for bombed-out or evacuated members and dependents of the Waffen-SS, the general SS, and other “loyal followers.”<sup>10</sup> To save on men and matériel, such housing was to be self-constructed when at all possible, and the use of prisoners was only permitted if “important war-related construction programs” would not thereby be hindered.<sup>11</sup> Amtsgruppe C apparently intended to employ this particular construction brigade for its own purposes.

Prisoners in this brigade lived in Müggelheim in a barracks camp, lit at night, that was encircled by barbed wire and guard towers. Food was brought from Sachsenhausen, and the guards lived in small houses around the camp, some of which were still under construction. Even civilians lived in these small houses.<sup>12</sup> Smaller groups of prisoners were continually deployed for special projects, including building a bunker at Gosen or doing carpentry work at a shipyard.<sup>13</sup>

But the main work of the brigade was to build houses, using stones or bricks reclaimed from the rubble as construction material. These were brought from the Hansa-Ufer down the Spree River. Some prisoners used what strength they had left to sabotage this work that was being done for the benefit of SS families. According to a report by Georg M., his work

detail diverted so much cement and lime that the work almost came to a standstill for a prolonged time period.<sup>14</sup>

According to statements from former prisoners and SS guards, the small Müggelheim detachment grew from around 100 to around 800 prisoners and became the largest subcamp of the SS-Baubrigade II. While no definitive figures about the Berlin construction brigade exist, reports on arrivals and departures of SS men in early 1945 allow one to conclude that the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer detachment must have had several hundred prisoners. In January 1945, almost the entire guard was replaced, with those born after 1900 replaced by men born in the 1880s and 1890s who had been drafted by the SS at the end of 1944 and had attended a short training course in Oranienburg. At the end of January, 59 SS men were standing guard at the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer, and 71 at Müggelheim.<sup>15</sup>

Around mid-February 1945, some of the prisoners in SS-Baubrigade II were transferred to Sachsenhausen. Others, some from the camp in Müggelheim and some from the Friedrich-Krause-Ufer camp, were combined with prisoners from the Lichterfelde subcamp to create a group of 504 men.<sup>16</sup> The prisoners were carted to Köpenick in a construction train and left Berlin on February 25, 1945, as “2. SS-Baubrigade (E).”

While the members of the SS were not called to task after the war, their victims often suffered for decades from the terrors they lived through. Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko, who survived the SS-Baubrigade II in Bremen, Wilhelmshaven, Hamburg, and Berlin, said in a 1992 interview:

I dream most of all about the roll call parade grounds, and lining up. I dream in particular about how they led us to the work squads, but hundreds of people who had fallen were lying there. Or how they deliberately threw a cap beyond the boundary, and shot people just to get three days' leave. When I dreamt that, I screamed: “Come back! Don't go there!” That was what I dreamt at first, but then the dreams began to lessen. I still dream even today, once about how I crawled over corpses when we worked in Berlin, that something exploded, I fell, and it ripped into me. I awoke and was still whole. In those first years, I dreamt of how I was strung up by the Gestapo.<sup>17</sup>

**SOURCES** The SS-Baubrigade II in Berlin was first researched as part of a larger study of all the SS-Baubrigaden: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmler's SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005). Before this, data could only be found in the more general studies of the Sachsenhausen subcamps or of the Berlin camp system. They did not go much further than what could be found in the lists compiled by the ITS.

Contemporary records that could provide more detail about the construction brigades have hardly survived. Lists of the guards may be found at the RTKIDNI, Collection 1367, Concentration Camps and Prisoner of War Camps in Germany. Of special importance are the investigations by the

ZdL (now BA-L), IV 406 AR 594-596/73, which include testimony by former prisoners and guards, as well as the reports by prisoners that are held at the AG-NG and at the Hans Schwarz Archive at the FGNS-H.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Neuengamme Kommandantur, May 3, 1944, RT-KIDNI, 1367/1/143, p. 23.
2. SS-WVHA, Verdict, November 15, 1944, BA-B, BDC/SSO.
3. Note, February 11, 1974, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 595/73, p. 433.
4. SS-WVHA, April 29, 1944, BA, NS 19/14, p. 41.
5. Alexander P., March 28, 1973, ZdL, IV 404 AR-Z 159/73, p. 109.
6. Sachsenhausen concentration camp, 2. SS-BB Berlin, January 10, 1945, RTKIDNI, 1367/1/14, p. 32.
7. Otto M., September 12, 1973, ZdL, IV 406 AR 594/73, p. 329.
8. Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko, May 19, 1992, AG-NG, Interview Nr. 1576.
9. Note, February 11, 1975, ZdL, IV 406 AR 595/73, p. 433; and SS-WVHA, II. SS-BB, March 20, 1945, February 20, 1945, January 25, 1945, RTKIDNI, 1367/1/14, pp. 36–41.
10. SS-WVHA, June 10, 1944, BA-B, NS 3/3124, pp. 6–13.
11. Ibid., p. 12.
12. Heinrich D., September 1, 1937 (*sic*), ZdL, IV 406 AR 595/73, p. 224; and Alexander P., March 28, 1973, in *ibid.*, p. 109.
13. Richard G., September 12, 1973, in *ibid.*, p. 228.
14. Georg M., June 30, 1962, FGNS-H, 13-7-0-2.
15. SS-WVHA, II. SS BB March 20, 1945, February 20, 1945, January 25, 1945, RTKIDNI, 1367/1/14, pp. 36–41.
16. See Note, February 11, 1974, ZdL, IV 406 AR 595/73, p. 433; and Bureau de Renseignements de la Croix-Rouge néerlandaise, La Haye, 1952, *Étude sur le sort des prisonniers hommes évacués le 5/6-9-44 du KL Herzogenbusch au KL Sachsenhausen*, p. 17, CEGESOMA, Rap. 435, Tr. 91.823.
17. Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko, May 19, 1992, AG-NG, Nr. 1576.

## BOCHUM (*SPRENGKOMMANDO*) (SS-BB III)

On June 19, 1943, 40 prisoners from the SS-Baubrigade III at the Duisburg subcamp were transferred to Bochum. There they were assigned to a Luftwaffe demolition squad (*Sprengkommando*).<sup>1</sup>

The transfer of prisoners from Baubrigade III, stationed in Cologne, to the demolition squad was the result of a directive from Heinrich Himmler. Faced with a high death rate among firefighters and the members of security and auxiliary services who were engaged in defusing unexploded bombs, Himmler had issued a directive on November 3, 1942, stating that

“in all cases, insofar as the situation permits,” prison inmates or concentration camp inmates were to be used for the dangerous work of uncovering and disposing of unexploded bombs. This followed a directive Adolf Hitler issued in October 1940.

Commanders of the Ordnungspolizei (Order Police) were made responsible for their quarters, food, and security.<sup>2</sup> A few days after this directive was issued in November 1942, the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Amtsgroupe D instructed the concentration camp commandants to prepare suitable prisoner details. In those concentration camps where construction brigades already existed, prisoners were to be selected from the brigade.<sup>3</sup> An additional factor was that in the early summer of 1943 the Royal Air Force was increasingly using time-delayed fuses in the bombs it dropped over the Rhineland and Westphalia, and their removal was regarded as particularly dangerous.

It is not known where the prisoners were quartered, though it is possible they were held in a prison. In the above-mentioned directive, Himmler had stated: “To save on guard units, concentration camp prisoners used for this work are to be kept in police prisons for the duration.”

Until August 12, 1943, regular reports sent to Buchenwald gave the strength of the squad at 40 prisoners. After August 13, there were only 26, but by December 13, it had risen to 29.<sup>4</sup> In the extant Baubrigade III reports after this date, there is no further mention of this subcamp, so one may assume it was disbanded at the end of 1943.

The drop in the number of prisoners in August 1943 can be traced back to a tragic accident. On August 12, 1943, in Bochum, SS-Unterscharführer Hans Born and 13 prisoners were killed when an unexploded bomb detonated. One severely injured prisoner survived the blast but died two days later in Bochum’s Protestant hospital.<sup>5</sup> According to a political prisoner who was a member of the Kalkum detonation squad, the explosion occurred because the ordnance technician acted improperly. In a 1988 interview about the incident, Kurt Selbiger said: “[It was] a bomb with a delayed fuse as well as an additional displacement fuse. That was a major impediment to digging up such bombs: if the bomb was moved, this displacement fuse was prematurely activated. It was very, very difficult to disarm this type of fuse. And then the ordnance technician ties the bomb to a car and has a dozen prisoners grabbing the rope to help pull the bomb out of the hole. . . . And then they all went to heaven.”<sup>6</sup>

The bodies of the prisoners whose names are known were cremated in Cologne’s Westfriedhof cemetery.<sup>7</sup>

A photographic record of the Bochum Fire Brigade includes photos of concentration camp prisoners at work. One photograph, showing prisoners with a recovered bomb near the city’s car fleet park, has been published to date.

**SOURCES** For more information on the SS-Baubrigaden, see Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmler’s SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

Primary sources for this camp and the SS-Baubrigaden more generally may be found in the following collections: NWHStA-(D), ASt-N, IfZ, THStA-W, ASt-Dü, and ASt-Kö. A published photograph of the SS-Baubrigade III, Bochum, at work may be found in Karola Fings, *Messelager Köln. Ein KZ-Aussenlager im Zentrum der Stadt* (Cologne: Emons, 1996), p. 11. The photograph is reproduced from collection "Bo37" of ASt-Boc.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Statistics on Prisoners' Deployment, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald, Nr. 227, June 1943; and SS III. BB in NWHStA-(D), Ger. Rep. 118/1183.
2. RFSS November 3, 1942, ASt-N, NG-1002.
3. SS-WHVA, Amtsgruppe D, November 9, 1942, IfZ, MA 414, 6380, cited in ASt-Dü, Collection Kussman, Nr. 34.
4. Statistics on Prisoners' Deployment, in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 227, July, August, and December 1943.
5. SS-BB III, August 13, 1943, in *ibid.*; Buchenwald concentration camp, Nr. 9, 313, and SS III. BB, August 16, 1943, in *ibid.*, p. 309.
6. Interview with Kurt Selbiger, February 23, 1988, ASt-Dü, Slg. Kussman, Nr. 40.
7. SS-BB III, Cremation Record in Historical Archive, ASt-Kö, Collection 753-25.

## BREMEN (SS-BB II)

In October 1942, the SS-Baubrigade II was assembled at the Neuengamme concentration camp and comprised 1,000 prisoners; 750 of them were sent to Bremen and 250 to Osnabrück, both of which Heinrich Himmler had visited in early September 1942 during his tour of cities destroyed during bombing raids.<sup>1</sup> In Bremen, heavily bombed during the night of June 25, 1942, the city administration, the Gau leadership, and the Weser-Ems Gau Chamber of Commerce all made efforts to obtain labor for the city. The manager of the latter wrote to the Reich Labor Ministry in September 1942: "We are in a war zone. You can see this when you visit Bremen. . . . The last heavy attack on Bremen caused immense damage and created a large number of new problems. One of the most important concerns labor, for what we lack above all are people who can remove the enormous amount of rubble."<sup>2</sup>

At this point, SS-Hauptsturmführer Gerhard Weigel, in his capacity as leader of the SS-Construction Brigade II, was already in negotiations with the Bremen city administration. The most important issue to be resolved was accommodation, but there were also questions about the specific deployment of labor, payment, and guarding the prisoners. Weigel inspected a barracks camp owned by the Francke Werke, located on the Warturmer-Heerstrasse, and declared it suitable.<sup>3</sup> The 750 prisoners were moved there no later than October 14, 1942.<sup>4</sup>

However, the office of the Senator for Construction (Senator für Bauwesen) noted that as the camp "did not meet the

necessary requirements for guarding concentration camp prisoners," a different site had to be found.<sup>5</sup> Thus, in 1942, a camp then being built for the Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front, DAF) in the stable buildings of the Hindenburg barracks, located on Bossdorfstrasse, was requisitioned. Prisoners were quartered in the stable buildings, while barracks for the SS, lavatories, the canteen, and a kitchen still had to be built. The Senator for Construction Matters paid rent to the Bremen military administration for the use of the stable buildings and the grounds.<sup>6</sup> From the Bremen registry office death notices, one can ascertain that relocation occurred between December 18 and 22, 1942, as prisoner Petris Jonis is recorded as dying at the camp on the Warturmer-Heerstrasse on December 18, 1942, while the address of Alexej Trubatsch, who died on December 22, is given as Bossdorfstrasse.<sup>7</sup>

The SS-Baubrigade II remained in Bremen until April 1944, though their numbers shrank continually. Some prisoners went with the SS-Baubrigade I to Alderney in February 1943, a larger detachment went to Wilhelmshaven, and the greatest part of the prisoners, and thus the main camp of SS-Baubrigade II, was transferred to Hamburg after August 1943. At this point, only 272 prisoners remained in the camp.<sup>8</sup>

SS-Hauptsturmführer Weigel was a notable early member of Nazi organizations and had considerable experience in responsible positions in concentration camps as well as at SS construction offices. Born on February 23, 1908, in Flöha, Saxony, Weigel joined the Hitler Youth when he was 16, then the SA in Bautzen in 1929, and switched to the SS in 1930. Trained as a heating engineer, he only became firmly established in party positions by 1933, after a longer period of unemployment.<sup>9</sup> From 1934 on, he was part of the SS contingent at the Sachsenburg concentration camp, and following the dissolution of that camp, he participated as an engineer in constructing the Buchenwald concentration camp. After working at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, at the SS administration office, and with the SS-Verfügungstruppe (Special Assignment Troops), Weigel joined the SS-Bauinspektion at the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) for Reich Süd. In January 1942, he then became head of the Bauinspektion at the HSSPF for Russland Süd in Kiev and remained there until he was transferred to the SS-Baubrigade II.

Weigel negotiated with the authorities and directed the deployment of the prisoners, but he was less visible to the prisoners than were the camp leaders in Bremen, Osnabrück, and Hamburg who reported to him. Weigel was assigned a deputy, Diplomingenieur Johann Karger, who was in command of the technical deployment, and when Weigel was ordered to take command of the SS-Baubrigade V in March 1944, Karger took over as commander of the SS-Baubrigade II.<sup>10</sup> As of mid-October 1942, only 30 SS men were available to serve as a guard detail, so it was necessary to recruit local help to strengthen prisoner surveillance.<sup>11</sup>

As in other cities, the construction administration coordinated the brigade's deployment. In Bremen this was divided



between two offices; a Director of Emergency Measures (Leiter der Sofortmassnahmen) was responsible for dealing with war damage, thus also for removing rubble. Fritz Köster, described as an “uncompromising National Socialist” and an “extremely capable organizer,” was in charge of Department III and was thus responsible for labor deployment and for setting up camps. Oberbaurat Wilhelm Wortmann directed Department IV and was responsible for damage removal and cleanup work.<sup>12</sup> In addition, Paul Wegener, Gauleiter of Weser-Ems, and Senator Hans-Joachim Fischer, who headed internal administration and occasionally the construction administration as well, also dealt with the concentration camp prisoners. After Wilhelmshaven had been hit by a bombing raid, it was Fischer, also Wegener’s deputy as Reich Defense Commissioner, who offered that city SS-Baubrigade II prisoners.<sup>13</sup>

The prisoners’ work was of great importance for Bremen. A report of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) stated that by December 1943 prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade II in Bremen had worked on more than 100 sites in the city, cleaning up rubble and undertaking rescue operations. In February 1944, there were still 346 prisoners working at 28 sites.<sup>14</sup> The population soon became familiar with seeing prisoners in their blue-and-white-striped clothes, colloquially calling them “Zebras.”<sup>15</sup> It did not escape the city authorities in charge that what the prisoners were able to accomplish was due to being terrorized by the SS. Fischer, the Bremen Senator for Construction Matters, wrote the WVHA on January 22, 1943: “I take this opportunity to record my recognition of the extraordinary work the construction brigade has done in removing bomb damage in Bremen. I especially want to emphasize here this valuable deployment that I regard as due primarily to the strict supervision SS leaders and men have exercised.”<sup>16</sup>

It is known that 168 men from the Bremen construction brigade camp died between October 1942 and April 1944, 123 of them in the first five months. Alexander P., a former prisoner, stated that there was “no order in the camp.”<sup>17</sup> Prisoners were regularly and indiscriminately beaten; bread was thrown to them, and only those strong enough got some of it. Fritz Bringmann, a prisoner medic who was transferred from Osnabrück to Bremen in May 1943, reported high levels of illness and many extremely weakened prisoners. The poor state of health in his opinion was the result of a ruthless pace of work, long shifts, the many roll calls, and poor nutrition.<sup>18</sup> The brutal behavior of SS-Rottenführer Brunken, who as roll-call leader strode about the camp with a stick or whip, hitting anyone who did not greet him correctly enough, only worsened matters. Brunken regularly mistreated prisoners in the infirmary, and in at least one case, he personally shot a recaptured prisoner.<sup>19</sup> A number of prisoners died because they were refused access to air-raid shelters during bombing raids.<sup>20</sup> Prisoners also died after having to stand for hours at punishment roll calls imposed after unsuccessful escape attempts.<sup>21</sup>

The situation in Bremen eased markedly when the majority of the SS-Baubrigade II was transferred to Hamburg in August 1943, along with camp leader Gerhard Weigel.<sup>22</sup> In the course of 1943, some of the SS personnel were also withdrawn and replaced by older guards. Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko reported: “And then the lame appeared, those who had been shot up at the front. They had been at the front for two years, and had seen what that meant. They behaved better toward us.”<sup>23</sup> The situation was also helped by an improvement in the supply of food. A report for the period from July to September 1943 mentions that the city of Bremen allocated additional rations to the SS-Baubrigade II “in recognition of its extraordinary work.”<sup>24</sup> In fact, former prisoners report that in 1943 supplies improved.<sup>25</sup> However, it is not possible to say to what extent this improvement can be attributed to the city. It is certain that beginning the fall of 1943, Bringmann passed on several hundred kilograms of potatoes in a sealed store-room to fellow prisoners. When the loss was discovered, Bringmann had to flee, according to him on April 4, 1944.<sup>26</sup>

As in other construction brigades, when it became known that the camp was to be transferred from Bremen to Berlin, efforts to escape increased, supported in particular by the forced laborers and imprisoned opponents of the regime. At the high point of the use of forced labor in 1944, Bremen held about 200 camps with about 25,000 foreigners, both male and female.<sup>27</sup> Bringmann said:

At that time, there were tens of thousands of forced deportees who had to work in the firms. They were also used to clear rubble and as a result came in contact with our comrades. What bound them together was their similar background, that they had been violently separated from their relatives, and their common interest in returning home alive. . . . It did not take long for help to be offered in the form of forged identity papers or as permits from relatives who worked in labor camps for Eastern workers in Hannover, Braunschweig, Osnabrück, and other places. With these identity papers and often with pre-bought train tickets, good preconditions were in place for a quick departure from Bremen. We arranged and provided appropriate clothing, food, and money.<sup>28</sup>

According to Bringmann, 15 prisoners were able to escape in this manner between the fall of 1943 and the spring of 1944, and only 1 was recaptured.

Neither the leaders of the construction brigades nor others belonging to the SS guard were ever prosecuted after the war for crimes committed in the Bremen camp. The dead are buried in the Osterholz cemetery in Bremen.

**SOURCES** As part of an investigation into the SS construction brigades, the Bremen camp has only recently become the focus of research in Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmler’s SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh,

2005). Prior to this, it was only mentioned in passing in other works about Bremen during the Nazi era, such as Inge Marssolek and René Ott, *Bremen im Dritten Reich: Anpassung—Widerstand—Verfolgung* (Bremen: Carl Schünemann Verlag, 1986). On the history of Bremen during the Nazi era, see Herbert Schwarzwälder, *Geschichte der Freien Hansestadt Bremen*, vol. 4, *Bremen in der NS-Zeit* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1995).

Primary source material for SS-Baubrigade II at Bremen is widely dispersed. The most important is the Hans Schwarz Archive in the FGNS-H (memoirs and the *Totenbücher* from Neuengamme) as well as the AG-NG (memoirs and other collections of material). Another source is the files of the Senator für Bauwesen in the StA-Br (Collection 4,29/1) and the files at the ZdL (IV 406 AR 245/69), available at BA-L.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. RFSS, September 9, 1942, BA, NS 19/14, p. 11.
2. Dr. Karl Kohl, September 23, 1942, A-HkBr, SZ I 15, vol. 9.
3. Senator für Bauwesen, October 7, 1942, StA-Br, 4, 29/1-1307.
4. The first documented death occurred on this day. See Prisoner Death Notifications from May 4, 1942, to December 16, 1942, FGNS-H, Hans Schwarz Archive.
5. Senator für Bauwesen, August 31, 1942, AG-NG, Material Collection, Ng. 6.4.92.
6. Ibid.
7. Data Bank of the AG-NG; and Prisoners' Death List in FGNS-H.
8. SS-WVHA, November 9, 1942, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 26.
9. See BA, BDC/PK,/RS,/SSO for the information referred to here.
10. BA, BDC/SSO.
11. Senator für Bauwesen, October 7, 1942, StA-Br, 4, 29/1-1307.
12. Herbert Schwarzwälder, *Geschichte der Freien Hansestadt Bremen*, vol. 4, *Bremen in der NS-Zeit* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1995), pp. 530, 594.
13. For details on Wegener and Fischer see Inge Marssolek and René Ott, *Bremen im Dritten Reich: Anpassung—Widerstand—Verfolgung* (Bremen: Carl Schünemann Verlag, 1986), pp. 365; as well as File Note November 5, 1942, ASt-Wil, 4600/6.
14. SS-WVHA, February 14, 1944, BA, NS 19/14, p. 34.
15. Marssolek and Ott, *Bremen im Dritten Reich*, p. 358.
16. Senator für Bauwesen, January 20, 1943, in StA-Br, 4, 29/1-1307.
17. Alexander P., March 28, 1973, BA-L, ZdL IV 404 AR-Z 159/73, p. 108.
18. Fritz Bringmann, December 20, 1977, AG-NG, Report Nr. 150.
19. Fritz Bringmann, June 2, 1946, AG-S, IV/26.
20. Prisoner Death Notifications and Subcamp Death Notifications in FGNS-H; and Marssolek and Ott, *Bremen im Dritten Reich*, pp. 358, 417.

21. Interview with Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko, May 19, 1992, AG-NG, Nr. 1576.

22. Fritz Bringmann, November 20, 1949, BA, BY 5/V 279/74.

23. Interview with Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko, May 19, 1992, AG-NG, Nr. 1576.

24. SS-WVHA, November 9, 1943, BA, NS 19/14, p. 27.

25. Interview with Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko, May 19, 1992, AG-NG, Nr. 1576.

26. Report Fritz Bringmann, March 25, 1984, AG-NG, Nr. 141; and Interview with Fritz Bringmann, July 29, 1981, AG-NG, Nr. 153.

27. Marssolek and Ott, *Bremen im Dritten Reich*, p. 413.

28. Report Fritz Bringmann, December 20, 1977, AG-NG, Nr. 150.

## DORTMUND (*SPRENGKOMMANDO*) (SS-BB III)

On order of the Higher-SS and Police Leader West, the Cologne-based SS-Baubrigade III sent 40 prisoners to Dortmund on May 31, 1943. There they were assigned to the Luftwaffe bomb disposal squad (Sprengkommando).<sup>1</sup> This transfer can be traced back to a directive of Heinrich Himmler.

Faced with a high death rate among firefighters and the members of security and auxiliary services who were engaged in defusing unexploded bombs, Himmler had issued a directive on November 3, 1942, stating that "in all cases, insofar as the situation permits," prison inmates or concentration camp inmates were to be used for the dangerous work of uncovering and disposing of unexploded bombs. This followed a directive Adolf Hitler issued in October 1940.

Commanders of the Order Police were made responsible for the accommodation, rations, and security of the prisoners.<sup>2</sup> A few days after this directive was issued in November 1942, Amtsgruppe D instructed concentration camp commandants to prepare suitable prisoner details. In those concentration camps where construction brigades already existed, prisoners were to be selected from the brigade.<sup>3</sup> An additional factor was that in the early summer of 1943 the Royal Air Force was increasingly using time-delayed fuses in the bombs it dropped over the Rhineland and Westphalia, and their removal was regarded as particularly dangerous.

It is possible that the SS-Baubrigade's inmates were held in a prison. In the above-mentioned directive, Himmler had stated: "To save on guard units, concentration camp prisoners used for this work are to be kept in police prisons for the duration."

There is little data, and only a few prisoner names are known, about the Dortmund bomb disposal squad. At the beginning of July 1943, the SS-Baubrigade III reported that there were 75 prisoners in the squad, and by July 20, there were only 34. These 34 remained there until August 23, 1943, when the subcamp was closed.<sup>4</sup>

The names of the first 40 prisoners are in the above-mentioned SS-Baubrigade III document, dated May 31, 1943. The 5 prisoners killed on June 9, 1942—the Yugoslav Hermann Bobeck, the Poles Stanislaus Affek and Edward Kapłonski, and the Ukrainians Petro Jajez and Michailo Saloid—when an unexploded bomb detonated in Derne, near Dortmund, were probably among them and were probably also part of the Dortmund bomb disposal squad.<sup>5</sup>

**SOURCES** The Dortmund bomb disposal squad was cited only in one publication that dealt with the SS-Baubrigade III, Karola Fings, *Messelager Köln: Ein KZ-Aussenlager im Zentrum der Stadt* (Cologne: Emons, 1996), p. 112.

The THStA-W (NS 4 Buchenwald and KZ Buchenwald) has a few records on the SS-Baubrigade III, Dortmund. There are no known survivors' reports.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. SS-BB III, May 31, 1943, NWHStA-(D), Court Report 118-76.
2. RFSS, January 3, 1942, ASt-N, NG-1002.
3. SS-WVHA, Amtsguppe D, November 9, 1942, IfZ, MA 414, 6380, cited in ASt-Dü, Collection Kussman Nr. 34.
4. SS-BB III, July 2, 1943, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 85/67, p.2; KL Buchenwald Statistics—Deployment of Prisoners, THStA-W, NS Buchenwald Nr. 227, July 1943; *ibid.*, August 1943.
5. SS-BB III, June 15, 1943, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald Nr. 9, 342.

## DOULLENS (BUCHENWALD) [AKA SS-BAUBRIGADE WEST] (SS-BB V)

The SS-Baubrigade V, also known as SS-Baubrigade West, existed from March to October 1944 and, with its complement of about 2,500 prisoners, was the largest of all the SS construction brigades. Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler ordered it formed on December 29, 1943. It was tasked with building V-weapon sites in the northwestern part of occupied France.<sup>1</sup>

Prisoners for the new brigade initially were selected from the Cologne SS-Baubrigade III, which was expanded on January 17, 1944, with the addition of 1,000 prisoners from Buchenwald. In March, further transports included prisoners from Buchenwald and from the Neuengamme SS-Baubrigade.<sup>2</sup> In selecting prisoners, care was taken to ensure none among them spoke French, to make it difficult for them to be in contact with the civilian population. However, a number of prisoners hid their linguistic abilities, as they hoped to escape once they were in France.

Some 60 percent of SS-Baubrigade V were Soviet citizens, 30 percent were Poles, and the remainder were Germans, Czechs, or Yugoslavs.<sup>3</sup> The construction brigade left Cologne in four transports between mid-March and early April 1944,

the first (with 500 prisoners) going to Liques, the second (with 576) to Hesdin, the third (with 750) to Rouen, and the fourth (with 700) to Aumale. However, a total of 2,518 prisoners arrived in France, as 4 prisoners had managed to escape from each of the last two transports. The first two transports were directed to the area west of St. Omer and south of Calais, where they were to construct V-2 sites for the Army. The 1,442 prisoners on the other two transports were to construct V-1 sites for the Luftwaffe further south, in the area around Aumale and Rouen.<sup>4</sup>

The SS-Baubrigade V was commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Gerhard Weigel, previously leader of the SS-Baubrigade II, who upon being appointed to lead SS-Baubrigade V also was promoted to SS-Sturmbannführer, effective June 21, 1944.<sup>5</sup> Weigel accompanied the first prisoner transport and organized the quarters for the next transports. He also conducted the initial negotiations with the military offices of the LXV Army Corps, and together with Colonel Zimmermann of the Supreme Command—West (Oberbefehlshaber West), he determined the sites of the deployment;<sup>6</sup> 95 SS men were assigned to guard duty, and 26 men were sent to deal with administrative and technical matters, all of them having come from Buchenwald. The Army and Luftwaffe, respectively, made 61 and 213 soldiers available.<sup>7</sup>

In order to have prisoners quartered as closely as possible to the construction sites, the brigade gradually set up at least 14 camps in the Haute-Normandie and Nord-Pas-de-Calais *départements*. Several hundred prisoners were quartered in the large halls of the citadel at Doullens, often referred to as the “main site.” Weigel is supposed to have directed the activities of the construction brigade from there.<sup>8</sup> Larger subcamps existed for a long period of time in Aumale, Hesdin, and Rouen. Other locations of deployment listed are Amiens, Arras, Beauval, Bergueneuse, Cassel, Mimoyecques, Montdidier, St. Omer, and Vignacourts. Prisoners were allocated to camps and construction sites according to need. In July 1944, there were four large camps, given the cover names “Lisa I,” “Lisa II,” “Inga,” and “Heilag,” and by August there were 8.<sup>9</sup>

In the main, prisoners worked at “special construction sites” of the LXV Army Corps, building launch sites as well as bunkered supply depots. Heavy physical labor was required and included excavation, laying concrete, and moving building materials. In addition, prisoners were repeatedly set to work at “immediate tasks important to the war effort,” such as repairing roads or rail lines after bombing raids. They also built bunkers, and after the Allied invasion of Normandy, they dug trenches, removed unexploded bombs, and repaired the damage to fortified positions.

The heavy physical labor was immensely difficult for prisoners, some of whom weighed less than 50 kilos (110 pounds). In June 1944, the head of the SS-Business Administration Main Office's (WVHA) Amtsguppe C, Hans Kammler, wrote that because of the time pressure, prisoners were constantly “kept working at a furious pace.”<sup>10</sup> Tomasz Kiryłłow, a survivor, has described what this really meant: “Piotr grabbed



the wheelbarrow, yanked it forward and stumbled. The SS man hit him in his chest with his rifle butt. Piotr protected himself with his arms and pulled back, his eyes filled with horror. I liked him. I had to watch how he tried to turn away from the blows of the SS whip. Blood ran from the wounds on his head. Finally, he pulled himself up and tried to move. ‘Stop!’ an SS man screamed, aimed his machine gun and fired. Piotr Majcenko turned his face to his murderer, took a few steps forward, and then sank to the ground.”<sup>11</sup>

The situation in Normandy meant that, for the first time, a construction brigade was working in an occupied country. That meant the SS was surrounded by an overwhelmingly hostile civilian population, and it was nearly impossible to prevent contacts between prisoners and the French population. Right in front of the SS guards, and apparently without fear, French men and women approached the prisoners, asked them questions, and gave them food. When prisoners were taken to work by truck, they were helped in the villages they passed through. The SS men became increasingly nervous, as resistance fighters targeted these transports.

It was difficult terrain for the SS, particularly since the increased bombing raids on the French Atlantic coast made it harder and harder for guards to know what was going on. Prisoners also had become more and more restless and refractory after D-Day. Given the military situation, Weigel had considerable difficulties maintaining discipline among the SS men, with Army and Luftwaffe guards in particular accused of lapses in duty. In one detachment, either May or June 1944, there must have been a mass breakout after a Wehrmacht post was attacked and overrun.<sup>12</sup> Prisoners were now threatened with random reprisal: for every prisoner who escaped, some of those left behind would be shot indiscriminately.

Yet despite this draconian threat of punishment, escapes remained common. At the end of June 1944, 91 prisoners were reported as having escaped, and 11 had been shot either while escaping or while trying to escape.<sup>13</sup> The high number of successful escapes was due to the great willingness of the French population to render assistance; only 2 prisoners who had fled in France were recaptured.

As a result, Commander Weigel was even more determined to break the link between prisoners and the surrounding population. On July 7, 1944, he put together a large transport of 350 prisoners suspected of planning escapes or of being in contact with the French, to be sent to Buchenwald.<sup>14</sup> He also ordered further disguising measures: the SS-Baubrigade V was renamed the “SS-Baubrigade VII,” and some of the prisoners were given civilian clothes and permitted to grow out their hair so as not to be recognized as concentration camp prisoners.<sup>15</sup>

Initially, Weigel actually was able to slow the prisoner exodus. However, before the SS-Baubrigade V was to be transferred back to Germany, the number of escapees increased again—many prisoners not wishing to return under any circumstances. In fact, in the statistics kept by the Buchenwald

concentration camp, the Normandy numbers stick out: during 1944, no other subcamp had so many prisoners successfully escaping in such a short time. Almost 20 percent of the escapees noted in these Buchenwald records until mid-September were from the SS-Baubrigade V.<sup>16</sup>

The actual use of V-weapons, on whose launching sites prisoners had worked, only began after the Allied landing in Normandy with a June 11, 1944, order from the LXV Army Corps. There were initial difficulties, but by the end of July, some 5,000 V-1 rockets had been launched against Great Britain. Anti-aircraft Artillery Regiment 155 was in charge of firing the rockets, but the Allied advance forced the LXV Army Corps to order this regiment to retreat on August 12, 1944. The Allied advance probably also prompted the SS-Baubrigade V to begin preparing to evacuate.

During August 1944, prisoners from the Aumale, Hesdin, and Rouen subcamps were gathered together in Doullens; the SS-Baubrigade V returned to Germany by rail via Lille. During a bombing raid in Lille on August 31, 27 prisoners died.<sup>17</sup> Survivors said that among these victims were prisoners wounded in an earlier bombing raid and being cared for by the French in their homes. The next day, the SS are said to have collected 10 to 15 of the wounded, stuck them in a bunker, and killed them with hand grenades.<sup>18</sup>

Between August 30 and September 11, 1944, 1,824 prisoners arrived at the Harz Mountains, in three large groups with about 550 prisoners each and in three smaller groups with less than 100 prisoners each. As no appropriate accommodations were available, they were divided up among SS-Baubrigaden III and IV, as well as the camps of the Mittelbau complex.<sup>19</sup> Despite this, SS-Baubrigade V continued to exist in an administrative sense through September, the number of hours they worked (on projects B15 and B17) being calculated by Special Inspectorate II.<sup>20</sup> Mittelbau, which had become an independent concentration camp by this time, assumed responsibility for 648 prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade V by the end of October—though by this time the construction brigade itself was in Osnabrück and had been renamed as an SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade.<sup>21</sup>

**SOURCES** It was only late in the research into the SS-Baubrigaden that this particular brigade was examined in Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmler’s SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

Documentation of the SS-Baubrigade V is very spotty. In addition to contemporary reports, which are in the BA-B (NS 19/14, pp. 51–58), there are also collections of material titled “NS 4 Buchenwald” and “KZ Buchenwald and Haftanstalten” to be found at the THStA-W. The ITS Sachdokumenten collection holds documentation on the administrative continuation of SS-Baubrigade V. Of particular significance are the trial documents of the former ZdL held at BA-L (IV 406 AR-Z 207/73). Here one can find copies of the transport lists which permit an almost complete reconstruction of the names of the prisoners in SS-Baubrigade V. There are references to the SS-Baubrigade V as well in the interviews with former forced laborers archived at NS-Dok. Kiryllow, who success-

fully escaped from the Hesdin camp, has also written an impressive memoir, Tomasz Kuryłow, *“Und ihr werdet doch verlieren”: Erinnerungen eines polnischen Antifaschisten* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1985).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. SS-WVHA, December 29, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/2065, p. 57.
2. Transportmeldungen, January 17, 1944, March 9, 1944, March 25, 1944, April 12, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a.
3. SS-WVHA, July 29, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 53.
4. Ibid., p. 52.
5. Gerhard Weigel, born February 23, 1908, BA-BL, BDC/RS.
6. SS-WVHA, July 29, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 37; and SS-WVHA, July 29, 1944, in *ibid.*, p. 52.
7. Ibid.
8. Kurt D., February 15, 1973; Karl J., September 17, 1972; Hans H., April 4, 1952, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, pp. 242, 250, 491.
9. SS-BB V (Feldpost Nr. 15566), July 30, 1944, August 25, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 54.
10. SS-WVHA, July 29, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 55.
11. Tomasz Kuryłow, *“Und ihr werdet doch verlieren”: Erinnerungen eines polnischen Antifaschisten* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1985), p. 134.
12. SS-WVHA, July 29, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 55.
13. Ibid.
14. Transportmeldung, July 7, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a; Pawel Potockij, May 1989, in NS-Dok, Z 10.547.
15. Hans Groth, February 29, 1964, in FGNS-H, Archive Hans Schwarz, 13-7-3-7.
16. Fluchtstatistik, September 15, 1944, in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 143.
17. Namentliche Aufstellung, October 9, 1944, in *ibid.*, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 54.
18. Felix L., September 6, 1973; Günter R., August 13, 1973; Günter R., March 20, 1974, in BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, pp. 632, 683, 823.
19. KL Mittelbau, Abt. Arbeitseinsatz, October 11, 1944, in *ibid.*, p. 7.
20. Abrechnung, September 1944, ITS Sachdokumenten—Ordner Buchenwald 54, p. 25.
21. Transport Report, October 29, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a.

## DUISBURG (BUCHENWALD) (SS-BB III)

Between February 1943 and May 1944, there was a subcamp of the Cologne SS-Baubrigade III in Duisburg. The prisoners' main task was to clear the city from rubble. The prisoners were accommodated in a barracks camp on the corner of Korn Strasse and Emmerich Strasse, in the suburb of Meiderich. The SS-Baubrigade I from Sachsenhausen was previously quartered here.

A few days after the SS-Baubrigade I was transferred to Alderney on February 21, 1943, the commander of the Cologne camp, Karl Völkner, took control of the remaining 342 prisoners. During the transfer, the commander of the guard detail of SS-Baubrigade I and four unknown members of the Duisburg city administration were present.<sup>1</sup> The commander of the camp in Duisburg was SS-Oberscharführer Franz Janitschke. Prior to this appointment, he had been a security guard in Cologne. Völkner had all the prisoner-functionaries transported back to Buchenwald and replaced them with other prisoners.

Völkner instigated a thorough selection of the Sachsenhausen prisoners now registered in Buchenwald. On the day he took control, 59 of the 342 prisoners were in the infirmary and 5 were in the hospital. In his report, sent to Buchenwald on the takeover, he wrote: “The condition of the prisoners is so bad that on Monday, February 22, 1943, only fifty prisoners could go to work. . . . The condition of their dress (Zebra), underwear and shoes is the worst imaginable.”<sup>2</sup> During the course of the day he forced another 100 prisoners to work, although their ability to function was limited. In order to keep numbers high for the work details, Völkner, on March 6, 1943, returned all weakened or sick prisoners to Buchenwald.<sup>3</sup> On March 13, the Duisburg camp received a transport of 270 prisoners from Buchenwald.<sup>4</sup>

The barracks camp was completely destroyed during a bombing raid on the night of April 26–27, 1943. The prisoners had no chance to seek refuge during the raid; 30 prisoners died, and another 28 were severely injured. The Diakonen Institute at Kühlenwall 64 was selected as the new quarters. The buildings of the Institute had been severely damaged in the summer of 1942 and had partially been reconstructed by the autumn so as to accommodate “workers from the East.” The SS took over the building in April 1943.<sup>5</sup> During the next few weeks, the prisoners had to finish the repairs to the Diakonie building. Once that was done, they were accommodated in the infirmary.<sup>6</sup>

Engelbert Oberhauser, who with another prisoner was transferred from Buchenwald to Duisburg in the summer of 1943, reported that

[t]he camp was in a hospital, burnt out during a bombing raid, a former convent of the Zisterzensier Order. It had extremely strong walls. Completely burnt to the ground, it stood in the ruins of the city centre. The Duisburg concentration camp was situated in the remaining commercial buildings. As an emergency measure the prisoners' accommodation was covered with paper maché and boards. The truss was completely burnt. The prisoners were dressed in Zebra and to a large extent in civilian rags. Among them were several German prisoner-functionaries; mostly the prisoners were Soviet and Polish SS slaves. . . . Full of lice, dirty and half-starved we learned the evening roll call. The buttocks of many were exposed; for most, only their knees stuck out of

their ripped trousers. They returned from work—demolition, cleaning up and defusing bombs. As we two lined up for roll call, we looked like lords among beggars with our new Zebra clothes, given to us before the transport left Buchenwald.<sup>7</sup>

For months, the conditions in the Diakonen Institute remained catastrophic. A report prepared in September 1943 indicates that the camp was being extended. A bombing raid again heavily damaged the building. The camp became plagued with lice, and a delousing chamber was built. There was a lack of washing facilities, and the kitchen was equipped with the bare minimum.<sup>8</sup> The catastrophic conditions did not prevent Völkner from asking for an additional 500 prisoners.<sup>9</sup>

Numbers in the camp varied considerably. Prisoners were often transferred to other detonation squads, to Buchenwald or to other camps. During the summer there were just under 400 prisoners; in October 1943, there were 1,018, the highest-known number; and in the spring of 1944, there were just over 800.<sup>10</sup>

The Duisburg “Office for Immediate Measures” (Amt für Sofortmassnahmen) was a special authority located within the city’s Building Administration. The prisoners worked at the request of the office in cleaning up and repairing damage caused by bombing raids. In March 1944, on instructions from the city, the prisoners were required to work additionally on Sundays and recycle bitumen roof sheeting so that the small allotment holders had roof sheeting to repair the buildings on their garden sheds.<sup>11</sup> Occasionally, the prisoners had to work for private companies, including August Gähringer, between September 1943 and the end of January 1944, and the German General Electric Company (AEG). The largest prisoner detachment worked at Franz Münnemann; 40 prisoners are documented as working there daily between October 1943 and January 1944.<sup>12</sup>

Many prisoners were seconded over a period of weeks from Duisburg to detonation squads in the Ruhr, which were under the control of the Higher-SS and Police Leader West. In June 1942, 120 prisoners were brought to the SS-Baubrigade III subcamp in Düsseldorf on Kirchfeld Strasse. These prisoners operated as a detonation squad until at least August 1943.<sup>13</sup> Other prisoners were sent to Bochum and Essen to retrieve unexploded bombs.<sup>14</sup>

During the spring of 1943, the number of deaths in the Cologne camp decreased significantly. The death rate remained high in Duisburg, however. Camp commandant Franz Janitschke was responsible for the conditions in the Duisburg camp. According to the prisoners, he was autocratic. Janitschke was born on March 1, 1897, in Ober-glogau (Upper Silesia). By trade he was a carpenter and had joined the SS in 1935.<sup>15</sup> In 1939, he joined the SS-Death’s Head Storm Unit at the Buchenwald concentration camp, where he remained until September 1942, when he was transferred as a guard of the SS-Baubrigade III to Cologne.

The prisoners in Duisburg were guarded by 10 SS men. While they were working, they were guarded primarily by local police.<sup>16</sup>

There were at least 49 other deaths at the SS-Baubrigade III subcamp in Duisburg, in addition to the above-mentioned 30 victims of the bombing raid. Of these, 15 died while defusing bombs; 2 were killed while cleaning up; for 20 the cause of death was said to be “Lungs—TB” or “Cachexy” (excessive loss of weight); 4 are said to have been shot while “trying to escape”; and 1 is alleged to have “committed suicide” by hanging.<sup>17</sup>

At the end of March 1944, 400 prisoners were withdrawn from Duisburg to help form the newly created SS-Baubrigade V.<sup>18</sup> The subcamp was finally dissolved on May 9, 1944: the remaining 131 prisoners were taken to Cologne, where a day later they were taken with prisoners from Cologne to Wieda in the Harz Mountains.<sup>19</sup>

Following preliminary inquiries by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) regarding crimes committed against prisoners in the SS-Baubrigade III, the Cologne State Prosecutor began investigations in 1968. Janitschke was one of the three accused; based on survivors’ statements, he was suspected of taking two French prisoners to Cologne, where they were killed, and of shooting two Russian prisoners in the nape of the neck during a bombing raid. The State Prosecutor could not prove Janitschke’s involvement, and the proceedings ceased in 1975.<sup>20</sup>

**SOURCES** Details about the events in the Duisburg subcamp were first published in 1996 in a monograph on the Cologne SS-Baubrigade III: Karola Fings, *Messlager Köln. Ein KZ-Aussenlager im Zentrum der Stadt* (Cologne: Emons, 1996). See also Eric Hannoschöck et al., *Initiative wider das Vergessen: KZ Aussenlager Duisburg-Ratingsee. Das Lager und die Entstehung des Mahnmals* (Duisburg: Stadt Duisburg, 1986). Earlier publications by men and women of Duisburg only dealt with the period up to the destruction of the barracks camp in Duisburg-Meiderich: Rolf Ingerfurth and Andrée Wolff, “Ein Gefangenlager in Duisburg-Meiderich (Ratingsee) zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus” (MSS, Duisburg, 1981), in *AST-DU*, 41/302.

The *AST-DU* holds the files of the Building Office as well as a few documents on the use of the concentration camp prisoners (Collection 600, Nr. 794, 865, 866). The most important collections of documents are the THStA-W (Collections NS 4 Buchenwald as well as the Buchenwald Concentration Camp and Prisons, in particular Nrs. 9 and 10); the ZdL (IV 429 AR 1304/67), now BA-L; and NWHStA-(D) (Court Rep. 118/1174–1190 and 118/1338–1349). The Ruhr Museum, Essen, has six photographs taken by Willy van Heekern that show concentration camp prisoners removing rubble in Duisburg in 1943.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. SS-BB III, February 24, 1943, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald Nr. 9, p. 383.



2. Ibid.
3. Transport List from-to Duisburg, in NWHStA-D, Court Reports 118/1177.
4. SS Camp Doctor Schiedlausky, March 19, 1943, HStA-W, KZ Buchenwald and Haftanstalten (Prisons), Nr. 9, pp. 53–56.
5. Street Directory, Duisburg, 1939; Diakonen-Anstalt (Institute) Duisburg, June 12, 1951, HStA-K, Acc. 606/19, p. 446.
6. Hans P., February 6, 1959, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 516; and Werner B., October 1, 1969, in *ibid.*, IV 429 AR-Z 16/73, p. 123.
7. Engelbert O., June 29, 1971, AG-B, 62–86–1.
8. Buchenwald Camp Doctor, September 6, 1943, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 9, p. 290.
9. SS-BB III, August 19, 1943, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 213, p. 111.
10. See HStA-D, Court Rep. 118–1177; and Numbers' Reports, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 227, Nr. 136a, Nr. 210, Nr. 161.
11. Building Office, March 17, 1944, ASt-DU 600/794.
12. Building Office (Debit Ledger of the Office for Immediate Measures), *Ibid.*, 600/866.
13. See Prisoners' Numbers' Lists, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 227.
14. Building Office, Debit Ledger of the Office for Immediate Measures, ASt-DU 600/866, Entry Nr. 805735–805739.
15. BDC/RS, BA-B; and Franz Janitschke, January 31, 1973, BA-L, IV 429 AR 1304/67, pp. 150–154.
16. Waffen-SS Doctor Weimar-Buchenwald, May 31, 1944, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald Nr. 10, p. 242; as well as Mychailo S., January 28, 1972, BA-L, IV 406 AR 85–67, pp. 171–172.
17. See tables in Karola Fings, *Messelager Köln. Ein KZ-Aussenlager im Zentrum der Stadt* (Cologne: Emons, 1996), pp. 224–235.
18. SS-BB III, March 29, 1944, NWHStA-D, Court Rep. 118/1177.
19. Monthly itemization in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 230, pp. 77–78.
20. ZLNW-K, January 30, 1975, BA-L, IV 429 AR 1304/67, pp. 160–191.

## DUISBURG (SACHSENHAUSEN) (SS BB I)

On October 15, 1942, 400 of the 1,000 prisoners made available to the SS-Baubrigade I by the Sachsenhausen concentration camp were sent to Duisburg to perform cleanup work after bombing raids. The Duisburg camp itself was administered from the headquarters of SS-Baubrigade I in Düsseldorf, though it had its own command structure as well as its own SS and police guards.

Local Nazi Party (NSDAP) functionaries and police are reported as having taken part in discussions over a suitable location for this subcamp. According to one set of memoirs, an NSDAP member suggested Sterkrade, a city district of Oberhausen, as a site, since locating a camp there would also intimidate the surrounding population. The counterargu-

ment was that Communists living in Sterkrade might hide prisoners who managed to escape. For that reason, Duisburg was chosen instead.

A fenced-in camp with four housing and one “commercial” barracks was built for the prisoners in the Meiderich district of the city. According to the recollection of a nearby resident, the camp at the corner of Korn and Emmerich Strassen was erected “overnight,” and in the ensuing months, four or five barracks were added to it.

Prisoners were put to work following directives issued by the city administration’s “Office for Immediate Action,” headed by Duisburg’s Mayor Freytag.<sup>1</sup> Invoices between the city and the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) for food, lodging, and the labor performed were handled by the Düsseldorf construction brigade.<sup>2</sup>

The prisoners’ main task was to clear rubble from the city. The city administration was so pleased with their work that the mayor personally requested that the WVHA extend the prisoners’ time beyond the planned two months.<sup>3</sup>

Neighboring residents could look directly into the camp. Nevertheless, by the 1980s memories of the camp were vague. One eyewitness tried to explain it this way: “You could see into the camp from a few apartments, but most people in Meiderich did not know what kind of a camp it was. To begin with, most thought it was a labor camp, and no one had any idea that this was a subcamp of a concentration camp. National Socialist indoctrination meant hardly anyone gave a thought to what was going on inside the camp.”<sup>4</sup>

The reason for this limited view was the widespread belief that concentration camp prisoners were in any case “criminals” and opponents of the regime, whose imprisonment and tough handling were therefore justified. This is reflected in Walter Ring’s city chronicle of Duisburg, published soon after the war: “Passers-by on the street could see the work [of rubble removal] being done by the closely guarded prisoners in their zebra-striped clothing, but could not get closer to them. It was said that they were professional criminals and anti-socials (*Asoziale*).”<sup>5</sup>

The torments and arbitrary brutality typical of the SS could be seen in Duisburg as well: “On the Sundays when prisoners did not have to work, the SS ordered them into the courtyard. Prisoners had to collect small rocks in buckets, but when a bucket was full, it was dumped out and the whole process began again. Those who didn’t work quickly enough risked a beating.”<sup>6</sup> Inside the camp, the only protection against bombing raids was a trench dug out of the earth, with a makeshift cover over it. According to residents in the area, the SS even hindered prisoners from using these trenches. These neighbors themselves felt the camp endangered them, since during night bombing raids, the camp remained brightly lit in order to prevent escapes.<sup>7</sup>

The prisoners also were punished for acts committed by corrupt SS who enriched themselves on goods retrieved from the rubble. In cleaning up the rubble from a Duisburg *Gymnasium* (state-maintained secondary scheme), for example, bottles stored in the city’s wine cellar underneath it

disappeared—according to a former prisoner, they were stolen by SS men. However, a police officer investigating the loss accused three Russian prisoners of the theft, and they were sent back to Sachsenhausen and were said to have been hanged there.<sup>8</sup>

Three members of the SS-Baubrigade I, all German, are buried in Duisburg.<sup>9</sup> There are no exact numbers for others who died. The SS-Baubrigade I began withdrawing from Duisburg during February of 1943. One small group of prisoners was taken to Düsseldorf on February 19 and, together with prisoners already there, left three days later in freight cars heading to the British Channel Island of Alderney. Some 342 prisoners remained in Duisburg-Meiderich and were then integrated into the SS-Baubrigade III on February 21 in Cologne, thus coming under the control of the Buchenwald concentration camp.<sup>10</sup>

The first systematic investigations began in the 1970s, though the State Prosecutor in Ludwigsburg responsible for the investigations found insufficient evidence to justify a prosecution. Only the camp elder from Duisburg, Adolf Fehrenbacher, was sentenced to a multiyear jail term for the crimes he committed later in the war.

**SOURCES** In the early 1980s, a trade union youth group composed of Gymnasium pupils drew attention to the fact that a subcamp of a concentration camp had existed in Duisburg during World War II. That initiative led to a publication in 1986 of their research and survey results, though this long remained the only (and difficult to obtain) information about the SS-Baubrigade I camp: see Eric Hannoschöck, et al., *Initiative wider das Vergessen: KZ Aussenlager Duisburg-Ratingsee. Das Lager und die Entstehung des Mahnmals* (Duisburg: Stadt Duisburg, 1986); Annelie Kloth, “Wider das Vergessen: KZ Aussenlager Duisburg,” in *Tatort Duisburg 1933–45. Widerstand und Verfolgung im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Rudolf Tappe and Manfred Tietz (Essen: Klartext, 1993), 2:634–637. It would only be much later that a proper examination of the camp history, correcting some previously incorrectly interpreted data, would follow: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

The ASt-DU hold only a few sources (Bestand 600, Bauverwaltungsamt). As the Duisburg subcamp was only a subsidiary camp of the SS-Baubrigade I in Düsseldorf, it did not feature significantly in postwar investigations by the ZdL (IV 404 AR-Z 57/67 and 410 AR 63/77), now BA-L.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. See Verfügungen des Amtes für Sofortmassnahmen 1942–1945, ASt-DU, 600/794.

2. See Sollbuch des Amtes für Sofortmassnahmen 1943, in *ibid.*, 600/865.

3. SS-WVHA Ch. C 10/10Dr. Ka/Sei., November 25, 1942, in BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 16.

4. Statement by Mr. N., an eyewitness, in Eric Hannoschöck et al., *Initiative wider das Vergessen: KZ Aussenlager Duisburg-Ratingsee. Das Lager und die Entstehung des Mahnmals* (Duisburg: Stadt Duisburg, 1986), p. 14.

5. Heinrich Averdunk and Walter Ring, *Geschichte der Stadt Duisburg*, new ed. by Walter Ring (Ratingen: Aloys Henn Verlag, 1949), p. 343.

6. Statement by Mrs. W., an eyewitness, in Hannoschöck et al., *Initiative wider das Vergessen*, p. 9.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

8. Report by Reinhold M., April 24, 1966, in BA-L, 404 AR-Z 57/67, p. 133.

9. List of Concentration Camp victims buried in Duisburg, ASt-DU, 607/266.

10. SS-BB III, Übernahmemeldung vom 24.2.1943, in ThHStA-W KZ Buchenwald, Nr. 9, p. 383.

## DÜSSELDORF (BUCHENWALD) (SS-BB III)

On July 19, 1943, 120 prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade III were brought from the Duisburg subcamp to Düsseldorf in order to be deployed by order of the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) West to retrieve unexploded bombs.<sup>1</sup> The deployment of prisoners for demolition squads by the SS-Baubrigade III stationed in Cologne was due to an order by Heinrich Himmler. In the face of the high number of fatalities of firemen and members of the security and rescue services in defusing unexploded bombs, Himmler advised the offices responsible for the removal of unexploded bombs on November 3, 1942, to follow an order by Adolf Hitler dating back to October 1940. According to that order, the dangerous exposure and removal of unexploded bombs was “in all cases as far as possible” to be done by inmates from prisons or concentration camps. The senior commanders of the Order Police were responsible for the quarters, food, and further security of the prisoners.<sup>2</sup> A few days later, Amtsgruppe D instructed the commanders of the concentration camps to hold appropriate groups of prisoners ready. In those concentration camps that had organized construction brigades, prisoners were to be taken from these camps.<sup>3</sup> Another factor in the decision was that the Royal Air Force, in the early summer of 1943, had dropped an increasing number of bombs with delayed fuses in the Rhineland and Westphalia. The removal of these fuses was extremely dangerous.

The prisoners were accommodated in a school building at Kirchfeldstrasse 74–80 in that part of the city known as Friedrichstadt. A month earlier, 50 prisoners from the “Kalkum” detonation squad had been quartered there. On June 30, 1943, Wasil Bliznjuk (born in 1921) and Semjon Plushnikow (born in 1911) were killed while digging out unexploded bombs.<sup>4</sup> The remaining 118 prisoners remained at Kirchfeldstrasse until August 23, 1943.<sup>5</sup> Thereafter, the camp appears to have been dissolved—presumably the prisoners were returned to the Duisburg subcamp of the SS-Baubrigade III.

**SOURCES** There is no available research into this camp, which existed for only five weeks. The prisoners of this bomb search squad have not been given any attention because the buildings at Kirchfeldstrasse 74–80 were used for a long time

to accommodate the Buchenwald subcamps Kalkum and Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke (German Earth and Stone Works, DESt).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Statistics—Prisoner Deployment, June 1943, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 227, June 1943.
2. Reichsführer-SS, November 3, 1942, StA-N, NG-1002.
3. SS-WHVA, Amtsgruppe D, November 9, 1942, IfZ, MA 414, 6380, cited in ASt-Dü, Collection Kussman, Nr. 34.
4. SS-BB III, July 1, 1943, BA-L, IV 406 AR 85/67, p. 34.
5. Statistics—Prisoner Deployment, August 1943, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 227.

## DÜSSELDORF (SACHSENHAUSEN) (SS-BB I)

The SS-Baubrigade I was one of the first generation of construction brigades, sent by Heinrich Himmler into the destroyed cities of western and northwestern Germany. On October 13, 1942, 1,000 prisoners marched from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp to the Oranienburg railway station. Two days later, they arrived at Duisburg. There the detachment was divided: 400 prisoners remained in Duisburg, while 600 prisoners on October 20, 1942, proceeded to Düsseldorf.

The SS-Baubrigade I took up quarters in an undeveloped area at Stoffeler Kapellenweg, district Stoffeln, Düsseldorf. There the Düsseldorf Road Construction Authority had already commenced construction of barracks for the accommodation of prisoners. Next to where the hotel present-day Haus Kolvenbach is to be found was the barracks camp. Housing did not adjoin the site, but a public park used frequently for recreation was not far away, and next to the camp, there were the Stoffeln Cemetery and small garden plots.

The commander of the SS-Baubrigade I was Maximilian List.<sup>1</sup> He was born on February 9, 1902, in Munich, where he graduated in 1930 from the Higher Technical College as a building engineer. In February 1937, he began his career with the SS-Construction Office. From August 1941 he commanded the SS-Building Inspectorate (Bauinspektion) Ostland at the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Riga, until September 25, 1942 when he was recalled to take command of the SS-Baubrigade I. List is seldom mentioned in surviving prisoners' reports; instead, SS men from Amtsgruppe D under his command are emphasized. Admittedly though, a former prisoner holds List responsible for the terror at work that reigned in the construction brigade: "On instruction of Hauptsturmführer (Captain) List, they [the prisoners] were forced to the workplace by all means possible, including beatings. Those who could not walk were beaten, as were the comrades who suffered from diarrhea. When these frail prisoners were driven into the camp in the evening, the SS, with

Hauptsturmführer List at the head, had only a smile to spare for them."<sup>2</sup>

List administered the construction brigades' camps in Düsseldorf and Duisburg with a staff structured in a way similar to the concentration camps' headquarters. Deputy Commander and head of both camps was SS-Obersturmführer Kurt Klebeck, who was in charge of prisoner security, accommodations, and supplies. At both locations, additional camp leaders, work commanders, and commanders of the guards were instrumental in determining the atmosphere of the camps. In Düsseldorf there were SS-Unterscharführer Roland Puhr (the camp's deputy commander), SS-Hauptscharführer Otto Högelow (commander of the guard), and Kurt Wittwer (commander of the labor detachments). All three remained with the construction brigade when it was transferred in February 1943 to Alderney. All three, as well as Klebeck, were charged on numerous counts of unlawful killing after the war. Wittwer, by trade a bricklayer and builder of stoves and a member of the SS since 1932, was feared in his role as construction foreman: "Everyone trembled when he came. He was ruthless with the prisoners and did not even spare the sick."<sup>3</sup> After the war, Wittwer in turn described Puhr, who was the subject of investigations regarding a number of murder charges, as a totally brutal and scheming person.<sup>4</sup> Högelow was repeatedly described as a "political fanatic" who mistreated prisoners for slight reasons and who also participated in shootings.<sup>5</sup> The SS guards were reinforced by local police working in the field.

The prisoners, most of them Soviet and Polish nationals, had to march daily into the city, where they had to clear rubble from the city. More than 100 deaths are known. Notwithstanding the deaths, there must have been a constant supply of new prisoners because the brigade's strength, at the time of its withdrawal from the city, was stated as 600.<sup>6</sup> The use of the prisoners was under the direction of the city's Air Protection Office, Labor Assignment Department. It was responsible for the "recruitment of German and foreign laborers of every type" and for their distribution, accommodation, food, and payment.<sup>7</sup> The importance of the quota of prisoners for cleaning up the city is apparent, because the prisoners represent nearly one-fifth of the 3,300-strong labor force that was available for this work in January 1943.<sup>8</sup>

Germans living in the vicinity of the camp could see how the prisoners, under blows, shifted earth from one place to another and back again. The neighborhood could see how the SS men threw rocks at the prisoners and how prisoners were pushed from the roof of a barrack, and the residents could hear screams and shots at night. It was soon generally known that after work the prisoners were punished in the camp by the SS men. Repeatedly, residents in the neighborhood saw dead prisoners.

To see the debilitated prisoners became an everyday occurrence also for the rest of the population. However, as Emil Pascha reported, in a few cases it seems to have generated a shocklike reaction: "As the overcrowded train slowly went past you could not help but see the faces of those miserable



yellow-tainted people, their skulls shaved close, nothing but skin and bones. Their appearance was shattering—the passengers slowly turned their faces in silence and the women wiped their tears.”<sup>9</sup>

Even when there was an initial desire to help, people preferred to stay away from the camp fence and the prisoners. According to Heinz Zimmermann, who was then 14 years old: “The prisoners swayed more than they were walking. They were closely guarded by SS guards. Not one of us, including our mothers, dared to give food to the prisoners. We were too scared.”<sup>10</sup> Few bystanders registered the reality of conditions in the concentration camps. The limits of perception are reflected by Emil Barth in his diary entry on the camp: “I will never forget that human community is based on violence and suffering. But it is demoralizing to look eye to eye with the victims—victims who, not to mention the innocent, agonizingly force the question whether or not, even with the individual case of perfect guilt, guilt is acquitted with guilt.”<sup>11</sup>

Heavy labor, hunger, and violence were the main causes for the 111 deaths, registered in the first five months of the existence of the SS-Baubrigade I Düsseldorf. Embezzlement resulted in minimal food rations. According to Alfons Kupka, a former prisoner, “[T]he food was extraordinarily poor. . . . Roll Call Leader Puhr with the help of the cook expropriated food so that the physical constitution of the whole detachment was very poor; almost all had degenerated to ‘Muslims’ [*Muselmänner*].”<sup>12</sup> Sick and enfeebled prisoners received no medical care. Despite their condition, they had to go to work. In the evenings, the weakest were mistreated and were often forced during the winter of 1942–1943 to spend the nights outdoors. Two SS members, Puhr and Wittwer, were later accused of deliberately killing prisoners.

Dr. Albermann was the SS doctor for the SS-Baubrigade I in Düsseldorf. He completed the death certificates so that the deaths could not be construed as occurring due to violent crimes. Only in 6 cases are deaths by tuberculosis or septicemia recorded in the cremation records at the Düsseldorf-Stoffeln Cemetery. In all the other more than 100 cases, deaths were recorded as being due to “circulatory weakness,” “heart seizure,” or “heart attack.”<sup>13</sup> It did not escape Julian von Tempski, senior city inspector at the Stoffeln Cemetery in charge of the supervision of cremations, that the death certificates did not match reality. He stated as early as May 1946, “Among the dead were many who had been shot or hung. In most cases, death certificates were prepared stating that the relevant person had died from a weak heart or heart seizure and the like.”<sup>14</sup>

A rather large group of around 55 Jehovah’s Witnesses were assigned to SS-Baubrigade I. Some of them had been in the Sachsenhausen Punishment Detail because they had regularly gathered together in the “Bible Researchers” blocks.<sup>15</sup> They were able to make contact with fellow female believers in the city just a few days after their arrival in Düsseldorf. The women brought them food at the construction sites, and

by this means they were able to send letters to their relatives.<sup>16</sup> These connections were either not noticed by the SS and police guards or were silently tolerated. It was generally known that Jehovah’s Witnesses, because of their religious convictions, would not attempt to escape from concentration camps. One Jehovah’s Witness stated that in the camp they were singled out for torture by the Kapos. The Kapos soon fell out among themselves and one by one drove each other to their deaths.<sup>17</sup> Not one of the 111 dead of the SS-Baubrigade I in Düsseldorf was a Jehovah’s Witness, which can be partly explained by the strong sense of solidarity among the Jehovah’s Witnesses and their complete isolation from camp corruption.

The SS-Baubrigade I was withdrawn from Düsseldorf on February 22, 1943. None of those responsible for crimes committed in Düsseldorf were convicted after the war.

**SOURCES** For his book *Ein KZ-Aussenlager in Düsseldorf-Stoffeln* (Düsseldorf: Bezirksverwaltungsstelle 3, Stadtarchiv, 1988), on the SS-Baubrigade I in Düsseldorf, Andreas Kussmann interviewed former inhabitants of the camp neighborhood. While especially these sources gave a graphic picture of the reaction of the neighborhood, the organizational connections of the subcamp to the city bureaucracy are explored in Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

The most important of the dispersed sources are the investigations IV 404 AR-Z 57/67 and 410 AR 63/77 in the BA-L. The ASt-Dü, inventory IV, contains records of the Building Administration. A copy of a list of the dead of the SS-Baubrigade I survived in the Düsseldorf Cemetery Administration. It is printed in Kussmann, *KZ-Aussenlager*, pp. 202–211.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. BDC/RS and BDC/SSO, BA-B.
2. Cited by Andreas Kussmann, *Ein KZ-Aussenlager in Düsseldorf-Stoffeln* (Düsseldorf: Bezirksverwaltungsstelle 3, Stadtarchiv, 1988), p. 108.
3. Ibid., p. 40.
4. Ibid., p. 91.
5. Ibid., p. 20.
6. See “Darstellung der Arbeitskräfte für Sofortmassnahmen und Luftschutzbauten,” ASt-Dü, IV 877.
7. Mitteilung der Stadtverwaltung Düsseldorf 9 (1942), Nr. 12, p. 84, “Massnahmen der Stadt Düsseldorf zur Behebung von Notständen nach Fliegerangriffen,” ASt-Dü, IV 481.
8. See “Stand der Arbeitskräfte für Sofortmassnahmen und Luftschutzbauten,” ASt-Dü, IV 877 and VII 1486.
9. Cited by Kussmann, *KZ-Aussenlager*, p. 181.
10. Ibid., p. 190.
11. Emil Barth, *Lemuria. Aufzeichnungen und Meditationen* (Hamburg: Claassen & Goverts, 1947), pp. 90–91.
12. Report by Alfons Kupka, September 8, 1947, AG-S, IV/26.

13. See the list in Kussmann, *KZ-Aussenlager*, p. 202; BA-L, 410 AR 63/77, pp. 916–918.
14. BA-L, 410 AR 63/77, vol. 4.
15. See a report by a former prisoner dated April 17, 1950, BA-L, IV 404 AR-Z 57/67, p. 246.
16. Report by Helmut Knöller, AG-NG, Nr. 1317.
17. Ibid.

### **ELLRICH (BUCHENWALD, SACHSENHAUSEN, AND MITTELBAU) (SS-BB IV)**

The SS-Baubrigade IV was stationed from May 1944 to April 1945 in Ellrich, a small village in the Harz Mountains. As with the SS-Baubrigade III, which was also at the same time transferred from the West to Wieda in the Harz, the prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade IV were to be deployed, on the orders of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) (Amt C), to construct a new railroad track. This railroad line ran through the Helme Valley. It was about 22 kilometers (13.7 miles) long and was designed to relieve the railroad connection between Osterhagen and Nordhausen. The SS-Baubrigade IV was assigned to the eastern construction zone.

The SS-Baubrigade IV, which had been transferred from Wuppertal, began work with 529 prisoners at Ellrich on May 17, 1944; 300 additional prisoners, mostly French, were transferred on June 7 from Buchenwald to the construction brigade. There were 826 prisoners on October 28, 1944, following the camp's administrative assignment to the newly founded concentration camp at Mittelbau. The camp reached a peak with approximately 1,240 prisoners on January 15, 1945, once the Sachsenhausen concentration camp assumed administrative responsibility.<sup>1</sup> Both changes in affiliation to a main camp did not alter the location or the type of deployment of the SS-Baubrigade IV. Mittelbau used for it the pseudonym "Erich II," distinguishing it from the camp in the same town known as Ellrich-Juliushütte (Erich I).

The rooms of the Bürgergarten Inn, once a well-known restaurant, served as living quarters. However, only a small number of prisoners were quartered there. The administration and the kitchen were located at the Ellrich camp; the largest group of the prisoners lived in a subcamp in Günzerode and were led from there to the railroad line to work. For the time being, Otto Diembt, who had been in charge at Wuppertal, remained the head of SS-Baubrigade IV. Moreover, several known SS men were part of the guard detail as well as Luftwaffe soldiers, who were taken over by the SS in the summer of 1944.

The conditions of the SS-Baubrigade IV were particularly affected by the gradual change in control to the Buchenwald subcamp Dora. From about the middle of June 1944, this camp, the largest Buchenwald subcamp in the spring of 1944, step-by-step took over the functions of the main camp. The conditions in the camps, which were controlled by the newly founded Mittelbau concentration camp in October 1944, were

significantly worse than the conditions under which the SS-Baubrigade IV prisoners had to live in Wuppertal. It is noteworthy that the camp commander, Diembt, tried to check the increased likelihood of death on the prisoners that followed the Mittelbau incorporation. Former prisoners have testified that Diembt, as in Wuppertal, also behaved properly in Ellrich, arranged for the conditions in the camp to be bearable, obtained additional vegetables for the prisoners from nearby farmers, and admonished civilians who beat the prisoners while at work.<sup>2</sup>

The SS-Baubrigade IV had an especially close connection with the Ellrich-Juliushütte camp. The Ellrich-Juliushütte camp in close proximity cast a shadow also on the lives of the construction brigade prisoners. The prisoners had heard, in part from the local population and in part from Diembt, that the conditions were very brutal in this camp.<sup>3</sup> Emil W., who worked in the office of the construction brigade, had to enter Erich I more than once. In doing so, he saw many corpses, consisting of only skin and bones, in the filthy camp, which was on the grounds of a former factory. According to Emil W., the conditions were "difficult to describe in words" and "the most gruesome that I have ever seen in my life."<sup>4</sup> There was discussion in the construction brigade that prisoners in Ellrich-Juliushütte were shot for the smallest trifling. It was made clear to the prisoners by Diembt that he distanced himself from what was happening in Erich I. Emil W. stated that "his aversion to the nearby commandships and rejecting any communication with them was generally known."<sup>5</sup>

It also appears that Diembt prevented prisoners of his construction brigade from being transferred to Dora. The judgment delivered by the denazification court on Otto Diembt on April 2, 1948, states: "The situation in the camp in Ellrich became even more precarious, since there was a second subcamp where prisoners were miserably treated and where severe failures were noted. Moreover, [in] nearby Nordhausen there was the infamous camp Dora. The commandant of this camp tried to prompt his superior authority to deploy the accused's prisoners, on account of their visible healthier condition, in the underground ordnance factory at Nordhausen. The accused was able to frustrate the attempt."<sup>6</sup>

It is not possible to verify these statements concerning the death rate in Ellrich with verifiable data. Three prisoners died prior to Mittelbau officially assuming control in October 1944.<sup>7</sup> There are no reliable records after this date. Robert Rousseau, a former French prisoner, called Ellrich an "infamous camp" in which "countless French died."<sup>8</sup>

According to a statement made by Diembt in 1963, the dispute he had with the commandant of the Mittelbau concentration camp at the beginning of 1945 also centered on the question of a possible evacuation of the camp. He then stated that he did not want to evacuate the camp but to hand it over "after the collapse." This is said to be the reason for his removal on January 31, 1945.<sup>9</sup> Officially, his removal was based on "irregularities in caring for troops and prisoners."<sup>10</sup> Diembt was promoted the day before his dismissal to SS-Obersturmführer, posted to Mittelbau, and from there to

Neuengamme. In March 1945, he took command of a company known as Kampfgruppe (Battle Group) Dusenschön in Schleswig-Holstein.

Diembt's successor was SS-Untersturmführer Erich Scholz, who was born on May 18, 1911, in Tarnowitz, Upper Silesia. He studied architecture in Berlin and since August 1940 had been a member of the SS-Main Office of Finance and Construction. In September 1942, he was transferred from the WVHA to the Reich Ministry for Armaments and Munitions. There he was an adjutant to the Armaments Delivery Office of SS-Brigadeführer Staatsrat Walther Schieber. It was from here that he was transferred on February 1, 1945, to the SS-Baubrigade IV.<sup>11</sup> Former German prisoners explicitly described Scholz immediately after the war as well as later as very human. Of central significance for this predominantly positive assessment of the survivors was his behavior during the dissolution of the camp in April 1945.

Indeed, the evacuation of the camp of the SS-Baubrigade IV in the spring of 1945 was atypical. Former prisoners stated that Scholz discussed all questions regarding the evacuation in "a downright comradely manner" with them and tried to save their lives.<sup>12</sup> Scholz tried in the last days of the war to obtain the confidence of a few of the prisoners. However, his concern for the well-being of the prisoners neither included a group of about 200 Jewish prisoners, who in the last days of the war were transferred from the SS-Baubrigade III to Ellrich, nor those incapable of marching. He is said to have made these prisoners available for the infamous "Transport Brauny," which in the night of April 6–7, 1945, gathered together in the camps of Mittelbau the last prisoners incapable of marching. According to both Scholz and survivors, he was forced by the commander in charge of the city of Nordhausen to commence his decampment. In any event, Scholz delayed the evacuation as long as possible since the SS-Baubrigade IV was the last of the Mittelbau subcamps to leave its station.

After the remaining prisoners from Günzerode had marched to Ellrich, a group of roughly 1,000 prisoners and their guards set off on April 10, 1945. According to Scholz and survivors, no one was killed on the four-day march through the Harz. The SS-Baubrigade IV, its numbers decimated by escapes, reached Güntersberge on April 14, 1945. There, Scholz issued to all prisoners, who asked for it, a "Release from Protective Custody" form. He also formally discharged the SS guards. The SS-Baubrigade IV was thus dissolved. Most of the prisoners left. Scholz and a handful of SS men with a convoy of about 20 prisoners surrendered the next day to the Americans.

If one takes into consideration only the SS-Baubrigade IV prisoners forced to march, then the estimate by Joachim Neander that 50 of the 1,000 prisoners died in the Harz, immediately after the liberation, appears to be realistic. Compared with other marches in this region, the march of SS-Baubrigade IV had by far the lowest death rate. However, if one takes into account those approximately 300 Jewish or sick prisoners whom Scholz is said to have handed over to Transport Brauny and who then were massacred at Gardelegen, then every

fourth prisoner died.<sup>13</sup> There is no doubt that Scholz behaved comparatively correct with the remaining prisoners; whether that was out of conviction or consideration of his impending imprisonment may be left aside. Of note is that amid the chaos in the last days of the war, it was possible to hand to the Allies alive a large group of prisoners, even if this was knowingly done only in exceptional cases.

**SOURCES** See especially Manfred Bornemann, *Geheimprojekt Mittelbau. Vom zentralen Öllager des Deutschen Reiches zur größten Raketenfabrik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Bonn: Bernard & Graefe Verlag, 1994); Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spurensuche in der Südharzregion, ed., *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn. Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südharz in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie den Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945* (Duderstadt: Verlag Mecke Druck, 2000); and Joachim Neander, "Das Konzentrationslager 'Mittelbau' in der Endphase der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur. Zur Geschichte des letzten im 'Dritten Reich' gegründeten selbständigen Konzentrationslagers unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Auflösungsphase" (Ph.D. diss., Bremen University, 1996)—these have all rendered outstanding service to research the SS-Baubrigade IV in the Harz. Karola Fings's *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmels SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005) concentrates on the particular situation of the SS-Baubrigade within the context of the Mittelbau concentration camp. These works also contain references to the postwar report of Erich Scholz and reports of survivors, which, in part, are held by the AG-MD. Here are also kept copies of transport lists from Warsaw (Buchenwald Concentration Camp No. 36, Mittelbau Concentration Camp, No. 9). Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes. Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2000), has also made use of the records of the early Dora Trials at NARA. The BA-L (IV 406 AR-Z 69/72) holds the files of the inquiry into the SS-Baubrigade IV. Of importance are, moreover, the sources held by THStA-W (NS 4 Buchenwald, KZ Buchenwald and Prisons).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Work statistics May–July 1944, in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 230, pp. 81, 112, 136a, 149; transport lists, June 6, 1944 (incorrectly dated July), AG-B, 59–110, vol. 2.
2. Emil W., May 23, 1967, Albert M., December 19, 1967; Richard O., January 21, 1971, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z, pp. 96–100, 104–106, 179R; Theodor E., January 29, 1947, BA-K, Z42 V/608.
3. Richard O., October 11, 1967, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 69/72, pp. 101–103.
4. Emil W., May 23, 1967, *ibid.*, pp. 99–100.
5. Emil W., February 6, 1948, BA-K, Z 42 V/608.
6. Hiddesen De-Nazification Court, April 2, 1948, *ibid.*
7. August 18, September 17, October 3, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a.
8. See the text that accompanies his drawing of the Bürgergarten Inn, 1986, printed in "Der Bau der Helmetalbahn, der Zwangsarbeiten der III. und IV. SS-Baubrigade, die KZ-Aussenlager Mackenrode, Nüxei, Osterhagen und Wieda



sowie Ellrich und Günzerode,” in *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn. Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südharz in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie den Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945*, ed. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spurensuche in der Südharzregion (Duderstadt: Verlag Mecke Druck, 2000), p. 98.

9. Otto Dienst, August 29, 1963, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 69/72, p. 90.

10. Erich Scholz, May 8, 1972, in *ibid.*, pp. 301–303.

11. *Ibid.*; as well as BDC/RS, SSO, RKK, in BA-B.

12. Erich H., Erich K., Ernst Sp., Josef Sch., April 18, 1945, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 69/72, pp. 215–216.

13. See Joachim Neander, “Die Evakuierung der Lager der SS-Baubrigaden III und IV im April 1945,” in *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spurensuche, Bau der Helmetalbahn*, pp. 134–159.

### FERCH (SACHSENHAUSEN) (SS-BB II)

The SS-Baubrigade II, which was stationed in Berlin starting in April 1944, had a subcamp located in Ferch (County Potsdam-Mittelmark). It is mentioned in a list of the guards of the SS-Baubrigade II as of January 10, 1945. SS-Unterscharführer Erich Schmidt is listed as the only guard.<sup>1</sup> Apparently, Schmidt remained in Berlin even after the SS-Baubrigade II, including his detachment, was transferred to Nürnberg on February 25, 1945.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the SS-Baubrigade II prisoners were assigned to a camp of the SS-Construction Management, which is believed to have existed with 180 prisoners in Ferch in the summer of 1944.

**SOURCES** As investigations by the ZdL in 1973 (IV 406 AR 596/73), held at BA-L, were inconclusive, no additional information is available on this subcamp.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

### NOTES

1. SS-BB II, January 10, 1945, RGVA, Moscow, 1367/1/14, pp. 32–36.

2. *Ibid.*, March 30, 1945, p. 36

### GÜNZERODE (BUCHENWALD, SACHSENHAUSEN, AND MITTELBAU) (SS-BB IV)

From the summer of 1944 until April 1945, in the small village of Günzerode in the Harz Mountains, there existed a subcamp of the SS-Baubrigade IV stationed in Ellrich. While the administration and kitchen for the construction brigade were located in Ellrich, up to 800 prisoners were quartered in Günzerode to be deployed for the construction of a new railway line. This so-called Helme Valley Railway (Helmetalbahn) was a subsidiary line designed to relieve the traffic on the western line from Nordhausen to Osterhagen.

The camp was probably constructed in the middle of July 1944. René Morel, a survivor of the camp, stated in 1998:

Fifty-four years ago I was in Günzerode on the construction ground of the strategic railway line. . . . It was very heavy forced labor carried out with picks and shovels. I arrived in Günzerode on July 15 and stayed there for one hundred and twenty-four days. There were six hundred prisoners—about two hundred French, two hundred Russians, two hundred Poles, a few Czechs, and one Greek. We slept in three-level bunk beds on a sheep farm in the southern part of the village. It had been fixed up to be a small concentration camp. There were no barracks. We consisted of five work squads, each of one hundred or two hundred prisoners, and a detachment of twenty prisoners, who worked as electricians. . . . The Construction Brigade was constantly reinforced by further prisoner transports. A large number of prisoners died from diseases or mistreatment and the ranks had to be replenished.<sup>1</sup>

The conditions of the Günzerode subcamp were clearly worse than those in Ellrich. This, in part, is due to lack of medical care and also the inferior food supply. In addition, there was the heavy and debilitating work. Morel, who was 16 when he was arrested, made a statement about the work conditions: “We walked [to work] and as we did not pass through any villages we did not have to march. . . . We rose at 5.00 am; work began at 6.00 am. . . . In the autumn of 1944 it rained every day. The Helmetal flooded until November, and therefore our clothes were always wet. As the machines got dirtier and dirtier they also ceased to function properly. I cut open my shoes as my feet were always bleeding; I was still growing.”<sup>2</sup>

The Günzerode camp commander was an SS-Hauptscharführer. The remaining guards consisted of a few SS men and Luftwaffe soldiers. Unlike at Ellrich, where a German Communist as the camp elder had tried to improve conditions to the level of being somewhat bearable, survivors comment only negatively about the prisoner-functionaries in Günzerode. Morel describes a Communist from Mainz as brutal. Paul Dubois also reports on corrupt prisoner-functionaries in Günzerode, “It is obvious that these pillars of the Nazi regime, despite the fact that they had been arrested, acted like bandits and lived like princes, well fed, while we died from hunger and cold.”<sup>3</sup>

Little is known about deaths in the Günzerode camp. This is due to the lack of research and poor documentation. It is known that immediately after liberation survivors accused Ulrich Holz, born on March 22, 1922, in Altenfließ, of murdering the Polish prisoner Edward Sokolowski. A witness describes the crime as follows: “On February 15, 1945, the prisoner fled our Günzerode subcamp. He was discovered the next day in our barn at the Flaries mill near Günzerode. The prisoner, who knelt before SS-Oberscharführer Holz with raised hands, was shot in the head by him from above (Proof: the confirmed entry wound) at a distance of about three paces. Neither had the prisoner resisted his capture nor had he tried to escape. It is noticed, as a description of Holz, that he had already previously refused to sign a notice that prisoners were no longer to be beaten.”<sup>4</sup>

The camp in Günzerode was gradually dissolved between March 23 and April 10, 1945, by transferring prisoner groups to Ellrich. There, at noon on that last day, the SS-Baubrigade IV began the evacuation march.

Investigations into Holz commenced in the 1970s but were halted on October 26, 1973, by the Limburg State Court, on the basis that there was insufficient evidence for a conviction.<sup>5</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources can serve as bases for further research on the Günzerode camp: Firouz Vladi, “Der Bau der Helmetalbahn, der Zwangsarbeiten der III. und IV. SS-Baubrigade, die KZ-Aussenlager Mackenrode, Nüxei, Osterhagen und Wieda sowie Ellrich und Günzerode,” in *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn. Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südbarz in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie den Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945*, ed. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spurensuche in der Südhazregion (Duderstadt: Verlag Mecke Druck, 2000); and Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes. Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2001).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Cited in Firouz Vladi, “Der Bau der Helmetalbahn, der Zwangsarbeiten der III. und IV. SS-Baubrigade, die KZ-Aussenlager Mackenrode, Nüxei, Osterhagen und Wieda sowie Ellrich und Günzerode,” *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn. Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südbarz in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie den Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945*, ed. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spurensuche in der Südhazregion (Duderstadt: Verlag Mecke Druck, 2000), p. 94.

2. Ibid., p. 95.

3. Paul Dubois, May 4, 1945, in NARA, M-1079 Roll 2, p. 33, cited in Jens-Christian Wagner, *Produktion des Todes. Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2001), p. 442.

4. Erich H., Erich K., Ernst Sp., Josef Sch., April 18, 1945, BA-L, IV AR-Z 69/72, p. 215.

5. Landgericht Limburg, October 26, 1973, *ibid.*, p. 372.

## HAMBURG (NEUENGAMME) (SS-BB II)

Between July 25 and August 3, 1943, the Royal Air Force and the U.S. Air Force reduced the city of Hamburg to rubble during four nighttime and two daylight bombing raids. In barely a week, 34,000 people were killed, which was almost as many as had been killed to date by aerial warfare in the whole of Germany. Another 125,000 were injured, and more than half of all the homes in Hamburg were destroyed.<sup>1</sup> On August 7, following this series of attacks, which are known in the literature as “Operation Gomorrah,” the majority of the SS-Baubrigade II was transferred from Bremen to Hamburg for cleanup operations.<sup>2</sup> Hamburg remained the main center of operations of the SS-Baubrigade II until it was transferred to Berlin in April 1944. The Bremen camp was administered as a subcamp.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945



Under SS guard, prisoners from SS-Baubrigade II clear rubble in the Hammerbrook section of Hamburg after the Allied raids of the previous month, August 1943.

USHMM WS # 79115, StA-HH

Once in Hamburg, the construction brigade was reinforced so that, in August, 930 prisoners could be deployed. The prisoners came, in part from the Wilhelmshaven subcamp, directly from Neuengamme, or from a bomb explosives squad stationed at the Fuhlsbüttel prison.<sup>3</sup> The SS commander was at first Gerhard Weigel. He was replaced in March 1944 by Johann Karger [see Bremen (SS-BB II)]. The SS guards were reinforced with local police assistants.

The SS-Baubrigade II was stationed in the “Dead Zone,” which encompassed parts of the heavily destroyed city areas of Hammerbrook, Hamm-South, and Rothenburgsort, and which, in accordance with the instructions of Hamburger Gauleiter Karl Kaufmann, had been cordoned off.<sup>4</sup> The largest part of the construction brigade was temporarily accommodated in a bunker at Süderstrasse 301. For a few weeks the construction brigade used the enclosed swimming baths at the corner of Süderstrasse and Heidenkampsweg as additional accommodations. The prisoners were fed at the swimming baths and left from there for work. In the evening, they returned first of all to the baths where they were fed and roll call took place. The bunker in Süderstrasse was where the prisoners slept.<sup>5</sup>

At a later date, the whole construction brigade was quartered in former classrooms on the first floor of the elementary school at Brackdamm 14/16.<sup>6</sup> The move appears to have taken place during November 1943, as the pastor at the Stephan-Kempe-Church in the Dead Zone, Heinrich Dahmlos, made the following note on November 29, 1943: “The entire area around the Stephan-Kempe-Church is still sealed off until today. Not a soul lives in the area other than the political and criminal prisoners who are quartered in the school on Brackdamm and who store their supplies of vegetables in the public shelter underneath the church.”<sup>7</sup>

The first task of the SS-Baubrigade II was to seal off the areas declared as part of the Dead Zone. According to a report of the SS-Business Administration Main Office

(WVHA), the prisoners erected a 650-meter (711-yard) wall and 1,900 meters (2,078 yards) of barbed wire to block the streets.<sup>8</sup> The prisoners' work is recorded in three photographs, which were probably taken at the request of the Police Commissioner. Signs indicated that the restricted area could only be entered with written permission from the police.<sup>9</sup>

Unlike in other cities, the Hamburg building administration did not direct the use of the prisoners but was merely occupied with allocating accommodations for them.<sup>10</sup> This is due to the particular situation in Hamburg following the mass attacks. Police Commissioner Hans Kehrl had requested 450 concentration camp prisoners from Neuengamme during the first attack, in order to deploy them for the especially unpleasant work of retrieving corpses and the dangerous task of removing unexploded bombs. As the city administration failed to retrieve corpses, the Repair Service of the Air Raid Protection Police assumed this task. The prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade II were also part of the Chief of Police's "Auxiliary Force." They are said to have been deployed in accordance with instructions of the Air Raid Protection Police.<sup>11</sup>

Once the prisoners sealed the Dead Zone, they were initially occupied with the essential task of recovering corpses, which were present in their thousands in the burned-out area. In the summer heat, the prisoners recovered the already bloated corpses, pulled them from the canals, sorted the body parts, and laid them out to be taken away. This was horrible work. According to Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko, their "hair stood on end."<sup>12</sup> There is a series of photos that records this work. It shows the SS and Police guards supervising the work from a proper distance.<sup>13</sup> The recovery of bodies remained the main task of the construction brigade for a long time. According to reports of the WVHA, by the end of September 1943 the prisoners had buried a third of the bomb victims of Hamburg. In January 1944, the Repair Service was still looking for more than 5,000 bodies under the rubble. Some 57 recovery squads were deployed to recover the bodies. The prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade II formed 37 of these squads. One month later, 40 of the 45 squads consisted of concentration camp prisoners.<sup>14</sup> One detachment, initially consisting of 20 but later 80 prisoners, worked at the Ohlsdorf Cemetery and either dug mass graves or unloaded and transported the bodies that came from the city.<sup>15</sup>

In addition, recovery detachments were also used to secure building material and also supplies such as items of furniture and clothing and items of value. The resultant corruption and misappropriation came to the attention of the Berlin authorities.<sup>16</sup> In the course of time, according to one survivor, 48 railway carriages, filled with cars, radios, typewriters, clothes, alcohol, furs, and other objects, were moved illegally to Berlin from Hamburg by the SS-Baubrigade II.<sup>17</sup> This cannot have been the only case of private racketeering, but it is an example of robbery on a grand scale, protected at the highest level. A note in a report, which was sent by Hans Kammler (Head of Amt C of the WVHA) to Heinrich Himmler in April 1944, supports this conclusion. There it is stated: "Some of the valuable items recovered from the destroyed

houses and factories have been made available in the Neuengamme concentration camp to the Central Building Administration and Amt W I."<sup>18</sup>

The deployment of the construction brigade in Hamburg meant for the Neuengamme concentration camp prisoners a partial breakdown of their isolation. A report of the Neuengamme camp association states: "Many of the Neuengamme prisoners' connections with the Hamburg population originate also from the period 1943/44. During this time different resistance groups kept contact with the anti-Fascist groups within the camp. The prisoners of war and the forced laborers, above all, made contacts. Leaflets arrived at the camp, assistance was organized, news was exchanged—without which organized resistance would not have been possible."<sup>19</sup> It was possible for individual prisoners from the construction brigade to escape. Thus, in April 1944, the camp elder, Karl W., thanks to the help of a guard and a resistance group consisting of workers from Blohm & Voss, was able to flee.<sup>20</sup>

There are limited details on the number of deaths in the camp of the SS-Baubrigade II in Hamburg. In the death lists of the Neuengamme infirmary, there are 4 entries for the period from August 1943 to April 1944, which referred to the SS-Baubrigade II in Hamburg. According to this list, 23-year-old Pole Rydzard Nowak was executed there on October 1, 1943. Another Pole, Franciszek Kubiak, died from a fractured skull in November. In addition, a German and Belgian prisoner died, respectively, in December 1943 and March 1944.<sup>21</sup> When compared with other camps, 4 deaths in a detachment that at least in August 1943 consisted of around 930 and for the first quarter of 1944 had an average of 772 prisoners is a small number. It is true that the "death books" are in general not a reliable source, but the numbers are supported by statements of former prisoners. The Kapos were for the most part political prisoners who "properly did their duty."<sup>22</sup> The ability to obtain supplies from the rubble was also of considerable significance for the prisoners.

After the war, several prisoners accused SS members of the construction brigade of throwing gas bombs into the shelters with the aim of killing and robbing the occupants. Due to these accusations, preliminary proceedings were commenced in 1948 against Johann Karger in Hamburg. The results are not known as the files were destroyed by the Hamburg State Prosecutor before the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) became interested in the SS-Baubrigade II.<sup>23</sup> Gerhard Weigel was also never the subject of any legal proceedings. In Hamburg, there is nothing that commemorates the prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade II.

**SOURCES** Despite the comparatively good primary sources, it was only relatively late that the Hamburg SS-Baubrigade II became the subject of research; see Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005). Previously, a few photographs and documents as part of an exhibition had been shown in Neuengamme and printed in Ulrich Bauche et al., eds., *Arbeit und Vernichtung. Das Konzentrationslager Neuengamme 1938–1945*.



*Katalog zur ständigen Ausstellung im Dokumenthaus der KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme* (Hamburg: Aussenstelle des Museums für Hamburgische Geschichte, 1990), pp. 219–224.

It is true that there is no complete collection of sources, but contemporary documents are infrequently to be found in the StA-HH, above all in the collections Baudeputation (321-2), Baubehörde I (321-3-1), Architect Gutschow (322-3), Polizeibehörde (331-1), and Senatskanzlei (131-2, 131-3). The WVHA Reports on the construction brigade are held by the BA-B (NS 19/14). Of particular significance are the judicial files of the BA-L (IV 406 AR 245/69) and the reports of former prisoners in the archives of the AG-NG and the FGNS-H (Hans Schwarz Archive).

On the impact of the bombings of Hamburg, see Ursula Büttner, “Hamburg im Luftkrieg. Die politischen und wirtschaftlichen Folgen des ‘Unternehmens Gomorrah,’” in *Städte im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Ein internationaler Vergleich*, ed. Marlene P. Hiller, Eberhard Jäckel, and Jürgen Rohwer (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 1991), pp. 272–298.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Geheimbericht des hamburgischen Polizeipräsidenten über die schweren Luftangriffe auf Hamburg im Juli/August 1943, StA-HH, 731-6/I.

2. SS-WVHA, November 9, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/14, pp. 26–27.

3. Wenzel W., May 20, 1957, BA-L, IV 406 AR 594/73, pp. 242–244; Günther R., March 20, 1975, *ibid.*, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, pp. 820–822; Mieczysław M., January 19, 1970, *ibid.*, IV 429 AR 1938/66, p. 148.

4. Senatskanzlei, Protokoll, August 11 and 12, 1943, StA-HH, 131-2/B 3; Architect Gutschow, minutes of a meeting held on August 9 and 11, 1943, *ibid.*, 322-3/B 8.

5. Cemetery Administration, August 24, 1943, and September 24, 1943, StA-HH, Cemetery Administration 58; Mieczysław M., January 19, 1970, *ibid.*, IV 429 AR 1938/66, p. 148; Georg M., March 30, 1962, FGNS-H, 13-7-0-2; Baudeputation, Monatsbericht October 1943, StA-HH, B321-2/B121; Günther R., March 20, 1974, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, pp. 820–822; Antoni Papiernik, September 8–9, 1991, AG-NG, Interview Nr. 1573; Ernst B., February 28, 1946, BA-K, Y 5/V 279/70.

6. See Karl W., September 5, 1966, FGNS-H, 13-7-0-3; Mieczysław M., January 19, 1970, BA-L, IV 429 AR 1938/66, p. 148; Ernst F., April 18, 1950, in BA, BY 5/V 279/74.

7. Cited by Renate Hauschild-Thiessen, *Die Hamburger Katastrophe vom Sommer 1943 in Augenzeugenberichten* (Hamburg: Verlag Verein für Hamburgische Geschichte, 1993), p. 97.

8. SS-WHVA, report November 9, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/14, pp. 27–28.

9. P 52.858, P 52.859, P. 52860, StA-HH, 731-6, I/18 A 1 27.

10. Building Authority, monthly report October 1943, StA-HH, B 321-2/B 121.

11. Polizeipräsident, October 15, 1943, StA-HH, 331-1 I Polizeibehörde I/1144.

12. Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko, May 19, 1992, AG-NG, Interview Nr. 1576.

13. Photographs in StA-HH, 731-6, I/3a, Part 2, Annexure 9, P. 19, Pictures 3 and 4.

14. Polizeibehörde, January 3 and March 1, 1944, StA-HH, 331-I, Polizeibehörde I/650.

15. Baudeputation, September 24, 1943, *ibid.*, B321-2/B-122.

16. For more details, see Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

17. Karl W., September 5, 1966, FGNS-H, 13-7-0-3.

18. SS-WHVA, 29.4.1944, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 41.

19. Report in FGNS-H, Estate of Hans Schwarz, 13-7-5-5.

20. Subcamp death reports, March 31, 1943, to March 17, 1944, FGNS-H, Estate of Hans Schwarz.

21. See BA-L, IV 406 AR 245/69, p. 233. The proceedings in Hamburg had the reference 14 Js 262/48.

22. Georg M., March 30, 1962, FGNS-H, 13-7-0-2.

23. See BA-L, IV 406 AR 245/69, p.223. The proceedings were conducted in Hamburg with the reference 14 Js 262/48.

## HESDIN (BUCHENWALD) (SS-BB V)

A subcamp of the SS-Baubrigade V stationed in Doullens existed in Hesdin, a small village in the northwest French region Pas-de-Calais, from March 1944 until probably August 1944. The camp housed between 500 and 600 prisoners who were to build a base for the V weapons (*Vergeltungswaffe*). They were accommodated in a Napoleonic cavalry barracks, La Frézelière, which was surrounded by a high wall and barbed wire. From here, work detachments were sent to an Organisation Todt (OT) camp in Bergueneuse and a camp in the vicinity of Mimoyecques.

A few details of the camp history are known, thanks to the memoirs of Tomasz Kuryłow.<sup>1</sup> Kuryłow, as a 17-year-old, was forcibly removed from White Russia for forced labor and, following an act of sabotage in a factory, was first transferred to a work education camp (*Arbeitserziehungslager*). From there he was then transported to Buchenwald. He was part of the second transport of the SS-Baubrigade V, which in March 1944 was sent to France via Cologne. As with many other prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade V, he hoped to be able to escape there. He wrote the following about the departure from Cologne: “The screaming SS men drove us into the goods wagons. As usual there was very little space. Nevertheless, we were in good humour—we were travelling to France, the land of our dreams.”<sup>2</sup>

In fact, the situation for the prisoners in France was significantly better than in Germany, because the population there openly showed their sympathy to the prisoners. On their arrival in Hesdin, during the march to the barracks, the population’s support was obvious. Upon seeing them, someone yelled: “They are indeed thin, these unfortunates.” French men and women questioned the prisoners and, once they had heard that they were political prisoners, brought them food. Kuryłow wrote, “After work we returned along

Rue Farée. It seemed that in this street every inhabitant was our friend. Food packages were secretly thrown from windows and doors.”<sup>3</sup>

The prisoners worked mostly in the surrounding forests, where they built bunkers and shelters. A smaller detachment was busy in a mechanical workshop in Hesdin, working with lathes and repairing vehicles. Kiryłłow described the work done in the forest as follows: “The sweat ran down my face. Above me stood an SS man. I loaded the barrow as quickly as I could, but the SS man was not satisfied. He asked me. ‘Can’t you work?’ Obviously he did not like me. . . . Before the departure from Buchenwald I weighed forty-eight kilos [106 pounds]. The barrow laden with soil weighed definitely more than that. It was only my will that kept me on my feet.”<sup>4</sup> Kiryłłow was spared, but a little later the same SS man shot his friend Piotr Majzenko.

In addition to the daily struggle for survival, the prisoners were mainly occupied with how to make contact with the French resistance and organize an escape. After a few prisoners had already escaped, the controls in the camp were tightened. The SS examined the prisoners for smuggled civilian clothes or searched for secret messages written in French. Once, when a note was found on a prisoner during a search on which was written in French a plea for food, the SS men beat the man to death. The camp elder, Heinz Schäfer, a Communist prisoner, was punished by the camp commander, by being sent to a bomb search detachment. According to the Buchenwald concentration camp “Death Book,” Schäfer died on May 28, 1944, in Hesdin when a dud detonated.<sup>5</sup>

By this time, Kiryłłow had already escaped. He had managed to make contact with the commander of the resistance group Francs-Tireurs et Partisans Français in Blangy-sur-Ternoise, Marcel Huleux. In the following weeks the group tried to help more prisoners escape from the camp. After the withdrawal of the SS-Baubrigade V from northwest France, Kiryłłow remained with the partisans in the country around Hesdin.

Sometime in August 1944, the subcamp was dissolved, and the prisoners, probably via Doullens, arrived back in Germany. They were distributed among various Buchenwald camps in the Harz Mountains. In October 1944, they were taken over by the newly built Mittelbau concentration camp.

**SOURCES** A small camp museum was established in Hesdin. There, among other things, are kept lists of the names of prisoners. Besides the memoirs of Tomasz Kiryłłow, “*Und ihr werdet doch verlieren.*” *Erinnerungen eines polnischen Antifaschisten* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1985), the sources on the Doullens subcamp (BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73; THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald) offer starting points for further research.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Tomasz Kiryłłow, “*Und ihr werdet doch verlieren.*” *Erinnerungen eines polnischen Antifaschisten* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1985), pp. 124–201.

2. Ibid., p. 127.

3. Ibid., p. 146.

4. Ibid., p. 134.

5. THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald and Prisons, Nr. 5, vol. 14.

## HOHLSTEDT (MITTELBAU) (SS-BB I)

The camp in Hohlstedt, a subcamp of the SS-Baubrigade I stationed in Sollstedt, was constructed in October 1944. About 200 prisoners were held at first in forest bunkers until they had constructed the barracks. Among the prisoners was a large group of former members of the Wehrmacht. The prisoners worked mostly for the German railways at the Sangershausen railway junction, but from time to time, they were engaged in other tasks. The guards were not only from the SS; some were armed members of the German railways.

The survivors of Hohlstedt recall particularly bad food, mistreatment at work, nightlong roll calls in the rain, the cold, and executions, above all of Polish and Soviet prisoners.

Around April 6, 1945, the prisoners at the Sollstedt camp were sent to Hohlstedt. The evacuation of the SS-Baubrigade I to the Mauthausen subcamp Steyr-Münichholz began a day later.

**SOURCES** Only a few statements recorded in investigation proceedings, which are kept in the BA-L (IV AR-Z 57/67 and 410 AR 63/77), provide information about this camp. Jens-Christian Wagner has collected other widely distributed bits of information on this camp in his monograph on the Mittelbau concentration camp: *Produktion des Todes. Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2001).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## KÖLN (BUCHENWALD) (SS-BB III)

The SS-Baubrigade III in Cologne was established on September 21, 1942; it was one of the first concentration camp subcamps and was formed to clean up destroyed cities. It was stationed in Cologne prior to the SS-Baubrigade I and II and remained there until May 1944. It formed a number of subcamps in Rhineland and Westfalia.

The establishment of the subcamp in Cologne was the result of steps taken by Gauleiter Josef Grohé as well as later provisional lord mayor Robert Brandes. Following the Royal Air Force major offensive on May 30–31, 1942, both sought support in Berlin for the heavily destroyed Rhine metropolis. Grohé personally repeatedly contacted Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler and in the autumn of 1942 accompanied him, when he was on an inspection of bombed cities and stayed in Cologne.

On September 21, 1942, an advance detachment of 300 Buchenwald prisoners arrived in Cologne. They were accompanied by the camp commandant, Hermann Pister, and Karl Völkner, who was to be the commander of the construction brigade.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners were accommodated in the center of



SS-Baubrigade III removes corpses in Cologne in this annotated photo by Josef Fischer, July 1943. The annotation reads, "Inmates of a concentration camp carry corpses on a ladder to the truck, early July 1943." NS-Dok

the city, in the trade fair area of Cologne Deutz at the Rhine, opposite the cathedral. The prisoners began with the construction of their quarters in the northeast corner on the first floor of the Congress Hall (Kongresshalle), the present-day Rhine-Hall (Rheinsaal). On the ground floor were the canteen and a changing room. The premises immediately in front of the hall was fenced off and used as a roll-call parade ground. The only entrance to the camp was in the vicinity of the trade fair tower. At the entrance was a guardhouse. The SS guards patrolled outside the fence with dogs. The SS guards and camp administration were quartered in the trade fair tower and the neighboring buildings.

By the beginning of November 1942, the number of prisoners had been increased to 1,000. By March 1943, due to deaths, the transport of sick prisoners to Buchenwald, and the transfer of prisoners to other camps, the number of prisoners had dropped to 531. In the summer of 1943, Cologne was the subject of renewed large Allied air attacks. Thereafter, Himmler, following an agreement with Albert Speer, ordered that the construction brigades in the Rhineland be doubled in size.<sup>2</sup> By July 1943, the SS-Baubrigade III had more than 1,000 prisoners at its disposal. Between September 1942 and May 1944, all in all around 6,000 prisoners went through the camps of the SS-Baubrigade III.<sup>3</sup>

The commander of the Construction Brigade III Köln was Karl Wilhelm Völkner, who was born on February 26, 1898, in

Quedlinburg, in the Harz Mountains, had worked as a master plumber, and joined the Nazi Party (NSDAP) and the SS in 1932.<sup>4</sup> Völkner, who had been decorated as an aviator several times during World War I, was called up to the Luftwaffe in August 1939. He was dismissed from service and joined an SS-Death's Head Unit and transferred in January 1940 to an SS-Guard Bataillon at the Buchenwald concentration camp. He was promoted on January 30, 1943, to SS-Obersturmführer, receiving the status equal to a commander of a construction brigade. Former prisoner Toni Fleischhauer described Völkner as follows: "He was not inclined to personally commit acts of violence. On the contrary, he was usually happy to warmly greet each prisoner. When he was drunk, he showed sentimentally accentuated comradeship. . . . To me his strongest characteristic was his pronounced desire to have possessions. He understood his function as incorporating the possibility to enrich himself. So he tried to please his superiors. That meant that he supplied, according to demand, presents or dead people."<sup>5</sup>

On average, 30 SS men were assigned to guard the approximately 1,000 prisoners. The largest part of the guards consisted of local police. In November 1943, 910 prisoners worked on each Sunday in Cologne guarded by 3 SS guards and 90 policemen.<sup>6</sup>

Daily, the prisoners were tortured by the SS men, especially during the first three months. Alexander Malofejew wrote: "They beat the prisoners and they succeeded to suppress their human dignity to such an extent that they paid no regard to age or nationality (I am thinking here of the German prisoners). You were beaten because you did not pay sufficient attention to the SS or simply because wounds in your face should not heal, because you walked too slowly in the camp, because you spoke German, because you did not speak German, because you worked too slowly, etc."<sup>7</sup>

It was only with an increased deployment of older policemen and auxiliary police forces that, according to former prisoners' reports, the terror receded. The worsening military situation changed the guards' mentality; as Askold Kurrow notes, "They [the policemen] became human only after Stalingrad and when Köln lay in ashes."<sup>8</sup>

Also, the internal power structure was of considerable significance for the prisoners' conditions of survival. During the first five months, there was a power struggle between a corrupt clique of prisoner-functionaries and political prisoners. Alfred Müller, the camp elder from Buchenwald sent to Construction Brigade III Köln, called by the prisoners "Bloody Müller," was found hung in December 1942. It was not possible to clarify whether this was a targeted resistance act, suicide, or murder by another "criminal" Kapo. In February 1943, camp leader Völkner, under pressure from political prisoners, transferred the rest of the disliked Kapos to Neuen-gamme, which resulted in a marked drop of the death rate. Most of the deaths in the Construction Brigade III Köln camp from this time were the result of delayed explosions of bombs, bomb attacks, or work accidents.<sup>9</sup>

The city office of the Head of Emergency Measures (Leiter der Sofortmassnahmen) located in the Building Administra-



tion Office, and which had an office on the premises of the Cologne Trade Fair, was responsible for the allocation of work detachments throughout the city. The prisoners removed rubble from houses and streets; they also recovered and loaded valuables such as wood, tiles, or metal at just about every destroyed site in the city area. The prisoners rescued people trapped in the rubble after air raids, recovered corpses, and were deployed to dig graves in cemeteries. During the months of July, August, and September 1943, the Baubrigade III alone recovered 4,500 corpses and “placed them in coffins during day long operations.”<sup>10</sup> Prisoner crews were often drawn on to assist where there were shortages: in building air-raid shelters, working on public utilities, constructing auxiliary homes, or working in “vital” war industries.

Prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade III Köln were, under the supervision of craftsmen, dispatched along with inmates from other subcamps to almost all cities in the 6th Defense District to work in the dangerous “bomb disposal squads.” For example, the detachments worked from March to September 1943 in Elberfeld-Barmen, Essen, Bochum, Dortmund, Aachen, Jülich, Mönchengladbach, Krefeld, Wesel, Gelsenkirchen, Bottrop, Mülheim an der Ruhr, Hagen, Witten, and Schwelm. Between July 1943 and March 1944, the demolition squads of the SS-Baubrigade III eliminated, according to SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) reports, around 8,000 bombs.<sup>11</sup> Most of the time, after their mission, the prisoners returned to the camp of the construction brigade. Over a longer period, bomb disposal squads were established in Bochum, Dortmund, and Düsseldorf.

The level of illness among the prisoners was permanently high. This was due to the inadequate diet and the physically and mentally demanding work. For medical care, there was only an inadequately equipped infirmary with 12 beds for the prisoners. At the same time, the prisoners had already arrived half-starved and ill from Buchenwald. Alojzy Wasilewski provides an example—he was 180 centimeters (71 inches) tall but weighed only 56 kilograms (123 pounds).<sup>12</sup> By transporting off selected prisoners, the SS-Baubrigade III was able to maintain productivity. The selections were done by SS-Oberscharführer Gustav Schmidt from Buchenwald and a contract doctor, SS-Untersturmführer Erich Möllenhoff, from Cologne. Between September 1942 and February 1944, more than 400 prisoners declared unfit to work were transferred to Buchenwald and replaced with other prisoners.<sup>13</sup> In addition, there were transfers to Buchenwald as disciplinary measures, for example, when prisoners attempted to make contact with the civilian population. From the prisoners’ point of view, the subcamp was distinguished from the main camp in that the terrain of rubble offered better escape opportunities to the work detachments. It also appears that support especially from forced laborers and opponents of the regime, albeit only a few, was relatively high in the Cologne area.

From April 1943 the Cologne State Police used the camp of the SS-Baubrigade III to hold so-called work education prisoners (*Arbeitserziehungsbüflinge*). Some of the prisoners had been arrested on political grounds and were held there by

the Gestapo until a “Protective Custody Order” was issued. The largest group of *Arbeitserziehungslager* (AEL) prisoners were Poles or Soviets who spent a few weeks with the construction brigade and were then again released to their jobs. Several hundred Gestapo prisoners, marked with a white stripe on the exterior of their clothing, were incarcerated with the construction brigade. On May 8, 1944, a few days before the SS-Baubrigade III was transferred to the Harz Mountains, there were still 287 concentration camp prisoners and 576 Gestapo prisoners in the camp.<sup>14</sup>

In May 1944, the withdrawal of the construction brigade from Cologne began, despite the protests of the Gau Administration and the City Administration. The majority of the prisoners were assigned to the SS-Baubrigade V. On May 10, 287 prisoners from Construction Brigade III Köln and 131 prisoners from the Duisburg subcamp were transported to Wieda in the Harz.<sup>15</sup> Other subcamps of the Buchenwald concentration camp remained: the bomb disposal squad at Kalkum, the detachment Napola at Bensberg, the German Earth and Stone Works (DESt) factory at Essen and Düsseldorf, as well as camp “Berta” at Rheinmetall-Borsig.<sup>16</sup>

None of those responsible for the Construction Brigade III Köln camp were ever put before a German court for crimes committed there. In the 1960s, a few of them were living undetected in Cologne and obviously without any fear of the judiciary: such as Karl Völkner, Erich Möllenhoff, or Josef Grohé. Following prior investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL), the Cologne State Prosecutor began a systematic investigation in 1968. In 1975, however, the investigation ceased.

The existence of the subcamp first came to the attention of the people of Cologne in the 1980s because of the committed efforts of a number of individuals. Since 1993, a memorial stone, erected on the banks of the Rhine at Deutz, commemorates the SS-Baubrigade III. Since 1990, the city of Cologne, in recognition of the responsibility it had for the deployment of concentration camp prisoners, has conducted a program enabling survivors of forced labor to visit the city.<sup>17</sup>

**SOURCES** Karola Fings’s *Messelager Köln. Ein KZ-Aussenlager im Zentrum der Stadt* (Cologne: Emons, 1996) provides a monograph about Construction Brigade III Köln. In comparison with other SS-Baubrigaden, there is sufficient documentation on Construction Brigade III Köln. In addition to contemporaneous sources in the THStA-W (NS 4 Buchenwald and Prisons) as well as the investigation files of the BA-L (IV 406 AR 85/67, IV 429 AR 1304/67) and NWHStA-(D) (Ger. Rep. 118/1174-1190, 1138-1349), the most important sources are around 30 interviews with survivors of the camp, which are kept in the NS-Dok.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Heinrich Himmler, September 18, 1942, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 136; report on numbers, September 21, 1942, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 146; statutory declaration

by Völkner, December 12, 1961, BA-L, IV 429 AR 1304/67, p. 43.

2. Oswald Pohl, July 8, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 19; Himmler telephone diary note, July 9, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/1440, p. 29.

3. See the tables in Karola Fings, *Messelager Köln. Ein KZ-Aussenlager im Zentrum der Stadt* (Cologne: Emons, 1996), pp. 218–233.

4. BDC/SSO, RS, in BA-B; and denazification court proceedings against Völkner, BA-K, Z 42 V/3772.

5. Report Toni Fleischhauer, n.d. (November 1962), BA-L, IV 429 AR 1304/67, pp. 26–27.

6. SS-Baubrigade III, December 4, 1943, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 229, p. 115.

7. Alexander Malofejew, July 9, 1987, NS-Dok, Biographical Collection Forced Labor.

8. Askold Kurow, n.d. (ca. 1982), *ibid.*

9. See tables in Fings, *Messelager*; pp. 231–235.

10. WVHA, November 9, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 28.

11. WVHA, November 9, 1943, February 16, 1944, April 29, 1944, *ibid.*, pp. 29, 35–36, 42.

12. Alojzy Wasileski, Letters and Documents, NS-Dok, Z 10.554.

13. Fings, *Messelager*, p. 125.

14. KL Buchenwald (Work Statistics), May 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 230, p. 80.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 77–78.

16. KL Buchenwald, Prisoner Office, June 23, 1944, in NWHStA-(D), Court Reports 118/1176.

17. Karola Fings, *Begegnungen am Tatort. Besuchsprogramme für ehemalige Zwangarbeiter/innen, Kriegsgefangene und KZ-Häftlinge. Ein Leitfaden* (Düsseldorf: Hans-Böckler-Stiftung, 1993).

## KORTEMARK AND PROVEN, BELGIUM

### (NEUENGAMME, BUCHENWALD)

#### (SS-BB I)

The SS-Baubrigade I was stationed in Kortemark and Proven, Belgium, for barely five weeks, from July 28 until September 2, 1944. When it became necessary to withdraw the SS-Baubrigade I from Alderney, due to the Allied landing in Normandy, the prisoners were to construct launching pads for V-1 rockets in Belgium. The responsible Wehrmacht Field Construction unit organized the necessary accommodations in the planned operational area in Flanders, north of Poperinge between Diksmuide and Kortemark.<sup>1</sup>

Of the original 1,000 prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade I, only 570 made it to Belgium. Two camps were constructed to hold the prisoners: the main camp at Kortemark held about 350 prisoners in a school in the suburb of Markhove, and a group of around 220 prisoners were sent to Proven near Ypres. Due to this change, the construction brigade was now under the command of the Buchenwald concentration camp; on August 5, 1944, there followed the administratively required re-writing of the prisoner numbers.<sup>2</sup> The assumption of responsibility by Buchenwald made sense so far as the work of

the SS-Baubrigade I corresponded to that of SS-Baubrigade V. Its SS commander, Gerhard Weigel, instructed the SS-Baubrigade I in the works in Belgium.

With the stationing in Belgium the SS were confronted with a totally new situation. For the first time they and the SS-Baubrigade I were operating in hostile territory. The hostile attitude of the French population, attacks by partisans, and the fact that none of the prisoners who escaped were recaptured showed that maintaining control over the camp was much more difficult. In Belgium, the SS were confronted not only with a population openly helping the prisoners but also with armed attempts to help prisoners escape.

When the train reached Belgium, the prisoners found full sympathy on the part of the population. Willi Kreuzberg stated: “Everyone waved and greeted them! The Belgians quickly grasped who we were. Cigarettes were thrown to us. The SS became anxious and pushed those back who could be seen from the windows. We were not intimidated. We felt, that whoever managed to escape here would be accepted and hidden.”<sup>3</sup> The contrast to the situation in Germany was almost unbelievable for the prisoners. Helmut Koeller remembered: “We prisoners in Flanders had perhaps a life; it was the best of all times in the concentration camp! The Belgian people brought us prisoners everything; tobacco in abundance (many of us had hoarded whole pillows of it!), bread and fruit, sweets, sugar, milk, etc. In addition, the Belgian Red Cross brought us three times a week sweets, fruit and tobacco!”<sup>4</sup>

Since the supply lines broke down due to acts of sabotage, the workload of the prisoners was to a certain extent bearable. Targeted acts of sabotage, destruction from air raids, and the advance of the Allied forces caused 10 of the 12 landing ramps built by the prisoners never to become operational. Belgian farmers, who supplied the water needed to set the concrete at the sites and who were overwhelmingly part of the Belgian resistance, also helped prisoners to escape. The brazenness with which the escapes were organized almost on a daily basis was a clear indication to the SS that they were operating in enemy territory. Once a detachment with three prisoners and two Wehrmacht guards drove with a truck to a building site, a car followed them, giving the prisoners a signal to jump and to flee. When the prisoners hesitated and pointed to the guards, the civilians in the car drew a machine pistol and directed it at the guards.<sup>5</sup>

Searches for escaped prisoners were not only fruitless, but the SS guards had to consider that they could be killed by resistance fighters when searching for the prisoners. Therefore, if there was an indication of an escape, the guards made rigorous use of their weapons. The former prisoner Heinrich Dick described how, from a 10-man detachment that worked at a building site in Poperinge, no one was left:

Once when we delivered cement on a lorry to a building site six Russians escaped. The SS guard ran after them, fired at them, but returned unsuccessfully. He then shot the remaining three Russians with a pistol. I was the only survivor of ten men. . . .

Hoegelow (chief of the SS-guards) learned of this incident shortly thereafter, when we returned to the camp. We were not permitted to go out the next day because the guards were searching for the escapees. They did not capture any, but one of the guards was missing. He was found in the evening—shot with his dog. Hoegelow then said that those who saw the incident would be taken away. Since I was the only survivor it could only have meant me. I therefore fled the camp the next day together with a Russian.<sup>6</sup>

The prisoner losses for the few weeks in Belgium were enormous. When the construction brigade was forced to withdraw due to the advancing Allied forces, there were around 130 prisoners missing. Most of them must have escaped since there were only 8 registered deaths for that period.<sup>7</sup> Many prisoners fled on the day on which they were to be transferred. Under no circumstances were they going to be transported to Germany in view of the imminent liberation. On the morning of September 1, 1944, a group of 39 prisoners overran the SS post inside the walled-in schoolyard in Markrove and fled in different directions. Several prisoners were shot, but most of them indeed succeeded in escaping.

The transport of the SS-Baubrigade I that followed was marked by the simultaneous retreat of German troops, the parallel flight of German civilians, and direct war activities—all through a landscape in which ammunition and food depots had been blown up and were burning, as well as bridges and railroad tracks that had been destroyed. The SS, now extremely nervous, fought with all available means through the war zone. As with the retreat from Alderney, here, too, the SS troupe had to make forced stops because of destroyed or captured areas that had to be circumvented.

Via Ghent and near Brussels, the train reached, after four days since departure, the Dutch border town of Budel. There the train was derailed since the partisans had destroyed the tracks. Wittwer, the SS Labor Service leader of the construction brigade Commander Georg Braun, and Chief of Guards Hoegelow forced civilians to search for a new locomotive and the prisoners to lay bypass railroad tracks. Wittwer returned with several captured Dutch men, who were interrogated by Braun and Hoegelow. Six of them were shot on the spot.<sup>8</sup>

On September 6, 1944, at about 12:30 P.M., the train reached the German border. The former prisoner Helmut Knoeller described the suddenly changed situation: “Here in Germany was a completely different picture: The civilian population cheered the soldiers.”<sup>9</sup> After another four days, the SS-Construction Brigade I, comprising 441 prisoners, arrived at its new destination, Sollstedt in Thüringen.

Among the escapees from Kortemark was Robert Prokop who had reached England via France, where he had joined a Czech Brigade. He returned to Kortemark with the Czech Brigade and learned that during an escape 15 prisoners had been killed and that the SS had buried them in a ditch alongside the road. The victims were later reburied in a mass grave at the local cemetery.<sup>10</sup>

After the war, not one of the responsible SS leaders was the subject of judicial proceedings for crimes committed in Kortemark. Investigations against Braun and Hoegelow for the shooting of Dutch civilians in Budel ended without results.

**SOURCES** The first written report about the camp was published as early as December 1944 in Kortemark by escaped prisoner Jan Woitas: G. Krijger, *Duitschlands Folerkampen, Oranienburg-Sachsenhausen, Amersfoort, Duisburg, Dusseldorf and the Island Aldereney* (Kortemark: n.p., n.d. [December 1944]). It was only 60 years later that the camp was described in a study of the SS construction brigades: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005). Few documents on this camp can be found in files at the BA-L (410 AR 63/77 and IV 404 AR-Z 57/67), as well as in the archives of the AG-NG, AG-S, and FGNS-H (Hans Schwarz Archive).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. WVHA, report on the SS-BB I and V—Construction of the Sites and Supply Facilities for V1 and V2 in the West, July 22, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/14, pp. 51–58.
2. See the Certificate of the ITS for Lang, BA-L, 410 AR 63/77; Buchenwald Concentration Camp, Head of Administration, September 26, 1944, ITS Archive, ISD-Technical Documents-Buchenwald File Nr. 184, pp. 100–111.
3. Willi Kreuzberg, *Schutzhäftlinge erlebten die Invasion* (Weimar: Thüringer Volksverlag, 1947), p. 29.
4. Helmut Knoeller, October 27, 1944, AG-NG, Nr. 1274.
5. Ibid.
6. Interview with Heinrich Dick, BA-L, 410 AR 63/77, pp. 219–220.
7. See the registration lists of SS-Construction Brigade Prisoners with numbers commencing at 88000 from August 3, 1944, to September 1, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald, Nr. 136a.
8. Proceedings in BA-L, 410 AR 63/77, pp. 13–14, 59–60, 94–95.
9. Helmut Knoeller, October 27, 1944, AG-NG, Nr. 1274.
10. Interrogation Robert Prokop, BA-L, IV 404 AR-A 57/67, pp. 260–272.

## MACKENRODE (BUCHENWALD, MITTELBAU, AND SACHSENHAUSEN) (SS-BB III)

Between July 1944 and April 1945, Mackenrode, a small village in the Harz Mountains, was the site of a subcamp of the SS-Baubrigade III, which was stationed in Wieda. The prisoners were assigned to construct the 22-kilometer-long (13.7-mile-long) Helme Valley Railway, a railway stretch from Osterhagen to Nordhausen, thereby relieving the existing railway from Nordhausen to the west. On July 21, 1944, the



first 150 prisoners were housed in a barracks camp not far from the village near present-day Federal Road (Bundesstrasse) 243. On July 30, another 150 prisoners occupied the barracks. The camp that consisted of three barracks located on Peterswiese was fenced in and had four guard towers. Mackenrode, with up to 475 prisoners, was the largest subcamp of SS-Baubrigade III. SS-Oberscharführer Walter Dotzauer was the camp commander. Directly opposite the entrance to the camp was a barrack for the guards, who were overwhelmingly soldiers from the Luftwaffe.

Aime Bonifas, who on September 2, 1944, was transferred from the external camp Laura via Dora to Mackenrode, described the peculiar closeness of the prison camp to the village as follows: "The camp was right next to the village of Mackenrode. We can recognize all the houses and the high tower of the Evangelic-Lutheran Church. The sight of the church in the days that followed was often a puzzle. It is not for me to judge and I do not know who congregated in the church, but how can one talk about heaven when you are so close to such injustices."<sup>1</sup> He wrote the following about the reaction of the local population: "Our construction sites were in several villages. The few locals who were seen on our way showed only contempt for us. Once a young girl spat on us."<sup>2</sup>

In order to construct the railway, the prisoners had to undertake heavy earthmoving work and clearing, mostly without the assistance of machinery or horses. The various work detachments had to walk several kilometers to the work sites. Work was often done on Sundays. Conditions in the camp deteriorated with the onset of winter. The prisoners waded through snow and mud, often without shoes, with torn clothes, without sufficient food, and without any hygienic care. From February 1945, a 150-strong prisoner detachment worked in Tettenborn; from there the existing railway line was to be connected by a branch line to the Helme Valley Railway. It is not clear whether a permanent camp had been set up for the duration of several weeks.

There are only a few reports of instances of death or acts of violence against the prisoners in the camp. An Italian prisoner, who was a stoker on a locomotive, was doused with boiling water during an accident in November 1944. He was taken to the infirmary in Wieda, where he died. In February 1945, it is said that the Belgian Josef Fruyt was beaten to death in the camp for stealing potatoes. From a report to the SS-Führungsstab (Leadership Staff) B 13, dated February 6, 1945, it is evident that two days earlier 10 prisoners from Mackenrode had been detailed for construction work, but the foreman changed the orders and had the prisoners load potatoes at a farm instead. It was here that the prisoners, including Fruyt, were said to have stolen potatoes.<sup>3</sup>

On April 6, 1945, the prisoners were taken on foot from Mackenrode to Wieda, where on April 7, 1945, the evacuation march of the SS-Baubrigade III began.

Six victims of the Mackenrode camp—a French man, a Belgian, two Poles, and two prisoners from the Soviet Union—were buried in the village cemetery. The bodies were exhumed after the war and reburied in Nordhausen.

**SOURCES** Further research could be based on Aime Bonifas, *Häftling 20.801. Ein Zeugnis über die faschistischen Konzentrationslager* (Berlin: Union-Verlag, 1983); and Firouz Vladi, "Der Bau der Hemetalbahn, der Zwangsarbeitseinsatz der III. und IV. SS-Baubrigade, die KZ-Aussenlager Mackenrode, Nüxei, Osterhagen und Wieda sowie Ellrich und Günzerode," in *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn. Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südharz in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie den Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945*, ed. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spurensuche in der Südharzregion (Duderstadt: Mecke Druck, 2000), pp. 40–133.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Aime Bonifas, *Häftling 20.801. Ein Zeugnis über die faschistischen Konzentrationslager* (Berlin: Union-Verlag, 1983), p. 126.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

3. Firouz Vladi, "Der Bau der Hemetalbahn, der Zwangsarbeitseinsatz der III. und IV. SS-Baubrigade, die KZ-Aussenlager Mackenrode, Nüxei, Osterhagen und Wieda sowie Ellrich und Günzerode," in *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn. Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südharz in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie den Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945*, ed. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spurensuche in der Südharzregion (Duderstadt: Mecke Druck, 2000), pp. 40–133.

## NÜRNBERG (SACHSENHAUSEN)

### [AKA 2. SS-BAUBRIGADE (E)] (SS-BB II)

The SS-Baubrigade II, last stationed in Berlin, in the middle of February 1945 was transformed into an SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade. Prisoners from the camps in Müggelheim and Friedrich-Krause-Ufer were gathered together in Berlin-Köpenick. They, together with other prisoners from a subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Berlin-Lichterfelde, had a strength of 504 men.

The prisoners were put on a train in Köpenick, which, as the 2. SS-Baubrigade (E), left the capital city on February 25, 1945. From February 14, 1945, the brigade was under the command of SS-Obersturmführer Karl Raab, who was born on January 6, 1895, in Atzgersdorf near Vienna. The guards, numbering between 60 and 70 men, were SS men deployed in Berlin. The destination of the construction brigade was the destroyed Nürnberg railway station, where cleanup work was to be done. As the train entered the station, the prisoners experienced a heavy bombing raid. Wenzel W. described this in his memoirs in 1957: "We prisoners experienced this attack in closed railway goods wagons. Only a few prisoners survived."<sup>1</sup>

On March 12, 1945, following a large bombing raid on the city, around 30 starving prisoners set off on a search for food. As a deterrent, the SS instigated a horrible spectacle. Accord-

ing to a report from 1946, the prisoners were forced “to kneel with their foreheads on the ground for several hours during cold weather in fear of being shot if they moved.”<sup>2</sup> For theft, 3 of the prisoners were hanged from a railway wagon.<sup>3</sup> According to the statement of a survivor, a prisoner did the hanging. Willy K. described the execution in March 1947 as follows: “Unfortunately one of our prisoners assumed the repulsive role as executioner for a bottle of alcohol and cigarettes. The prisoner, a German, was lynched by the other prisoners in Landshut after the liberation.”<sup>4</sup>

Landshut was the last destination of the construction brigade, which arrived there via Regensburg, in the middle March 1945. At night the train was shunted to Ahraun and during the day the construction brigade traveled to the Landshut Railway Station for cleaning-up work.

For the last months of the war, there are scarcely any sources, and reliable information about the 2. SS-Baubrigade (E) is not available. Details on the number of transfers of prisoners in the main camp or on escaped or dead prisoners are not possible, but it can be assumed that in the confusion of the last weeks of the war many prisoners were able to escape. A guard said in 1973: “The constant bombing raids and attacks by low flying fighters caused us to suffer losses. Prisoners and guards were killed or injured. . . . Because of the air raid alarms we only worked at night. Many prisoners used this as an opportunity to disappear.”<sup>5</sup>

Almost a month later, on April 27, some of the prisoners of the 2. SS-Baubrigade II (E) set off on foot from the Bavarian town of Landshut in several columns in the direction of Wasserburg. It is said that some of the prisoners remained with the train or, after the dissolution of the columns, returned to the train. On the march, the columns gradually broke up. On the way, a group of prisoners stayed in a barn, and several groups fled. Also, the SS disappeared. Survivors report that those not capable of marching were shot. Raab was last seen with the construction brigade on April 29, 1945. The remaining SS men fled from the approaching Americans on May 1. During the following night, the columns were freed. Another column is said to have been taken to Graz.<sup>6</sup>

Shortly after the liberation, a few prisoners returned to Landshut. They found the construction brigade’s train had been burned out.<sup>7</sup> Many survivors of the 2. SS-Baubrigade (E) were marked for the rest of their lives by the many years they had spent in the concentration camps. Georg M. wrote the following in 1949: “After the entry of the Yanks I and many of my comrades from many nations celebrated in Landshut a reunion. We stayed there for six weeks recovering. I then made my way home. But I discovered that I no longer had a home. In September 1945, I lay down and almost forgot to get up. From this time my health is broken.”<sup>8</sup>

The State Prosecutor at the State Court in Nürnberg-Fürth investigated the hanging of three prisoners at the Nürnberg Railway Station but terminated the investigations on January 20, 1969. Later investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) on crimes com-

mitted by those in charge of the 2. SS-Baubrigade (E) did not result in a trial.

**SOURCES** Without the files of the Nürnberg State Prosecutor investigation (18 Js 680/67; BA-L, IV 1666/66) and the ZdL investigation (BA-L, IV 406 AR 594-596/73), it would not be possible today to reconstruct the last months of the SS-Baubrigade II, even in the outline presented here. They constitute the central source. See also Karola Fings, *Die Kommunen, der Krieg und die Konzentrationslager. Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2004).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Wenzel W., May 20, 1957, BA-L, IV 406 AR 594/73, pp. 242–243.
2. Paul F., February 18, 1946, *ibid.*, IV AR 1616/66, p. 8.
3. Peter G., August 13, 1973, *ibid.*, IV 406 AR 594/73, p. 275.
4. Willy K., March 4, 1947, *ibid.*, p. 230.
5. Paul R., August 20, 1973, *ibid.*, p. 299.
6. Georg Merten, June 30, 1962, FZG, 13-7-0-2; Georg M., July 18, 1973, BA-L, IV 406 AR 594/73, pp. 239–240; Peter G., August 18, 1973, *ibid.*, pp. 274–275; Alexander P., March 28, 1973, *ibid.*, IV 404 AR-Z 159/73, p. 110.
7. Wenzel W., May 20, 1957, BA-L, IV 406 AR 594/73, p. 244.
8. Georg M., May 27, 1949, *ibid.*, IV 406 AR 595/73, p. 176d.

## NÜXEI (BUCHENWALD, MITTELBAU, AND SACHSENHAUSEN) (SS-BB III)

Between May 1944 and April 1945, the SS-Baubrigade III, based in Wieda, had a subcamp in the Harz Mountains in the village of Nüxei, which consisted of only a few houses. The prisoners were to build a 22-kilometer-long (13.7-mile-long) railway line, designed to relieve the existing line between Osterhagen and Nordhausen. Probably in the middle of May 1944, 100 prisoners began fitting up a barn on a farm in Nüxei as accommodations for a camp. The SS confiscated a meadow after 2 prisoners escaped and had the camp constructed next to present-day Federal Road (Bundesstrasse) 243. An area of about 50 meters×50 meters (164 feet×164 feet) was fenced in and furnished with guard towers and searchlights. The quarters of the guards were in the immediate vicinity of the camp.

The camp is unusual because of its proximity to the village population. Wilhelm Walter, the owner of the farm, wrote in 1972:

One Sunday morning three trucks with about one hundred “Zebras” [concentration camp inmates in striped prisoner clothing] appeared on my farm. The guards seized my barn for use as a camp. . . . Immediately a mezzanine floor was constructed in

my barn to create two sleeping levels. The guards (Luftwaffe soldiers) were accommodated in the local pub and in two rooms of one of my worker's cottages. Once the beds etc. had been put in place, the camp was occupied by about three hundred prisoners. . . . Given the small area it was impossible to keep the prisoners separated from the German population and from the forced laborers.<sup>1</sup>

After Karl Völkner, the SS camp commander of the SS-Baubrigade III, was relieved from his post in the summer of 1944, the prisoners in the Wieda and Nüxei camps were transported away and replaced with 300 new prisoners from the Buchenwald subcamp Dora. At the same time, conditions in the camp got worse. Walter reported on this as follows: "Everything changed on the evening of July 20. When the prisoners returned from work they were not allowed back into the camp. . . . All the prisoners were marched off in the direction of Wieda on the same evening. The Luftwaffe guards were immediately withdrawn. The new prisoners appeared the next day under the most severe guard of the SS."<sup>2</sup>

One of the new prisoners was Albert van Dijk, born in the Netherlands in 1924, who has described the Nüxei camp in detail in his memoirs. He wrote the following about the work: "At first we thought that we had come to a rest camp, but we soon found out that we had made a mistake. . . . The railway had to be built at an unimaginable pace, and large soil excavation was necessary which had to be done with primitive tools. . . . Soil was taken away in wheelbarrows on the run. The prisoners collapsed under the load of the railway ties and rails, which they had to carry. They were pulled up and continued to carry their load groaning. But the foremen demanded even more; the pace of work was increased excessively."<sup>3</sup>

Work on the railway ceased between the beginning of January and the middle of February 1945 because of low temperatures. During this period, the prisoners from Nüxei worked in two large underground installations in Woffleben, lengthening the grueling daily routine considerably.

The columns from the tunnel construction site marched in when we, who worked on the ramp or in the workshops, had already been standing and waiting for hours on the roll call square. We ate standing—in snow and frost. We slept without blankets; many prisoners lay on the bare floor as the stronger prisoners had taken the straw sacks from the weaker ones to use them as cover. The bread rations were constantly reduced; the small portions of margarine ceased; the soup was made from frozen and rotten rutabagas. Worn out shoes and clothes were not replaced and frostbite was very common. Hardly a day did pass without someone dying.<sup>4</sup>

Marcel Orset, a survivor, remembered the horrors of the last winter during the war: "Nüxei, was a slow struggle against death; I have terrible memories of the winter, frozen feet, a

serious leg injury; the danger of being transported away, the destruction, the dead comrades. The work? Not as brutal as in Osterhagen. Life in the camp? A lot of misery. In comparison to the hell in Osterhagen and if it had been summer one could have survived."<sup>5</sup>

Although the camp and surrounding community lived close together, it did not mean that the local population developed empathy for the prisoners and contributed something to improve the situation. On the contrary, it seemed that the situation worsened—the lack of sympathy for the starving prisoners, the pursuit of self-interest, and the missing political insight into the conditions of the concentration camp community helped in part to worsen the situation.

Van Dijk recalls a peculiar incident that occurred at Christmas in 1944. On the roll-call square Walter and representatives of the Mackenrode (Hohenstein) church had placed a large fir tree and had set a basket of presents at its base. The church choir arrived at the camp and sang Christmas carols. The would-be benefactors resented it when only the German Kapos joined in the singing. According to van Dijk:

As they refused to sing, the prisoners, as punishment, stood for longer than two hours almost like columns of ice around the Christmas tree with the barest of clothing in the frost. It was not even allowed to stamp your feet. The members of the church choir left to their houses, to the warm hearth. They took the basket with the little packages bitching about the incorrigible prisoners. Candlelight streamed from the window of the farmer's house and happy children's voices could be heard. The hands of the clock on Mackenroder church tower moved to twelve. Christmas had begun.<sup>6</sup>

Van Dijk describes an event that the farmer Walter left out of his report. A starving prisoner had caught a chicken that had entered the camp through the barbed-wire fence. He and a Russian prisoner were caught killing it. According to van Dijk, Walter, after the evening roll call, entered the camp in a rage and demanded punishment. A Kapo broke the wrist bones of the Russian, thrashed van Dijk, and crushed one of his fingers. Van Dijk was put on public display with a sign saying: "I am a chicken thief."

On April 5, 1945, the prisoners were taken on foot from Nüxei to Wieda, where the evacuation march of the SS-Baubrigade III began on April 7.

**SOURCES** The organization AgSSüHR has collected reports and documents about the Nüxei camp; see Firouz Vladi, "Der Bau der Helmetalbahn, der Zwangsarbeitseinsatz der III. und IV. SS-Baubrigade, die KZ-Aussenlager Mackenrode, Nüxei, Osterhagen und Wieda sowie Ellrich und Günzerode," in *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn. Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südbarz in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie den Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945*, ed. AgSSüHR (Duderstadt:Verlag Mecke Druck, 2000), pp. 40–133.



Further research on Nüxei can be based on the primary and secondary sources provided for the Wieda subcamp.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

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2. Ibid., p. 127.

3. Albert van Dijk, "Das Aussenkommando Nüxei" (MSS, n.p., n.d.), cited in *ibid.*, p. 71.

4. Ibid., p. 73.

5. Marcel Orset, *Misère et mort, nos deux compagnes* (Chalon-sur Saône: Self-published 1948), quoted in *ibid.*, p. 75.

6. Ibid., pp. 72–73.

## OSNABRÜCK (NEUENGAMME) (SS-BB II)

The SS-Baubrigade II was formed in October 1942 in the Neuengamme concentration camp with 1,000 prisoners; 250 of them formed a subcamp in Osnabrück, which stayed there until May 1943. The decision to send a labor detail to Osnabrück also to remove debris from bomb damage was made on relatively short notice.<sup>1</sup> The city mayor, Erich Gärtner, may have had influence on the allocation of concentration camp prisoners, as in his capacity as head of both Emergency Measures (Leiter der Sofortmassnahmen) and Air Defense, he was responsible for all matters of removal of debris after bombing raids.

The prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade II arrived at Osnabrück no later than October 17, 1942, for on this day the first death is documented.<sup>2</sup> In the first few months of 1943 there was no further large bombing raid on Osnabrück. Therefore, the prisoners were withdrawn in May 1943, probably at the beginning of the month, and transferred to Bremen, Wilhelmshaven, and later Hamburg, despite the protests of the mayor.<sup>3</sup>

The labor detail occupied the Overberg School in a residential district of Osnabrück on the street of the same name. The gymnasium located between the two wings of the building served as the prisoners' accommodation. Looking from the street, the left wing had been destroyed by a direct hit of a bomb, and only its basement could be used. Here were the bath of the school, the storeroom, and the kitchen, in which students were taught cooking. In the basement of the right wing were the boiler room, the prisoners' kitchen, an infirmary, a small workroom, and a windowless partition. On the ground floor of the right wing were the quarters for the SS and the police reservists. The schoolyard was used for roll calls.<sup>4</sup>

Of all the construction brigade camps, the Osnabrück camp had the highest death rate; 86 prisoners died between October 1942 and March 1943 and are buried in the Heger cemetery—that is, within five months, one-third of the prisoners died. Responsible for the atrocious conditions was primarily the camp leader, who, together with a corrupt clique of prisoner-functionaries, terrorized the remaining prisoners as well as the surrounding community, which did not intervene despite the visibly dramatic conditions in the camp.<sup>5</sup>

Initially, the camp commander in Osnabrück was SS-Hauptscharführer Brinkmann. He was replaced in November 1942 by SS-Oberscharführer Walter Döring. Döring, born on March 1, 1906, in Eisenach, already had a career of several years as an SS man and as a concentration camp supervisor. From 1934, the trained butcher served as a member of the SS in Weimar, was then transferred to the SS barracks at the castle Lichtenburg in Prettin for disciplinary reasons, and from there went to the Buchenwald concentration camp in June 1937. In January 1941, he was sent to the Neuengamme concentration camp first as block and then as roll-call leader. Shortly before being ordered to Osnabrück, Döring is alleged to have been involved in the killing of a Soviet prisoner of war (POW).<sup>6</sup> One of Döring's closest confidants within the camp community was the first Kapo, Wilhelm Leers. Leers was born in 1903 in Cologne. In February 1940, he was sent by the Criminal Investigation Department of the Police in Cologne as a "professional criminal" to Neuengamme.<sup>7</sup> In Neuengamme, Leers revealed himself as a sadist, and this accounts for the criticism by political prisoners of his selection for Osnabrück. Of the remaining Kapos destined for Osnabrück, all of whom were citizens of the Reich, there were two political prisoners, Ernst Bonhoft and Fritz Bringmann, sent as orderlies.<sup>8</sup> The remaining prisoners of the labor detail transported to Osnabrück were mostly Soviet citizens, but a few Poles, Yugoslavs, and Dutch are also mentioned.<sup>9</sup>

From January 1943, the unit of guards, besides a handful of SS men, consisted mostly of local auxiliary police, who as a rule were either self-employed or worked in the service sector, for example, as waiters or barkeepers, and the majority of them were born in the 1880s and 1890s. It is possible to conclude from the surviving personnel files that the police reservists, once they started "guarding prisoners," performed their duties without any noteworthy incident. There are no instances documented of frequent absences due to illness, of applications for transfer, or of disciplinary proceedings.<sup>10</sup>

The "Regime of Terror" established by Döring and Leers included the embezzlement of food on a grand scale, so that within a few weeks most of the prisoners lost weight in a "terrifying manner."<sup>11</sup> Iwan Andrejewitsch Slipatschenko desperately searched in the rubble for food to survive: "I could have eaten the sole of a shoe if it had been attractively packed. Goodness knows what I ate."<sup>12</sup> In addition to the hunger, lack of clothing and the high pace of work were the main reasons for the prisoners' visible deterioration. With Döring's arrival

in Osnabrück, the pace of work was increased, and rations were again reduced.<sup>13</sup>

Of the 250 prisoners, around 100 had physically wasted away by the end of 1942. On Döring's instructions, no more than 10 sick were allowed in the inadequate infirmary. When the prisoner orderlies brought up the untenable conditions with Döring, he demanded that they kill the sick with injections of gasoline, which they steadfastly refused despite mistreatment by Döring.<sup>14</sup> As Döring wanted to get rid of the sick, he sent them to work where they were forced to work until they collapsed. Then they were doused with water and left lying in the cold until the prisoners returned to the camp. Bringmann wrote the following about this "treatment": "The majority did not survive until the return to the camp and died during the course of the day. The others got very rarely something to eat in the evening, but the cold water treatment was continued until they also met their fate."<sup>15</sup>

Leers also abused the prisoners with great brutality both on Döring's command and without. Once he chased a sick Soviet prisoner to work, beating him again and again, and when he was finally too weak to go, he hung him in the prisoners' quarters with his hands tied behind his back. Here he mistreated the helpless prisoner until he was unconscious—a torture that the prisoner did not survive.<sup>16</sup> The 86 prisoners whose deaths are recorded in the Osnabrück camp were except for 1 all of Soviet nationality. One can conclude that the small "layer of leadership" in the camp consisting of German prisoners, which with a few exceptions belonged to Leers's clique, knew how to ensure their survival by means of brutality and corruption. The only possibility for the Soviet prisoners was to try and escape. Only a few were able to escape, and those caught had to expect to be shot. In at least two cases, Döring personally murdered the recaptured prisoners.<sup>17</sup>

Not only the guards but also the local inhabitants were daily witnesses to the brutal treatment of the prisoners. The school janitor, Fritz L., remained at his position, and the cooking courses, headed by the teacher Agnes W., continued for various groups of students.<sup>18</sup> The violence that was meted out to the prisoners was visible. Agnes W. reported in 1950: "The schoolyard was open and the neighborhood children played there. They must have seen that the prisoners were treated badly, and they must have told their parents for the mothers complained to the SS or the Kapos. I was told by a woman, whose name I no longer remember, that she received the following reply: 'If the children are not hard yet, then they will have to become that way.'"<sup>19</sup>

The prisoners worked daily at several locations right in the middle of the city. The population could see that many of the prisoners were "completely run down, exhausted, and lacking any strength," collapsing while they labored.<sup>20</sup> They were also witnesses to the mistreatment meted out at the work sites. In 1950, a police reservist described the situation with the following words: "The prisoners were badly mistreated on the building sites. I saw countless cases. The so-called SS foremen and the Kapos committed the acts. The prisoners

were beaten on the head with wooden bars, so that they collapsed covered with blood and sometimes could not continue working for a considerable time."<sup>21</sup>

Comparing the change in the death rate over time with reports by surviving prisoners, it becomes clear that the systematic resistance by anti-Fascist and Communist prisoners finally led to an improvement in the conditions of the camp. Both Bringmann and Bonhofs as well as George Merten, who was deliberately sent in December 1942 from Neuengamme to Osnabrück, were instrumental in dismantling the power structure in the camp.<sup>22</sup> With high personal risk, they resisted the instructions of Döring and repeatedly criticized his commands. Finally, they used the opportunity during his absence on leave at the beginning of March 1943 to draw the attention of the main camp to the intolerable conditions by pointing out the low efficiency of the camp. They systematically tried to weaken the front of the corrupt and brutal Kapos, fighting back against Leers in quite dangerous conflicts for months. Döring was replaced in March 1943 by an SS-Hauptscharführer Gehrts (possibly spelled Gerds or Geerdts); Leers fled in April 1943 from the enraged fellow prisoners.<sup>23</sup>

The Hamburg State Court sentenced Döring to prison for life in 1951; on appeal the sentence was reduced to two years. He was charged again in the middle of the 1950s and sentenced to a term of eight years in a penitentiary. Leers had been sentenced to death by a British military court as early as 1946, but the sentence was commuted, and in 1954 he was released from prison. Both town doctors, who issued the falsified death certificates, were questioned in the 1950s but never prosecuted.<sup>24</sup> Nothing at the Overberg School commemorates the infamous subcamp.

**SOURCES** The history of the Osnabrück construction brigade camp was given particular attention in a study of the SS-Construction Brigades: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005). Before that, it had been mentioned with a marginal comment in an extremely apologetic city history, which covered up the responsibility of the city of Osnabrück for the camp and the extent of the crimes: Karl Kühling, *Osnabrück 1933–1945. Stadt im Dritten Reich* (Osnabrück: H.Th. Wenner, 1980), p. 149. Relatively early a survivor of the camp published important witness reports: Fritz Bringmann, *Häftlinge in der 2. SS-Baubrigade in Osnabrück* (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg-Verlag, 1981).

Sources are to be found in the ASt-Os and the NStA-Os, Dep. 3 b XV and Dep. 3 b XIX, of which a few extracts have been published in an early volume on the Osnabrück camp: Ursula Fisser-Blömer, "Zwangsarbeit in Osnabrück. SS-Baubrigade, Kriegsgefangenen- und Arbeitserziehungslager," *Antifa-Be-Os* 6 (1982): 23–29. Also relevant are the judicial files held by the BA-L, IV 406 AR 245/69, IV 406 AR 221/74, as well as the documents in the AG-NG (Interviews and Reports Nr. 141, 150, 153, 1576, 1602) and the FZG (Archive Hans Schwarz Totenbücher des KZ Neuengamme).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Senator für Bauwesen, October 7, 1942, StA-Br 4, 29/1-1307; SS-WVHA, Amt C, October 10, 1942, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 106.
2. Häftlings-Totennachweis ITS, BA-L, IV 406 AR 245/69, p. 239.
3. See statements in ZdL, BA-L, IV 406 AR 221/74, pp. 50, 54; correspondence in StA-Os, Dep. 3 b XIX 167.
4. Sketches in BA-L, IV 406 AR 221/74, pp. 38–39, 47.
5. See table of all deaths in Osnabrück in the appendix of Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).
6. BA, BDC/RS, and Fritz Bringmann, September 3, 1948, BA-L, IV 406 AR 221/74, p. 6.
7. NWHStA-(D), BR 2034 VH I/170.
8. Fritz Bringmann, *Häftlinge in der 2. SS-Baubrigade in Osnabrück* (Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg-Verlag, 1981), pp. 38–50.
9. Fritz Bringmann, May 12, 1949, in BA-K, BY 5/279/74.
10. Thirteen personnel files of the reservists deployed to guard the concentration camp prisoners could be located; see StA-Os, Dep. 3 b XIX, Akz. 46/86, Nr. 9, 34, 119, 234, 257, 279, 502, 632, 664, 716, 776, 808, 830.
11. Bringmann, *Häftlinge*, p. 39.
12. Interview with Iwan Andrejewitsch Slipatschenko, AG-NG, Nr. 1602.
13. Bringmann, *Häftlinge*, pp. 42, 44–45.
14. Ibid.; and Fritz Bringmann, September 3, 1948, BA-L, IV 406 AR 221/74, pp. 6–7.
15. Report by Fritz Bringmann, May 12, 1949, in BA-K, BY 5/279/74.
16. Report by Fritz Bringmann, June 26, 1945, in BA-K, BY 5/279/70.
17. Report by Fritz Bringmann, May 12, 1949, in BA-K, BY 5/279/74; and Bringmann, September 3, 1948, BA-L, IV 406 AR 221/74, pp. 6–8.
18. Walter Döring, July 13, 1950, BA-L IV 406 AR 221/74, p. 46; Agnes W., Fritz L., Albert J., November 3, 1950, *ibid.*, pp. 65–69.
19. Ibid., pp. 65–66.
20. Josef T., July 20, 1950, *ibid.*, p. 53.
21. Heinrich K., July 20, 1950, *ibid.*, p. 50.
22. Bringmann, *Häftlinge*, p. 38; Georg Merten, March 30, 1962, FZG, 13-7-0-2.
23. Fritz Bringmann, BA-L, IV 406 AR 221/74, p. 35.
24. Ibid., pp. 90–131, 154–161; *ibid.*, BA-L, IV 401 AR 688/75.

## OSTERHAGEN (BUCHENWALD, MITTELBAU, AND SACHSENHAUSEN) (SS-BB III)

Osterhagen is a small village in the Harz Mountains. Between July 1944 and April 1945, one of the three subcamps of the SS-Baubrigade III, stationed in Wieda, was located in Osterhagen. The prisoners were to construct a 22-kilometer-long (13.7-mile-long) railway designed to relieve the railway line between Osterhagen and Nordhausen. The camp, which had

previously been a brickworks, lay to the southeast of Osterhagen at the bottom of a valley. It consisted of three barracks and was surrounded by a fence with watchtowers. From July 5, 1944, 300 prisoners were detained there.

Osterhagen was the most notorious of all the SS-Baubrigade III camps. Aimé Bonifas, who was transferred from the Laura subcamp via Dora to Mackenrode on September 2, 1944, and arrived in Osterhagen on December 25, 1944, after a short stay in Wieda, described his transport to this much-feared camp in his memoirs:

The lorry carried us away quickly, I have no idea from which of the Wieda branch camps. . . . [G]uard towers loomed suddenly in a sweeping desolate landscape, a name which we could not believe to be true, which we dared not speak, which kept our mouths clamped tightly shut: Osterhagen, the infamous punishment camp. I was sent there, to this hellish camp, simply because numbers had to be kept up, because this beast had to continue consuming. . . . A real death hole, not a tree in sight, icy desolation, an area of despair. It was enough to make one howl. . . . I was more than used to the faces of prisoners, but here, more than anywhere else, I was shaken by their expressions, as if they were hunted animals. They bore the stamp of never-ending suffering.<sup>1</sup>

The Osterhagen camp was visibly more badly equipped than all the other camps of the SS-Baubrigade III. The hygienic conditions were particularly appalling. There was no water supply, and the filthy water brought in by truck was never sufficient. The prisoners had to wash in the open air in the icy cold. The clay surface of the camp was not sealed, with the result that the prisoners were completely filthy when it rained. Disease and epidemics were widespread. According to Bonifas, “The hygienic conditions in Osterhagen are so deplorable that we were completely covered in lice. It was a real plague. Large lice, with a black cross, that quickly multiplied, ran about everywhere and laid their eggs in the tiniest folds of our clothes. . . . They sucked the last little bit of life out of us. We were the dead waiting to be called. Many comrades died because they were quite literally eaten by the lice.”<sup>2</sup>

This, the most isolated of the SS-Baubrigade III camps, was commanded by SS-Hauptscharführer Franz Choina, described as a most brutal man. Georges Pieper, the camp elder and Kapo in the SS-Baubrigade III office in Wieda, described Choina shortly after the liberation as follows: “The Osterhagen Camp under the command of Choina was particularly infamous. He had the prisoners work in complete darkness and once the food was distributed the prisoners had to eat it cold. Warm soup was delivered in a lorry in the middle of the day and was distributed at 10 p.m. The prisoners in the Osterhagen camp were also beaten more than elsewhere. It was only in the rarest of cases that sick prisoners were taken to Wieda for treatment—it was rather the case that they had to work until they dropped dead.”<sup>3</sup>



According to Bonifas, the “law of the jungle” ruled in Osterhagen. Choina had insured the support of particularly corrupt prisoner-functionaries who tormented, humiliated, robbed, and beat the prisoners at every available opportunity. Each time the prisoners returned to the camp, there was a punishment roll call: “Each evening when you arrived at the block the green Kapo pulled out an exercise book in which he had written the numbers of the prisoners who had not worked hard enough during the day. It was often French men, mostly sick and at the end of their strength. Each was beaten five or ten times with a rubber truncheon and sometimes their soup was taken away from them. There was no quicker way to the crematorium!”<sup>24</sup>

Under the Kapos’ blows, often without shoes, and in ripped clothing, the undernourished prisoners had to perform heavy manual labor. When bad weather stopped work on the railway from the beginning of January to the middle of February, the prisoners were taken in open railway wagons each morning at 4 A.M. from Osterhagen to Niedersachswerfen, 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) away. Here they had to do heavy transport work—an additional strain that resulted in many deaths before work resumed on the railway line. The longer the winter lasted, with temperatures down to minus 20 degrees Celsius (minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit), the more prisoners died. “The end of the winter in Osterhagen was a nightmare. On March 2, [1945,] my work detail had to unload soil from the wagons and shovel against the wind which was particularly strong. The temperature was very low. On this day alone six of our comrades collapsed from exhaustion, five of them French. . . . Again the dead flooded the camp. People died everywhere at any time, day and night, often without a glance or a word or a handshake with a friend.”<sup>25</sup>

The prisoners’ corpses were brought to Dora and from March 1945 to the Erich subcamp in Ellrich. A few of the dead are said to have been buried in a mass grave in the Osterhagen cemetery from where after the war they were returned to their places of origin. Three corpses are said to have been exhumed from the campgrounds in the summer of 1945.

The camp was dissolved on April 6, 1945. The prisoners marched to Wieda, from where the evacuation march began a day later.

**SOURCES** Numerous reports and documents on Osterhagen are contained in AgSSüHR, ed., *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn. Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südbau in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie den Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945* (Duderstadt: Verlag Mecke Druck, 2000). In addition to the report by Aimé Bonifas, *Häftling 20.801. Ein Zeugnis über die faschistischen Konzentrationslager* (Berlin: Union-Verlag, 1983), the Wieda subcamp’s primary and secondary sources are the starting points for further research on Osterhagen.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Aimé Bonifas, *Häftling 20.801. Ein Zeugnis über die faschistischen Konzentrationslager* (Berlin: Union-Verlag, 1983), pp. 147–148.

2. Ibid., pp. 158–159.

3. Georges Pieper, May 2, 1945, BA-L, IV 406 AR 85/67, p. 46.

4. Bonifas, *Häftling 20.801*, pp. 152–153.

5. Ibid., p. 166.

## ROUEN (BUCHENWALD) (SS-BB V)

The SS-Baubrigade V based in Doullens had a subcamp in Rouen, about 97 kilometers (60 miles) to the northwest of Paris, between April and probably August 1944. A former World War I prisoner-of-war (POW) camp, located at a race-track, served as the prisoners’ accommodation. The approximately 500 prisoners lived in barracks of corrugated iron, known as Hindenburg Huts. The task of the SS-Baubrigade V was to construct launching pads for the V-1 and V-2 rockets. From Rouen, labor details were sent to the military airport at Montdidier and to Amiens.<sup>1</sup>

Zygmunt P., who managed to flee during a bombing raid on April 25, 1944, said the following about Rouen: “Our accommodations in Rouen were the so-called ‘Corrugated Iron Barrels.’ In one such ‘barrel’ were fifty prisoners. There were no beds and we slept on the concrete foundation that was covered with dirty, rotten straw. We were driven to work by trucks to the shore of the English Channel which was sixty kilometers [37.3 miles] away. There we had to repair the defense facilities destroyed by Allied air raids. Air-defense soldiers guarded us; their supervision was easier to bear, as they did not mistreat or abuse us while we worked.”<sup>2</sup>

The camp commander was SS-Obersturmführer Stahmer. After the war, he was accused by survivors of having caused the deaths of prisoners. He was said to have ordered the prisoners to continue working during bombing raids. Indeed, on April 23 and 25, 1944, 14 prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade V died in Rouen as a result of an air raid.<sup>3</sup>

Camp elder Friedrich B. testified in a postwar investigation about the murder of a Polish prisoner. The man was injured on the upper arm during a bombing raid and because of the bombing could not be taken to a hospital. The prisoner orderly cared for him for a few days in the poorly equipped prisoner infirmary. When the arm swelled more and more, they pretended that the prisoner would be taken to a hospital, and he was put on a truck. Friedrich B. continues the story: “I heard a shot and was told to strike him from the list. He had been shot. I saw how he was thrown from the truck.”<sup>4</sup>

In May or June 1944, a detail of the SS-Baubrigade V attacked a Wehrmacht post, and a mass breakout ensued. Hans Kammler, head of Amtsgruppe C of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), and Gerhard Weigel, head of the SS-Baubrigade V, noted in a report to Heinrich Himmler: “As a result of the situation (invasion, air raids, etc.) the prisoners were very unwilling to work and undisciplined. In particular, measures had to be taken against the Polish prisoners as in several instances they incited the other prisoners to refuse to work and in the majority of cases they were the

instigators of escape attempts and above all, of the large surprise attack on the Wehrmacht post.”<sup>5</sup>

The attack on the Wehrmacht post could have happened in the Rouen camp. Karl J. has reported about a similar incident: “I remember just now that a labor detail of Russian prisoners attacked the guards wearing black collar tabs (soldiers of the Luftwaffe Construction Company) and fled. I do not know how many escaped. Nothing happened to the soldiers—they were just tied up. One of the escaped prisoners received serious injuries on the run in an exchange of fire with a Wehrmacht captain when a bullet grazed his head.”<sup>6</sup>

Former prisoner Walter St. has reported that after a mass escape the SS in Rouen ordered a roll call of the prisoners, selected a few at random, and shot them.<sup>7</sup>

The Rouen subcamp was dissolved no later than August 1944 and transferred to the Harz Mountains via Doullens and Lille. The prisoners were distributed to various Buchenwald subcamps over which the newly formed Mittelbau concentration camp took control in October 1944.

**SOURCES** There are only a few documents and memoirs that provide information about the Rouen subcamp—especially BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73. Further research could be based on the primary and secondary sources for the Doullens subcamp.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Karl J., September 17, 1972; Friedrich B., December 14, 1972; Emil I., May 25, 1973, all BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 247, pp. 646–667.

2. Zygmunt P., January 15, 1970, *ibid.*, p. 336.

3. SS-BB V (Feldpost-Nr. 15566), October 9, 1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 54.

4. Friedrich B., December 14, 1972, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 647.

5. SS-WVHA, July 29, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 55.

6. Karl J., September 17, 1972, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 250.

7. Walter St., May 19, 1972, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, pp. 379–382.

## SOLLSTEDT (MITTELBAU, BUCHENWALD, AND SACHSENHAUSEN) (SS-BB I)

The SS-Baubrigade I was stationed in Sollstedt, a town in Thüringen, between September 10, 1944, and April 5, 1945. It once numbered 1,000 prisoners, but by the time it reached Sollstedt after service in the Rhineland, on the Channel Islands, and in Belgium, it only had 441 prisoners.<sup>1</sup> In October 1944, this unit came under the administration of the Mittelbau concentration camp, and the prisoners were assigned numbers from the 100000 series.<sup>2</sup> The assumption of control by Sachsenhausen in January 1945 did not change the relationship with Mittelbau as the main camp. At the end of the

war, the strength of the construction brigade was again almost 1,000 prisoners because of transports from Mittelbau.

In Sollstedt, the prisoners had to improve the tunnels of a potash shaft mine and pack and store items of clothing for the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), Amt B (Truppenwirtschaft), and for the Luftwaffe Clothing Office Bielefeld. The prisoners were accommodated in a barracks camp located at the bottom of a valley near the shaft. They had to construct the three to five barracks themselves. The food for the camp was brought from Mittelbau. One work detail of the brigade worked in another potash shaft mine near Hainboltshausen until April 1945. At the end of 1944, the SS-Construction Brigade I established a subcamp in Hohlstedt.

The former power struggles between the different prisoner groups broke out again in Sollstedt. The dreaded Adolf Fehrenbacher assumed the role of camp elder during the transport from Alderney. In the memories of survivors, Sollstedt stands out as a place of murder of Jewish and Wehrmacht prisoners. For the first time, a larger group of Jewish prisoners, almost exclusively from Poland but also including a few Frenchmen and Hungarians, was transferred to the SS-Baubrigade I on March 21, 1945. This group, in particular, was subject to mistreatment by Fehrenbacher and by the commander of the guards, Otto Högelow.<sup>3</sup>

From December 1944 a larger group of Sonderabteilung Wehrmacht (Special Detachment Wehrmacht, SAW) prisoners were part of the construction brigade. The SAW men were without exception soldiers who, after having been subjected to various disciplinary measures by military courts, were found not fit to serve in a Wehrmacht punishment battalion. Such cases could be sent by the military to the police or the Gestapo for incarceration in a concentration camp for a limited time. As “Transitory Prisoners II,” such soldiers, if they had not been condemned to death, were sent to Buchenwald from August 1944 and from November to the Mittelbau concentration camp. An SS-Baubrigade I list named “Transitory Prisoners II (SAW) detained here” and dated March 1, 1945, shows 296 persons in this group.<sup>4</sup>

At least 34 deaths occurred in Sollstedt up to the middle of April 1945. Several handwritten entries give the deaths as occurring between April 5 and 13, 1945. Survivors hold the commander of the construction brigade, Georg Braun, responsible for the deaths. It is alleged that, on his orders, SAW members were forced to “run the gauntlet” as punishment for infractions. He forced these men with the words “I want to see blood” to run between the camp prisoners who were lined up in two rows and had them beaten to death; some were said to have been shot after the chase.<sup>5</sup>

In February 1945, the SS-Baubrigade I in Sollstedt, without changing its location or status, took on the tasks of a railway construction brigade. On February 10, 1945, Gerhard Weigel, the “Inspekteur sämtlicher Baubrigaden” (Inspector of Selected Construction Brigades), assigned SS-Commander Braun to the Reichsbahn (German National Railways) Directorate at Halle-Northeim. The main task remained that of

storing items in the mines. During an inspection of Sollstedt on February 10, 1945, Weigel praised the “good progress” of storing clothes and equipment for several divisions of the Waffen-SS.<sup>6</sup>

Shootings, mass escapes, and aimless transports throughout the German Reich characterized the evacuation. On April 5, 1945, the Sollstedt prisoners were forced to march 72.4 kilometers (45 miles) in 24 hours to the Hohlstedt subcamp. During the march, prisoners who were unable to continue are said to have been shot. At midday on April 7, 1945, around 900 prisoners were loaded onto a train at the Wahlhausen Railway Station.<sup>7</sup>

At first, the train headed north and reached Berlin-Grunewald on April 10, 1945, where it is reported to have received an order to head to Norway. Near Wittenberge on the Elbe, the transport had to retreat in front of Soviet troops. It was here at the latest that SS-Commander Braun might have received the Kammler order he mentioned in 1952 that the SS-Baubrigade I was to go to Steyr. It is possible that the construction brigade now became a railway construction brigade and was given a new order. SS-Oberscharführer Högelow stated in 1952 that the construction brigade in Hohlstedt “was reassigned again and this time as a Railway Replenishment Construction Unit” and was deployed as such until the whole transport dissolved.<sup>8</sup>

The train altered direction and traveled via Pirna and Prague to Pilsen, which, according to a record of a former prisoner, it reached on April 21, 1945. After a further journey, lasting a week, the construction brigade reached Steyr on April 28, 1945. At least 20 prisoners died on the journey or were shot when they sought cover under a railway wagon during a bombing raid. The train was reportedly used by more than 160 prisoners to escape and was subjected several times to bombing attacks. It is not possible to determine how many prisoners reached Steyr. From Steyr they were transferred to the Mauthausen subcamp Steyr-Münichholz. Two days after reaching Mauthausen, on May 5, 1945, American tanks freed the camp.

After the war, the commanders of the SS-Baubrigade I escaped criminal punishment. Because of his membership in the SS, Högelow was imprisoned in Esterwegen until 1949; subsequently kept in detention for trial, he was released in 1951. Later investigations against him were fruitless. The Freiburg State Court sentenced Fehrenbacher in 1955 to a term of seven years in a penitentiary.

**SOURCES** The camp was described in an outline for the first time by Frank Baranowski, *Rüstungsprojekte in der Region Nordhausen, Worbis und Heiligenstadt während der NS-Zeit* (Duderstadt: Mecke-Druck, 1998). Jens-Christian Wagner’s, *Produktion des Todes. Das KZ Mittelbau-Dora* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2001) used this work in a study on the Mittelbau concentration camp. The Sollstedt subcamp received more attention in a book on the SS construction brigades: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

The most important sources are the investigative files at BA-L, 404 AR-Z 57/67 and 410 AR 63/77.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. File note dated October 10, 1944, ITS, Sachdokumenten-Ordner Buchenwald Nr. 47, p. 169.
2. See the report of the Dutch Searching Service from August 1948, AG-NG, Ng. 6.4.90.
3. See Waffen-SS-BB I, “Namentliche Liste der am 21. März 1945 vom KL Mittelbau zur hiesigen Einheit überstellten 250 Häftlinge,” March 25, 1945, SVG, Tr 184.600/31-R.429.
4. SVG, TR 184.600/21.
5. See the “Geständnis Högelows” written by prisoners dated May 1945, BA-L, IV 404 AR-Z 57/67, pp. 128–130.
6. Der Inspekteur der SS-Frontarbeiter und SS Baubrigaden, March 2, 1945, BA-B, NS 19/771, entry for February 10, 1945.
7. See Helmut Knöller’s report, AG-NG, Nr. 1317.
8. Otto Högelow, June 16, 1952, BA-L, 410 AR 63/77, p. 52R.

## SPREENHAGEN (SACHSENHAUSEN) (SS-BB II)

For a short time at the end of 1944, the SS-Baubrigade II stationed in Berlin since April 1944 had a subcamp in Spreenhagen (County Oder-Spree). A list of the guards of the SS-Baubrigade II of January 1945 mentions this subcamp for the first time; SS-Rottenführer Wilhelm Kopiska is listed as its commander.<sup>1</sup> A report to the Kommandantur of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, dated January 25, 1945, includes a note that the Spreenhagen labor detachment was reassigned to the SS-Construction Management in Bad Saarow (County Oder-Spree) on January 1, 1945.<sup>2</sup>

As the Sachsenhausen subcamp Ketschendorf in Fürstenwalde (County Oder-Spree) maintained a construction site among other places also at Spreenhagen, it is likely that the prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade II had to work there too.<sup>3</sup> The SS-Construction Management organizations “Reich Nord” and “Kurmark” maintained several sites at Bad Saarow, where prisoners of a Sachsenhausen subcamp located in Bad Saarow had to work.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is also possible that the prisoners of the construction brigades were transferred there in January 1945.

**SOURCES** Reviewing the records of the investigations by the ZdL about the Berlin camps of the SS-Baubrigade II held at BA-L (IV 406 AR 594-596/73) did not yield any further information.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. SS-BB II, January 1, 1945, RGVA, 1367/1/14, pp. 32–41.
2. Ibid., p. 41.
3. Stefanie Endlich, ed., *Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus. Eine Dokumentation* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1999), 2:275.
4. Ibid., 2:239.



## **WIEDA (BUCHENWALD, MITTELBAU, AND SACHSENHAUSEN) (SS-BB III)**

The SS-Baubrigade III was based in Wieda, a small village in the Harz Mountains, from May 1944 to April 1945. The location put it in the radius of the Mittelbau concentration camp complex then being established.

Hans Kammler, head of Amtsgruppe C (Construction) in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), was responsible for establishing this camp. After the sites for assembling the long-distance A4 (Aggregat 4) rocket (the later V-2) were bombed, Albert Speer, Adolf Hitler, and Heinrich Himmler decided in mid-August 1943 to push for the enlargement, "with the heavy utilization" of concentration camp prisoners, of an underground facility in the Harz Mountains. Himmler appointed Kammler to carry out the construction.<sup>1</sup> The whole project was coordinated under the so-called Mittelwerk GmbH, established in September 1943.

Kammler wanted to use the SS construction brigades to build a new rail line so the existing Osterhagen to Nordhausen line could be used exclusively for armaments industry transportation. The Mittelwerk GmbH entrusted management and construction of the rail line to the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways), which in turn revived an older plan to build a 22-kilometer-long (13.7-mile-long) track (called the "Helmetalbahn") south of the existing line and through the Helme valley. The Berlin company Tiefbau AG Julius Berger undertook the major excavation work.

The construction of Helmetalbahn dominated the prisoners' life until the end of the war. SS-Baubrigade III was assigned the westernmost of the three construction zones, the section from Osterhagen to Mackenrode. The administration for this section was in Mackenrode, and the SS-Baubrigade III established three subcamps along this part of the line: at Osterhagen, Nüxei, and Mackenrode.

After the Cologne camp with its remaining 311 prisoners of the SS-BB III was dismantled, and the Wieda camp was set up, the brigade began its work on May 16, 1944. Then 700 prisoners from the Buchenwald concentration camp joined them on June 7, 1944.<sup>2</sup>

An empty clubhouse of a marksmen's association formed the center of the camp in Wieda. Around it were other buildings that served as the brigade's administrative offices, a kitchen, a laundry, and an infirmary, and the grounds were fenced in and outfitted with watchtowers. On average, about 100 prisoners were housed here. Living conditions in this auxiliary camp generally were better than in the subcamps, especially as Wieda had the central kitchen. In addition, inmates here did not have to do exhausting construction work but, instead, either remained in the camp, built barracks in Niedersachswerfen, worked for private persons, or were set to work in or by the communal administration.

Brigade guards lived in barracks built for them close to the camp. Unlike in Cologne, where police and auxiliaries had been recruited, here the SS relied on Luftwaffe soldiers, in any case available because the Luftwaffe was having difficul-

ties with its supply lines. They came under the command of the SS as of September 1, 1944. In January 1945, the SS-Baubrigade III guards included an SS leader, 42 SS noncommissioned officers, and 132 SS men.<sup>3</sup>

The integration of the Wieda camp into the system of camps centered on Mittelbau meant death loomed more sharply over the prisoners. A small infirmary was set up in Wieda for minor cases, while other cases were sent to the Buchenwald auxiliary camp Dora or, starting in May 1944, to the Ellrich-Juliushütte camp that became part of Mittelbau and after January 1945 to the Boelcke-Kaserne. After June 1944, all transports to and from the construction brigade went through Mittelbau, without exception. As of July 1944, the guard details came under the control of the "SS-Standort Mittelbau"; and by October 1944, the construction brigades in the Harz came under the control of what had become the independent Mittelbau concentration camp. The transfer of control in January 1945 to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp was pro forma.

In the first few weeks, a surprisingly strong interaction developed between the Wieda camp and the surrounding community. Soldiers serving as guards played soccer with the prisoners on the sports field, and it is said that after the game they all marched singing through the village. One female villager reported: "In the first weeks after the camp was set up, it was like the annual fair. After work, in the evenings, the prisoners sat in the cleared area in front of the marksmen's tent, and some of them, especially the Gypsies, had instruments, mandolins or guitars, and made music. Many villagers, both young and old, stopped on the main street in front of the barbed-wire fence to listen in."<sup>4</sup>

This apparent lack of discipline in the camp resulted in the dismissal, in June 1944, of Karl Völkner as leader of the construction brigade. He had been in command since September 1942 and was now transferred to the Flossenbürg concentration camp. Until July 20, 1944, a certain SS-Oberscharführer Freys, who had been at the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria, temporarily replaced him. SS-Obersturmführer Fritz Behrens replaced him in turn.

Following Behrens's appointment, conditions in the camp deteriorated, and prisoners were replaced. On July 27, 1944, groups of prisoners from SS-Baubrigade III were taken away to Dora from the sites where they were working. Two days later, around 1,000 new prisoners from Dora filled the four camps. With this ruthless replacement, relationships that had developed over the course of a year and a half between at least some of the prisoners were broken. Paul Rassinier, who learned about the SS-Baubrigade III while in the Dora infirmary, accurately remarked that "in less than two months, Wieda became as hard and inhumane as Dora."<sup>5</sup> Behrens remained the leader of SS-Baubrigade III until just before the end of the war but was replaced in early April 1945 by SS-Untersturmführer Karl Merkle.

Some 16 deaths are registered as having occurred up to the time the brigade came under the control of Mittelbau.<sup>6</sup> During the summer, the living conditions deteriorated rapidly, so

that by the end of August 1944, 300 prisoners incapable of working were taken away to the Ellrich-Juliushütte camp.<sup>7</sup> The main reason for prisoner exhaustion lay in the heavy construction work demanded of them; the pace of work dictated by Kammler and the Armaments Ministry was also repeatedly increased.<sup>8</sup> According to Georges Pieper, camp elder (Lagerältester) and Kapo in the construction brigade's office and hence a good source, death rates increased markedly in the winter of 1944–1945: he recalls 74 prisoners dying between December 30, 1944, and April 7, 1945.<sup>9</sup> In early 1945, the SS-Baubrigade III received Jewish prisoners for the first time: about 200 of them were transferred from Dora, though by the end of March they were transferred to the SS-Baubrigade IV.

For the most part the railway line was double-tracked, and many bridges and sections were already finished when work had to stop at the end of March 1945 due to the advancing Allied forces. In a report prepared after the war by the building department of the Reichsbahn office in Kassel, the mass use of prisoners received only scant mention: "In 1944/45, a new rail line for goods traffic from Osterhagen to Nordhausen was built to relieve the Northeim to Nordhausen line, length about thirty kilometers [18.6 miles]. . . . Several thousand men (prisoners and concentration camp inmates) worked on it. Work stopped at the end of the war due to the American advance."<sup>10</sup>

On April 5, 1945, the prisoners from the Nüxei and Mackenrode subcamps were taken to Wieda, and the next day, so were the prisoners from the Osterhagen subcamp. On April 7, 1,135 prisoners were marched, in a northwesterly direction, through the Harz Mountains. A train took those who were ill, numbering somewhat more than 300.

On April 9, 1945, SS-Baubrigade III, now reassembled, left the Wernigerode railroad station in a single train: camp leader Merkle had by now disappeared. The train made it as far as Letzlingen, a village north of Magdeburg at about the same latitude as Berlin. About 900 prisoners were able to flee here during a bombing raid, though during the course of the day, 200 were recaptured and returned to the train by SS guards. The SS then forced these 200 on a march at whose end, on April 24, 1945, 50 prisoners remained to be liberated. Some in this group were able to escape en route, but most had collapsed dead by the wayside or had been shot.

A second group of around 600 prisoners who had been recaptured near Letzlingen was marched in a southeasterly direction. Here, too, there were mass escapes and shootings, whereby civilians and men from the German Home Guard (Volkssturm) particularly distinguished themselves. Around 500 prisoners of this group were liberated near Burgstall on April 14, 1945. The ill, who remained behind on the train at Letzlingen, were probably the victims of the infamous massacre at Gardelegen. According to estimates by historian Joachim Neander, of the 1,135 prisoners who left Wieda, only about 700 lived long enough to experience liberation.

**SOURCES** A local group, the AgSSüHR, has collected considerable material about the SS-Baubrigade III camp, in-

cluding maps, photographs, and reports by survivors and eyewitnesses. See Firouz Vladi, "Der Bau der Helmetalbahn, der Zwangsarbeitseinsatz der III. und IV. SS-Baubrigade, die KZ-Aussenlager Mackenrode, Nüxei, Osterhagen und Wieda sowie Ellrich und Günzerode," in *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn: Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südharz in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie den Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945*, ed. AgSSüHR (Duderstadt: Verlag Mecke Druck, 2000), pp. 40–133. Since the 1960s, Manfred Bornemann has also collected material and evidence about the camp in *Geheimprojekt Mittelbau: Vom zentralen Öllager des Deutschen Reiches zur größten Raketenfabrik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Bonn: Bernard & Graefe Verlag, 1994). Joachim Neander's dissertation investigated this particular death march in detail. See Neander, "Das Konzentrationslager 'Mittelbau' in der Endphase der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur: Zur Geschichte des letzten im 'Dritten Reich' gegründeten selbständigen Konzentrationslagers unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Auflösungsphase" (Ph.D. diss., University of Bremen, 1996). A recent monograph has also addressed the particular situation of the SS-Baubrigade III in Wieda and its relation to the Mittelbau concentration camp complex: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmler's SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

Sources are scattered, although the aforementioned literature provides initial guidance. Important collections of sources can be found at the THStA-W (NS 4 Buchenwald, KZ Buchenwald and Haftanstalten). The AG-MD holds copies of the transport lists from Warsaw (KL Buchenwald Nr. 36, KL Mittelbau Nr. 9), reports from survivors, and some of the files of the local building administration at Mackenrode. The investigation files of the NWHStA-(D) (Gerichte Rep.: 118/1174-1190, 1338-1349) are also of relevance, as are the holdings at the ZdL (IV 406 AR 85/67, IV 429 AR 1304/67) at BA-L.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. RFSS Heinrich Himmler, August 21, 1943, BA-B, R 3/1583, 31a.
2. Stärkemeldungen, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 230, pp. 77, 112, 117; *ibid.*, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a; KL Buchenwald, Transportliste, June 6, 1944 (incorrectly dated July), AG-B, 59-110, Bd. 2.
3. Stärkemeldung SS-BB III, January 25, 1945, CChIdK, 1376-1-14, p.35.
4. Emilie Denecke, June 1963, cited by Manfred Bornemann, *Geheimprojekt Mittelbau: Vom zentralen Öllager des Deutschen Reiches zur größten Raketenfabrik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Bonn: Bernard & Graefe Verlag, 1994), p. 211.
5. Paul Rassiner, *Die Lüge des Odysseus* (Wiesbaden, 1959), p.145, cited by Firouz Vladi, "Der Bau der Helmetalbahn, der Zwangsarbeitseinsatz der III. und IV. SS-Baubrigade, die KZ-Aussenlager Mackenrode, Nüxei, Osterhagen und Wieda sowie Ellrich und Günzerode," in *Der Bau der Helmetalbahn: Ein Bericht von der Eisenbahngeschichte, den KZ-Häftlingslagern und der Zwangsarbeit im Südharz in den Jahren 1944–45 sowie*

den *Evakuierungsmärschen im April 1945*, ed. AgSSüHR (Duderstadt: Verlag Mecke Druck, 2000), p. 63.

6. Tagesmeldungen, May 13, June 7, June 29, October 10, 12, 14, 23, and 27, 1944, in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a.

7. Change Reports, in THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald Dora Dok./K 395.

8. Reichsarzt SS und Polizei, June 23, 1944, BA, NS 48/26.

9. Georges Pieper, May 2, 1945, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 85/67, p. 46.

10. Oberbauabteilung RBD Kassel, April 25, 1954, BA, R 5 Anh. I/46, p. 141R.

## WILHELMSHAVEN (NEUENGAMME) (SS-BB II)

Prisoners from the Bremen-based SS-Baubrigade II often worked in Wilhelmshaven in 1943, and a subcamp as well as a bomb search detail existed there for a time.

Initially, this strategically important harbor city was to receive 500 prisoners,<sup>1</sup> as a massive area bombing on the night of September 14, 1942, had caused more damage than all of the previous attacks. In early October 1942, Walter Temp, the city's director of construction and head of its construction administration since May 1939, began the relevant negotiations. The Naval Station detail received permission to house the prisoners at Breddewarden, a work camp of the naval garrison.

November 3, 1942, saw the heaviest attack to date on Wilhelmshaven. Bremen's Senator Fischer, as Deputy Reich Defense Commissar, again offered Wilhelmshaven 500 prisoners from the SS-Baubrigade II, and Temp wanted to make them available for cleanup work to the Naval director's office and to the dockyards. But he was unable to recruit the necessary guards, as neither the Naval Station nor the city commandant wanted to make the needed forces available. In pleading tones, Temp wrote to the police president on November 12, 1942: "I am thus forced to draw to your attention that because of this failure, the possibility of removing or cleaning-up the bomb damage in Wilhelmshaven appears to be threatened, and that in a manner that is almost irresponsible. . . . It is therefore requested that the police make available sixty guards for the prisoners in 'protective custody,' possibly augmented by Luftwaffe and SS men."<sup>2</sup> But the police president could not help either. When four construction companies then occupied the quarters that had been proposed, the possibility of using the prisoners was regarded, at least for the time being, as a dead issue.

Wilhelmshaven only received a detachment of the SS-Baubrigade II in the spring of 1943, although the exact date it began its work is unknown. However, it likely began in the wake of the U.S. Army Air Forces offensive that had repeatedly carried out daylight air raids against Wilhelmshaven, starting on January 27, 1943. The city was so heavily bombed on March 22 that for the first time the district leader painted

a picture of the downfall of Wilhelmshaven. It is therefore likely that the 175-strong prisoner detachment, whose existence in Wilhelmshaven until August 7, 1943, is confirmed, was sent to the city after this March attack. It was recalled to Bremen on August 8, 1943, as the larger part of SS-Baubrigade II then was to be transferred to Hamburg.<sup>3</sup>

It has not been possible to determine in which building the prisoners in Wilhelmshaven were housed. A former prisoner stated that the camp was located at the navy harbor, but he himself was only in Wilhelmshaven in the fall of 1943.<sup>4</sup>

After the Wilhelmshaven camp was disbanded in August 1943, prisoners from the construction brigade did return to Wilhelmshaven as members of bomb detection squads. Since February 1943, there had been considerable problems with unexploded ordnance. From September 29 to October 21, 1943, and again from November 5 to December 22, 1943, 30 prisoners were sent each time to the city to do the dangerous work of disarming and removing unexploded bombs.<sup>5</sup>

There is scarcely any information about the conditions prisoners faced: no survivors' reports from the SS-Baubrigade II refer to Wilhelmshaven details. Eyewitness Wenzel W. mentions Wilhelmshaven simply as a location where they were deployed.<sup>6</sup> Only Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko reports on working in the Wilhelmshaven bomb detection squad. According to him, the sites were cordoned off, and prisoners had to disarm the bombs themselves. In his time there, eight prisoners were killed while doing this dangerous work.<sup>7</sup> However, none of the prisoners in this commando are listed by name in the Neuengamme death registers.<sup>8</sup>

**SOURCES** The use of the SS-Baubrigade II commando was first mentioned in a longer study of the SS-Baubrigaden: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ : Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005). An older study on forced labor in Wilhelmshaven does not mention these prisoners: Günther Heuzeroth and Peter Szyuka, *Die im Dreck lebten: Ausländische ZwangsarbeiterInnen und Kriegsgefangene in Wilhelmshaven, Delmenhorst, Bremen und Bremerhaven; Ereignisse, Augenzeugenberichte und Dokumente* (Oldenburg: Druck und Verlagscooperative GmbH, 1994). For background on the bombing of Wilhelmshaven, see Rolf Uphoff, *Als der Tag zur Nacht wurde—und die Nacht zum Tage: Wilhelmshaven im Bombenkrieg* (Oldenburg, 1992), pp. 98–108, 128–145. For information on Temp, see Ingo Sommer, *Die Stadt der 500.000: NS-Stadtplanung und Architektur in Wilhelmshaven* (Braunschweig: Friedr. Vieweg & Sohn, 1993), pp. 29, 375; and Werner Durth and Niels Gutschow, *Träume in Trümmern: Planungen zum Wiederaufbau zerstörter Städte im Westen Deutschlands 1940–1950*, vol. 2, *Städte* (Braunschweig: Friedr. Vieweg & Sohn, 1988), pp. 1035–1051.

There are very few relevant primary sources. In addition to the above-mentioned reports of former prisoners, an exchange of letters exists in the ASt-Wil (4600/6), and there are a few references in a file from the RFSS (BA-B, NS 19/14). Other references may be found in ZdL (at BA-L), AG-NG, and FGNS-H.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

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## NOTES

1. File Note, October 15, 1942, ASt-Wil, 4600/6.
2. Letter, November 2, 1942; and File Note, November 5, 1942, in *ibid.*
3. SS-WVHA, November 9, 1943, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 26.
4. Alexander P., March 28, 1973, BA-L, ZdL IV 404 AR-Z 159/73, p. 109.
5. SS-WVHA, February 14, 1944, in BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 34.
6. Wenzel W., May 20, 1957, ZdL IV 406 AR 594/73, p. 242.
7. Pawel Wasiljewitsch Pawlenko, May 19, 1992, AG-NG, Nr. 1576.
8. Toten-Nachweis von Aussenlagern, March 31, 1943, to March 17, 1944, FGNS-H, Archive Hans Schwarz.

**WUPPERTAL (BUCHENWALD) (SS-BB IV)**

Between August 1943 and May 1944 the SS-Baubrigade IV consisting of prisoners from the Buchenwald concentration camp, was stationed in Wuppertal. The first 50 prisoners reached the city on August 24, 1943.<sup>1</sup> Gradually the prisoner numbers were increased—at first to 100 on September 9, then to 400 on October 13, and to 592, the highest number, at the end of November.<sup>2</sup>

The decision to establish this SS construction brigade was said to be that of Albert Speer. A Royal Air Force offensive against the Ruhr, which started in the spring of 1943, resulted in a marked reduction in armaments production. Wuppertal, on the edge of the Ruhr, had largely avoided the large air raids until 1943, although major attacks on the districts of Barmen (May 29, 1943) and Elberfeld (June 25, 1943) had caused considerable destruction. The SS-Baubrigade IV was to carry out “reconstruction in the Ruhr industrial area.” A report by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), dated February 14, 1944, states: “The SS-Baubrigade IV is being deployed in rescue operations and opening up the main streets for transport. The rubble caused by buildings which collapsed due to rain and frost is being removed. Excavation and repair of the destroyed gas and water conduits is taking place. The work is continuing so as to, in the first instance, create accommodations for workers in the Ruhr.”<sup>3</sup>

The head of the Office for Emergency Measures in Wuppertal, the city’s building councilor Hermann Kell, and SS-Standartenführer Kurt Benn coordinated the operation. Senior Administration Officer Benn as head of the Action Staff Wuppertal City Administration and as member of the Action Staff of the District had good connections to the special staffs of the police, Nazi Party, and mayor. The construction of the camp lasted until September 1943. Benn could give all offices directions to remove bomb damage, and he directed workers to particular sites for the removal of rubble.<sup>4</sup> During this time the prisoners were already working for the city administration.<sup>5</sup>

The SS-BB IV was accommodated at Königshöher Weg 7, a Catholic school in the Elberfeld district of Arrenberg, whose

buildings had been destroyed in the summer of 1943. The advance detachment of 50 prisoners first had to establish quarters at Königshöher Weg. An inspection report prepared by the Buchenwald concentration camp doctor in September 1943 states the following: “The Wuppertal subcamp was occupied on August 24, 1943. The prisoners have been accommodated in a school, which has been badly damaged by bombs, but whose renovation is taking place with all available means. Prisoners as well as troops are accommodated provisionally in the not yet renovated school classrooms. Washing and bathing facilities are provisional and are in the process of being installed. The toilets are adequate. A kitchen is not available at this time. Food for the prisoners is cooked in two field kitchens.”<sup>6</sup>

The leader of the SS-Baubrigade IV was at first SS-Obersturmführer Arthur Knaust, an engineer, born on June 26, 1909, in Güsten (Sachsen-Anhalt). He was replaced in October 1943 by SS-Obersturmführer Dietrich. Otto Diembt, promoted to SS-Obersturmführer on January 30, 1945, commanded the brigade from December 1943 to February 1945. Diembt was born on March 18, 1907, in Bad Flinsberg. From 1926 to 1939 he worked as a bookkeeper in his hometown. He took part in the French campaign. After that he was a member of the SS-Fourth Death’s Head Unit in the Buchenwald concentration camp. After a six-month training course in Dachau and the SS-Junker School in Braunschweig, he was sent to the SS-Baubrigade.<sup>7</sup> The guards consisted primarily of police from the 6th Police District, who were based in the nearby Arrenberg Strasse. In the school yard there was a barracks for the guards.<sup>8</sup>

The SS-Baubrigade IV in Wuppertal has not been widely researched. Survivors after the war stated unanimously that there was no mistreatment or violent deaths.<sup>9</sup> In fact, of the 600 prisoners, there is only 1 documented death in February 1944.<sup>10</sup> To a large extent this can be attributed to the behavior of Diembt, who after the war received an unusually positive certification from several prisoners. Richard O. said the following about him in 1971:

Otto Diembt is probably the only camp leader, who I met during my almost ten-year imprisonment who has deservedly earned that we former prisoners stand up for him and with good conscience. When I, a former protective custody camp prisoner, make such a statement for an SS officer and camp commandant, I do so as a moral duty and with gratitude, because we were treated decently by him and above all we have him to thank for our lives. Hundreds of Poles, Russians, French, Czechs, Romanians, Hungarians, and Greeks can confirm at any time that Otto Diembt always treated us prisoners as humans.<sup>11</sup>

According to the former prisoner Josef Sch., Diembt had always treated him “tactfully and correctly” and that he had never forgotten that “human beings stood in front of him.”<sup>12</sup>

Another prisoner, Theodor E., shortly after the war raised his voice for Diembt and stated that Diembt had constantly discussed with the prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade IV the work, work hours, the prisoners' wishes, and the food supply. Theodor E. stated that Diembt, after assuming his position in Wuppertal, had first ensured that the prisoners from midday on Saturday did not have to work for the rest of the weekend and individually were even allowed to leave the camp. This freedom was only taken away when a directive was received from the Buchenwald camp commandant.<sup>13</sup> Contemporary documents confirm this. Apparently, until the middle of January 1944, the prisoners had to do much less work than elsewhere. On Saturdays there was less work than on weekdays. Until May 1944, there was as a rule no work on Sundays.<sup>14</sup> Diembt had to change this practice at the beginning of 1944—a conference on January 18, 1944, determined that “immediately work on Saturdays shall be for the same length of time as on the other weekdays.”<sup>15</sup>

Wuppertal had a particularly favorable prisoner structure and a relatively good supply of food. The German prisoners, who were the prisoner-functionaries, were for the most part political prisoners who did not encourage favoritism.<sup>16</sup> While the supply of food appeared to have been poor, it improved over a longer period when the large detachment was deployed to the heavily destroyed slaughterhouses in Elberfeld. Richard O. stated: “After six weeks we were close to starvation. Then 250 men were deployed to the slaughterhouse. . . . We were there about a year. We recovered and were even able to get some of the food to the prisoners in the camp with the result that not one of the prisoners had to suffer from hunger. From the butchers we received sausages and meat.”<sup>17</sup>

There were also many contacts with the resistance organization and the “Eastern workers” (*Ostarbeitern*), who were in the surrounding forced labor camps. The prisoners Karl Possögel, Sergej Selkin, and Dimitrij Maksimov formed a resistance group that was to prepare an armed resistance. Pamphlets and oral propaganda were composed with the German workers and the *Ostarbeitern*, translated, and distributed. As there were many small work detachments in the city, it was difficult for the SS and police guards to stop contact with the civilian population. Diembt is said to have instructed the SS not to prevent such contact.<sup>18</sup>

The few escape attempts in Wuppertal also indicate that the conditions in the subcamp were relatively bearable. There were six escape attempts from the SS-Baubrigade IV, five of which occurred shortly before it was transferred to the Harz. All the attempts were a success, and none of the escapees were recaptured and returned to Buchenwald.<sup>19</sup> In Wuppertal, unlike other cities, there appears to have been more help from the local population.

Noteworthy is an event that former prisoner Karl Possögel described. On a Sunday, 50 prisoners, guarded by an SS guard, demonstrated in the city. Possögel stated that in April 1945:

One Sunday the prisoners carried out a regular demonstration in Wuppertal. The police were off duty on Sundays, and so one Sunday a Kommando of approximately fifty prisoners went to work under their Blockführer alone. After doing two hours' work the prisoners in their convicts' clothes and with shaven heads marched off into the center of Elberfeld. For about two hours they went in disciplined formation through the streets singing their camp songs, and with the Blockführer following two hundred yards in the rear, so that people would not think he belonged to the procession. No action was taken against the prisoners on their return to the camp.<sup>20</sup>

Although in Wuppertal there was 1 death, it should not be forgotten that between August 1943 and May 1944, 58 prisoners were returned to Buchenwald.<sup>21</sup> What happened to a large transport in the middle of December 1943 is not known, as neither names nor prisoner numbers have survived. Possibly this transport followed a selection either shortly before or after the camp leader was changed and in which prisoners who were sick or who had fallen out of favor were transported away. What happened to 29 prisoners can be explained: after an average stay of three months in Buchenwald, 7 had died, 3 stayed in the camp until it was liberated, 11 were transferred to other Buchenwald subcamps, and 3 were released. There is no information as to what happened to 5 prisoners; 7 prisoners died after they were transferred to Buchenwald, including 5 who were transferred there while Diembt was the camp leader.

The dissolution of the camp began in Wuppertal on May 7, 1944.<sup>22</sup> The SS-Baubrigade IV was sent to Ellrich, a village in the Harz Mountains.

**SOURCES** The Wuppertal camp has only relatively recently been researched in a study on the SS-Baubrigaden: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ : Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

Primary sources for the SS-Baubrigade IV begin with the relatively complete documents in THStA-W (Collections “NS 4 Buchenwald,” “KZ Buchenwald und Haftanstalten”). There are significant gaps in the ASt-W for the period from 1933 to 1945, which makes research difficult. The files of the ZdL (IV 406 AR-Z 69/72) at BA-L and denazification proceedings against Otto Diembt (BA-K, Z 42 V/608) are of particular importance. Diembt was acquitted. Additional material may be found at ITS and NARA.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. KL Buchenwald (Lagerarzt), September 6, 1943, THStA-W, KZ Buchenwald Nr. 9, p. 290.
2. The numbers are recorded in *ibid.*, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a.
3. SS-WVHA Amt C, February 14, 1944, BA-B, NS 19/14, p. 36.

4. Stadt Wuppertal (Wasserwerke), November 12, 1943; and Stadt Wuppertal (Gaswerk), November 22, 1943, ASt-W, S XV 23.

5. KL Buchenwald, Forderungsnachweis, September 1943, ITS Sachdokumenten-Ordner Buchenwald Nr. 51, p. 320.

6. Buchenwald Concentration Camp (Camp Doctor), September 6, 1943, in THStAW, KZ Buchenwald Nr. 9, p. 290.

7. BDC/SSO, in BA.

8. Otto Diembt, August 29, 1963, in BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 69/72, p. 90; and Franz K., April 17, 1972, in *ibid.*, p. 287.

9. See Karl Possögel, April 30, 1945, NARA, RG 338, 000-50-009 (Buchenwald-Case), Box 442, Folder 2, as well as statement by four other former prisoners in ZdL, IV 406 AR-Z 69/72, pp. 96–98, 179, 265, 287.

10. Wuppertal, February 4, 1944, in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a.

11. Richard O., January 21, 1971, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 69/72, p. 179R.

12. Josef Sch., February 9, 1948, BA-K, Z 42 V/608, p. 15.

13. Theodor E., January 29, 1947, in *ibid.*, p. 9.

14. See the lists in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 230, pp. 18, 38, 51, 81.

15. SS-BB IV, January 19, 1944, in ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 69/72, p. 7.

16. Emil W., May 23, 1967, in *ibid.*, p. 98.

17. Richard O., January 21, 1971, in *ibid.*, p. 179R; auch Bericht des Schlacht- und Tierhofes für das Jahr 1943, ASt-W, S X 25.

18. Karl Possögel, April 30, 1945, NARA, RG 338, 000-50-009 (Buchenwald-Case), Box 442, Folder 2; and Judgment of the 18. Spruchkammer des Spruchgerichts Hiddesen, April 2, 1948, BA-K, Z 42 V/608, p. 54.

19. Research on these cases is based on THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a, and compared with the database “Fluchten” (Escapes) in the AG-B.

20. Karl Possögel, April 30, 1945, NARA, RG 338, 000-50-009 (Buchenwald-Case), Box 442, Folder 2.

21. The transfers were compiled from information in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a; and research was conducted in AG-B by Harry Stein.

22. THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 230, p. 81.

Ausrüstungswerke GmbH (DAW). About half of the railroad cars housed the prisoners. In addition, there were railroad cars for the kitchen, infirmary, equipment, commandant's office, and accommodation for the guards. Most of the trains carried a Wehrmacht anti-aircraft detachment with two four-barreled anti-aircraft guns as protection against bombing attacks.

The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade originated from the Buchenwald SS-Baubrigade V, which in September 1944 was transferred from Normandy to the Harz Mountains. The prisoners, who at first were distributed to various subcamps, were gathered together in Sangerhausen and on October 5, 1944, shipped to Osnabrück. The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade was allocated 180 prisoners, who were sent from Buchenwald and the Mittelbau concentration camp to Heringen. This group was destined for the planned SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade III. However, in the end, it was not formed.<sup>1</sup> Administratively, the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade was originally part of the newly independent Mittelbau concentration camp from the end of October 1944 and was taken over by the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in January 1945.

The leader of the SS-EBB V was SS-Obersturmführer Helmut Landau, who was born on February 8, 1906, in Krefeld. Landau, an architect, joined the Nazi Party in 1931 and from April 1940 was part of the WVHA (Office C-Construction). In March 1944, he was ordered to the general staff of the SS-Baubrigade V and in the middle of October 1944 took command of the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade.<sup>2</sup> In December 1944, there were 62 guards.<sup>3</sup> The largest number of the guards was railroad men, who were assigned for short periods to SS battalions in the concentration camps and then assigned to the railroad brigades. Most of them were born in the 1890s, and they were almost without exception of low SS rank; 21 names of transferred railroad men to the SS-EBB are known.<sup>4</sup>

The trains of the construction brigades were mostly stationed on sidings near train stations, so that the prisoners could reach their work location quickly. The SS-EBB V was quartered at the Osnabrück switching yard; a smaller detachment was based in Hasbergen.<sup>5</sup> The SS-EBB works stood clearly in the context of the deployment of the V weapons. After the war, Landau stated: “The Brigade had the task to remove bomb damage at railroad facilities in this area, so that at night at least one railroad track could be used along this route. This was necessary to transport satisfactorily the V-1 weapons.”<sup>6</sup>

Heavy physical labor was the main work for the railroad construction brigades: filling bomb craters, removing destroyed railroad tracks, and laying them anew. In Osnabrück there was also a “city detachment” that stayed to clean up the city. This detachment was popular among the prisoners as it was notable for relatively correct prisoner foremen and SS guards and because it was possible to obtain additional food. This was also the case for the “construction field command” of the construction brigade, whose prisoners built temporary accommodations for SS people in an allotment garden.<sup>7</sup> The deployment of the prisoners in the city can be traced back to

### **SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADE V (OSNABRÜCK) (BUCHENWALD, MITTELBAU, AND SACHSENHAUSEN)**

The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade V (SS-EBB V) was the first of eight SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigaden that the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WHVA) established in the late summer of 1944 as mobile concentration camp prisoner detachments. As a rule, each of these “concentration camps on rails” consisted of 504 prisoners plus guards. Their primary task was to repair the destroyed German railroad network. The trains, which were up to 50 railroad cars long, were refitted in the factories of the concentration camps in the SS's own Deutsche



the initiative of Osnabrück mayor Erich Gärtner, who even endeavored to be assigned the coordination of the prisoner deployments.<sup>8</sup>

From the autumn of 1944, SS-Sturmbannführer Weigel was the Inspector of All Construction Brigades (Inspekteur sämtlicher Baubrigaden) in the WHVA. He reported to Hans Kammler (WVHA, Amtsgruppe C) after an inspection of the SS-Baubrigaden on February 12 and 13, 1945: "The performance of the SS-BB [Baubrigaden] is exemplary. According to the commanders, the Organisation Todt [OT], which is also deployed there, has not reached the same standard."<sup>9</sup> This high performance was extracted from the weak prisoners only through terror. Survivors of the SS-EBB V reported that during their 10 hours of work they had barely a five-minute-long break. They were not even allowed to go to the toilet. Instead, there was a saying: "Work, don't shit."<sup>10</sup> A survivor stated the following about the conditions of the prisoners in Osnabrück: "Just about all the prisoners were sick. Many were only skin and bones; others could barely stand on their legs. Everyone had to work. Now and then I saw that in the evenings a prisoner was carried back to the railroad car. When it was going really poorly for someone he could stay in the infirmary car."<sup>11</sup>

At the end of 1944, the SS-EBB V comprised 410 prisoners.<sup>12</sup> Due to the lack of sources, it is difficult to determine what happened with the remaining prisoners. Probably some had been selected as "incapable of work" and sent to the nearest concentration camp, Neuengamme, and not to their assigned camp. Danish survivors reported that both in the middle of December 1944 and March 1945 some 80 prisoners from Neuengamme were sent to the SS-EBB in exchange for sick prisoners admitted from Osnabrück.<sup>13</sup>

There is evidence for two cases of homicide. An SS guard is said to have shot a Polish prisoner who was being removed from a work group.<sup>14</sup> In addition, an SS man is said to have tortured to death a Soviet prisoner who had escaped. The captured prisoner was returned to the SS-EBB, abused, shot, and then finally killed at close range with several shots to the head.<sup>15</sup> Many prisoners are said to have died during bombing raids. There are also reports of work-related deaths: one prisoner, according to Theodor S., was run over by a train in Osnabrück while fetching water.<sup>16</sup>

Exact numbers are difficult to obtain because the contemporary sources only identify one victim of the SS-EBB.<sup>17</sup> According to survivors' statements, the construction brigade victims were thrown into a damaged building in the vicinity of the railroad lines and once a week were taken to a crematorium in Osnabrück.<sup>18</sup> At the Heger cemetery in Osnabrück, where the prisoners of the subcamp of the SS-Baubrigade II were buried, no victims of the SS-EBB were identified other than the above-mentioned casualty.

An undated but contemporary list of 470 names of the SS-EBB prisoners shows that in addition to Soviets (193 prisoners) and Poles (172), Germans (48) were strongly represented. In addition, there were French, Yugoslavs, Italians, "Gypsies," Luxembourgers, Belgians, Dutch, and a Hungarian

Jew.<sup>19</sup> A group of 35 Danes who were transferred via Neuengamme to the SS-EBB V survived the war.<sup>20</sup> Before their departure from Neuengamme, they received warm clothing and two packets of food from the Red Cross. At the construction brigade they lived in two railroad cars, stayed close together, and generally worked on the better assignments in the city. On April 2, 1945, the Danes could leave the subcamp as a result of the Bernadotte mission, which resulted in Scandinavian prisoners being released from concentration camps during the last weeks of the war.

At the beginning of April 1945, the remaining prisoners were evacuated by train at first to Bremen, where for three long weeks they had to load locomotives on to ferries to be transported across the Weser River. At the end of April, the prisoners were taken to Nordenham and put on the ship *Apollo*. After a two-day trip through the Kiel Canal, they reached the Flensburg Fjord at the beginning of May 1945.<sup>21</sup> It is alleged that several murders were committed during the evacuation. In a statement signed shortly after the war's end, a survivor stated that an SS Rottenführer single-handedly killed 18 nontransportable Soviet prisoners with a hand grenade. Another Rottenführer was accused of shooting four Russians on May 1, 1945. Outside of Flensburg, the prisoners were loaded onto the damaged ship *Rheinfels*, crammed in with other prisoners from Stutthof and Neuengamme. On May 3, 1945, all the SS guards left their posts, and on May 5 the prisoners were liberated. While the German prisoners were taken to a recuperation camp in Flensburg, the Swedish Red Cross made a ship available to take the foreign survivors to Malmö.<sup>22</sup>

None of those responsible for crimes committed in the SS-EBBs were convicted. Landau was able to successfully conceal his role as SS leader of the Baubrigade and was sentenced to three years' prison solely for being a member of the SS.<sup>23</sup> Anton Schettler, who was born on October 10, 1910, in Pestovac, and was charged with shooting the recaptured Soviet prisoner, was declared dead, with the result that no proceedings were opened against him.

**SOURCES** The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade V first became a subject of research in connection with a dissertation about all of the SS-Baubrigaden, published by Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmler's SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005). This is partly due to the fact that there are few contemporary sources, so the outline of the Eisenbahnbaubrigade V can only be reconstructed by combining widely disparate sources.

Especially important primary sources are the archives of former ZdL (now BA-L), which contains copies of contemporary sources, especially statements from the survivors (IV 406 AR-Z 182/73, IV 406 AR-Z 227/73). There is also some relevant documentation in CChIdK. A published witness testimony is Jørgen H. P. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne: En Beretning om Koncentrationslejre og Fngsler, hvor der sad Danskere 1940–1945* (Copenhagen: Forlaget Zac, 1969).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. KZ Mittelbau Camp, October 11, 1944, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 7; Transportmeldungen, October 8, 1944, in *ibid.*, IV 406 AR-Z 182/73, pp. 59–62.
2. BDC/SSO RS, Helmut Landau, born February 8, 1906, BA-BL; BA-K, Z 42 VI/1536.
3. Schlussvermerk, August 16, 1973, in ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 182/73, p. 493.
4. KZ Neuengamme, Kommandantur, March 13, 1945, CChIdK, 1367/1/14, p. 56.
5. Karl J., September 17, 1972, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 252; and Jørgen H.P. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne: En Beretning om Koncentrationslejre og Fngsler, hvor der sad Dan-skere 1940–1945* (Copenhagen: Forlaget Zac, 1969), p. 211.
6. Helmut Landau, February 28, 1973, in ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 639.
7. Josef J., August 25, 1971, in *ibid.*, p. 37; and Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne*, p. 212.
8. Protokolle, November 10, 1944, NStA-Os, Dep. 3 b XIX, Nr. 124.
9. Der Inspekteur der SS-Frontarbeiter und SS-Baubrigaden, March 2, 1945, BA-B, NS 19/771.
10. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne*, p. 213.
11. Felix L., February 6, 1973, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 631.
12. KZ Mittelbau, December 31, 1944, in *ibid.*, 406 AR 85/67, p. 43.
13. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne*, pp. 211, 214.
14. Josef J., August 25, 1971, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 37.
15. Hans L., July 20, 1973, in *ibid.*, p. 642.
16. Theodor S., January 25, 1973, in *ibid.*, p. 572.
17. The German prisoner Hermann Enderun, identified through the Data Base of the AG-NG and documents at the Hege cemetery in Osnabrück, 1970.
18. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne*, p. 214.
19. “Verzeichnis der Häftlinge der 5. SS-Baubrigade (E)” (n.d.), ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 182/73, pp. 81–90.
20. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne*, pp. 211–214.
21. Documents of Anton A., prior to February 1947, in ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, p. 530.
22. See prisoners’ statements in *ibid.*, IV 406 AR-Z 207/73, pp. 28–30, 253, 669; *ibid.*, IV 429 AR 1304/67, pp. 37, 145–149; *ibid.*, IV AR-Z 182/73, pp. 108, 243.
23. Spruchgericht Recklinghausen, September 28, 1948, in BA, Z 42 VI/1536.

### **SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADE VI [AKA SS-BAUBRIGADE VI (E)] (BUCHENWALD, MITTELBAU, AND SACHSENHAUSEN)**

The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VI (SS-EBB VI), one of eight mobile “concentration camps on rails,” was first established as the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade I at the Buchenwald concentration camp. On September 12, 1944, 504 prisoners stood ready to be transported at the Buchenwald Railway Station.<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of November 1944, the unit was renamed. Until then it had been listed under various names

(also “Mittelbau/VIth SS Construction Brigade”; “1st SS Railroad Train, Construction Brigade 6”).<sup>2</sup> On October 28, 1944, the newly independent concentration camp Mittelbau took over the 514 prisoners of the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VI. On January 1, 1945, it was taken over by the Sachsenhausen concentration camp along with all other SS-Baubrigaden.

The command of the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VI was assigned to Walter Fikeis, born in Vienna on June 7, 1914. Fikeis, an Austrian engineer, had been a member of the SA since 1932 and with his appointment as camp commander was promoted to SS-Obersturmführer. Since 1942, he had worked in the SS-Main Office for Budget and Buildings. Before 1944, he was at first a member of the Central Construction Administration of the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF), Caucasus, and subsequently was with the Central Construction Administration “Reich Süd” in Dachau.<sup>3</sup> The guard included 65 SS members, about half of whom belonged to the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Amtsgruppe C and the other half to Amtsgruppe D.<sup>4</sup> Among them was a major group of older railroad men who had been drafted into the SS battalions of the concentration camps. Hans R., a former senior Reichsbahn official, stated at the beginning of the 1970s that in November 1944, pursuant to a decree of the Reich Ministry of Transport, the Nürnberg Railway Administration registered him as a “railway construction expert” with the Waffen-SS. Accordingly, on November 24, 1944, he received training in the Dachau concentration camp and, with 15 other railway officials, was dispatched to the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VI.<sup>5</sup>

At first the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VI also had a functional relationship with the armaments and rocket center being established in the Harz Mountains. Its destination was Cologne, where the railway station “Köln-Eifeltor,” an important traffic connection for the transport of V weapons (*Vergeltungswaffe*) to the southwest, had been heavily destroyed. On September 12, 1944, the prisoners were loaded onto a ready construction train at the Weimar railway freight station.<sup>6</sup> That same evening, the train departed and the next day reached the railroad station Berga-Kelbra near Nordhausen. The construction brigade remained there until September; at times the prisoners worked in Sangerhausen, where they had to dig trenches for the laying of telephone cables. On October 1, 1944, the SS-EBB VI left Berga-Kelbra. But it first pulled up in Bingerbrück (near Bingen on the Rhine River), where it arrived on October 2, 1944. There it repaired railway tracks on the right side of the Rhine, which also provided an important connection to the Saar River and France. Only on November 1, 1944, did the construction brigade finally arrive in Cologne. Because of the constant bombing raids on that city, the construction brigade stayed in a tunnel near Brühl. From there, the prisoners were taken daily by railroad to work at the Köln-Eifeltor railway station.

In a 1998 interview, Iwan Wassiljewitsch Werenitsch describes the work of the prisoners: “The station was always being bombed. Our main work was as follows: rebuild the

foundation, remove the destroyed rails, level the ground, lay ties, seal, screw down, that is, build new tracks.”<sup>7</sup> In addition, after bombing attacks the prisoners had to uncover unexploded bombs in the area of the railway station and in the immediate vicinity and retrieve the bodies.

At the end of 1944, 465 prisoners were still counted in the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VI, although up to that point at least an additional 61 prisoners had been transferred to the construction brigade.<sup>8</sup> Presumably the largest portion of the approximately 100 missing prisoners managed to escape. In the fall of 1944 the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigaden, which operated in areas difficult to guard, belonged to a group of sub-camps that offered particularly good opportunities for escape. For this reason, the resistance movement in Buchenwald took care that specially endangered prisoners were located in such camps. In September 1944, it put several Soviet prisoners on the list of transports for the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VII so that they could escape. It also managed to dispatch there two “escape point coordinators.”

Already during the night of departure on October 1–2, 1943, 23 prisoners in a train car near Kassel had forced open the doors and escaped. The furious SS officers thereupon threatened as punishment to send every tenth prisoner to Mittelbau or to string him up on the gallows—not the least because the SS leaders were threatened with disciplinary proceedings if there were high numbers of escapes.<sup>9</sup> Proceedings were initiated against Fikeis for failure of the guard in the field and for the negligent release of prisoners—which, however, remained pending until the end of the war.

This escape was part of a controversial decision among the prisoners. Alexander Agafonow, then a prisoner in the SS-EBB VI, writes:

A bold and, in my opinion, rash escape: in the center of Germany, near Kassel, surrounded by a fanatic populace cowed by terror, quick acting youngsters of the Hitler Youth and then escaped prisoners in striped inmates' clothing! At the first attempt to get hold of clothing or food the populace will raise the alarm and the chase will begin. No, I thought, the chances for the escapees are equal to nil. Only obsessed braves or men driven to despair act this way. Gustav and Ernst had been urged to risk the escape only near Köln, in no case earlier.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, the conditions for escape in Cologne were favorable. In November 1944, the SS-EBB VI was located only 21 kilometers (13 miles) away from the Allies; the battles could be heard.<sup>11</sup> Further, it was easily possible to escape during the confusion caused by bombing raids. Often, the SS could not determine definitely whether the prisoners had escaped or had been dismembered beyond recognition during a raid. Therefore, those that remained behind were spared the threatened punishment actions. A young Russian who was helped by forced laborers from his hometown made the first successful escape in Cologne. Agafonow, too, was able to flee

later during a bombing raid and was helped by female workers from the East located in a camp nearby.<sup>12</sup>

Because of the difficult transport conditions at the end of 1944, hardly any transports of individual prisoners to the political department of the concentration camps were carried out any more as punishment. Instead, a car of the SS-EBB VI was converted into a prison, in which, for instance, Russians were jailed who had been caught looting and were to be transferred from Bingerbrück to the Gestapo in Mainz.<sup>13</sup> Also, often at random, forced laborers were impressed into the SS-Baubrigade. Thus, after 2 Russians had escaped during an air-raid alarm at the beginning of March 1945, Fikeis simply arrested 4 Italian workers who from then on had to stay with the construction brigade.<sup>14</sup> However, large prisoner transports took place until the last days of the war. In the spring of 1945, SS-EBB VI sent 76 inmates to Buchenwald, for which in return it received 100 inmates.<sup>15</sup>

At this point the SS-EBB VI was already in retreat. Despite the quickly approaching Western Allies, the construction brigade was transferred as late as February 9, 1945, from Cologne to Zündorf on the right side of the Rhine.<sup>16</sup> Work was now performed on the Gremberg railway station, until on March 1 the train traveled on to Troisdorf. On March 8, 1945, one day after American troops crossed the Rhine over the bridge at Remagen, the redeployment began toward the East. The train advanced only a kilometer (0.6 miles) at a time and reached Nordhausen on March 11, which made the prisoners fear the worst. However, the train continued moving and reached Freital via Dresden. There, until April 8, cleanup work was resumed. On April 23, the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VI reached Passau via Dresden, Chemnitz, Plauen, and Pilsen and, five days later, Salzburg, where on May 4, 1945, the prisoners were liberated.

After the war, Fikeis was presumed missing. An investigation that only was initiated in the 1970s was abandoned in 1973.

**SOURCES** The files of the Cologne State Attorney's Office held at THStA-(D), Court Rep. 118/2104-2106) as well as at the BA-L (IV 406 AR-Z 95/73) are among the most important sources. In addition, the journal-like chronicle of former prisoner Jules Carette, “Souvenirs de Buchenwald & de la 1e SS-Eisenbahn-Baubrigade. Einheit Bauzug” (MSS, Lille, n.d.), and the memoirs of Alexander Agafonow, *Erinnerungen eines notorischen Deserteurs* (Berlin: Rowohlt Verlag, 1993) are of particular importance. Otherwise, there are no specific publications about the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VI. It was only discussed in connection with a dissertation about all SS-Construction Brigades: Karola Fings, *Die Kommunen, der Krieg und die Konzentrationslager. Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2004).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Buchenwald concentration camp, handwritten notice, n.d., ITS, Sachdokumenten-Ordner Buchenwald 47, p. 51;



transport list dated September 1944, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 95/73, pp. 138–141.

2. Buchenwald concentration camp, Bewegungsmeldungen 12.9.-21.10.1944, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 136a; KZ Buchenwald, Anschriften der Kommandos, ca. September 1944, *ibid.*, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 229.

3. Walter Fikeis, born June 7, 1914, BA-B, BDC/SSO, RS.

4. SS-EBB VI, January 25, 1945, RGVA, 1361/1/14, pp. 61–62.

5. Statement Hans R., HStA-(D), Gerichte Rep. 118/2105, p. 232.

6. Jules Carette, “Souvenirs de Buchenwald & de la 1e SS-Eisenbahn-Baubrigade. Einheit Bauzug” (MSS, Lille, n.d.).

7. Iwan Wassiljewitsch Werenitsch, September 8, 1998, NS-Dok, Z 10.664, p. 10.

8. Concentration camp Mittelbau, Stärkemeldung December 31, 1944, BA-L, IV 406 AR 85/67, p. 43.

9. Alexander Agafonow, *Erinnerungen eines notorischen Deserteurs* (Berlin: Rowohlt Verlag, 1993), pp. 186–187; Carette, “Souvenirs,” entry for October 1–2, 1944.

10. Agafonow, *Erinnerungen*, p. 186.

11. Carette, “Souvenirs,” entries from October 25 to November 3, 1944.

12. Agafonow, *Erinnerungen*, p. 189.

13. Carette, “Souvenirs,” entry for October 6, 1944.

14. *Ibid.*, entry for March 3, 1945.

15. “Nach Buchenwald wegen Feindnähe zurückgenommene Kommandos,” ca. April 1945, AG-B, 61-0-15-2; Arbeitsstatistik, February 23, 1945, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 135.

16. Carette, “Souvenirs,” entries from February 9, 1945.

scale attacks on Karlsruhe began on the day the train arrived in the city.<sup>2</sup> The train was parked on a railroad track near the newly constructed autobahn bridge at the Karlsruhe-Durlach junction. Almost a month later, the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VII (SS-EBB VII) left Karlsruhe and two days later reached Stuttgart, where it remained until almost the end of the war.<sup>3</sup> At first, the construction train stood in the Prague tunnel, a railroad tunnel to the north of the main railroad station, with guards posted at either end. The prisoners could move within the tunnel before they were locked in the wagons after evening roll call. Other trains traveling through the tunnel during an air-raid alarm ran over 3 prisoners on October 30, 1944. As a result, the train was removed from the tunnel a few days later. The tunnel remained a refuge from the air raids, and sometimes the prisoners had to seek refuge there several times a night.<sup>4</sup>

Kurt Schäfer, an engineering graduate born on June 8, 1911, in Karlsruhe, was commander of the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VII. He had been a member of the Nazi Party (NSDAP) since 1931. Schäfer was ordered to Amtsgruppe C of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) and was probably active in Auschwitz when he took over the construction brigade.<sup>5</sup> What was unusual was that Schäfer's wife and four-year-old daughter traveled with the concentration camp train.<sup>6</sup> While Schäfer was not incriminated by survivors, his deputy is alleged to have been especially brutal. For example, he forced prisoners to hop like frogs and kicked them at the same time. Once he is alleged to have shot a prisoner tortured in this way.<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, the SS-EBB VII has been described by survivors as an “oasis among the concentration camps.” Ryszard Krosnowski and Aleksander Miziewicz wrote the following:

Naturally there was heavy labor, poor food, and some of the SS men treated us inhumanely. But in comparison to the conditions that prevailed in the last months of the war in other concentration camps, the construction train was bearable. The reason for this was probably—besides the difference to the classic concentration camp—the type of work, which allowed food to be organized, as well as the guards who supervised the prisoners. At the beginning, the SS men who guarded the construction train had been pulled from the front and had not gone through camp training. They didn't know about how things worked in the other concentration camps, and to a certain extent behaved decently.<sup>8</sup>

The comparatively low level of brutality in this subcamp, in addition to the already mentioned reasons, is based on the rather unique composition of the prisoners. They consisted almost without exception of Poles (three-quarters) and Russians (a quarter). There was no group of German prisoners to take control, and until the end of 1944, as for all construction brigades, there were no Jewish prisoners. These two groups worked hard to maintain solidarity.<sup>9</sup>

### **SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADE VII [AKA SS-BAUBRIGADE VII (E)] [AUSCHWITZ, BUCHENWALD, MITTELBAU, AND SACHSENHAUSEN]**

The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VII (also known as SS-Baubrigade VII (E)) was formed in September 1944 with 505 prisoners as the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade II in the Auschwitz concentration camp. The task of the railroad construction brigade, a mobile concentration camp, was the repair of railroad lines. It was to have been transferred to Buchenwald by September 19, but this only occurred on October 13, 1944.<sup>1</sup> On October 20, 1944, the railroad construction brigade was renamed, and on October 28, 1944, the newly independent Mittelbau concentration camp took over the 498 prisoners. The assumption of control by the Sachsenhausen concentration camp on January 1, 1945, was, as with most of the SS-Baubrigaden, merely a formality.

On September 18, 1944, the train carrying 505 prisoners left Auschwitz and reached Karlsruhe on September 26, 1944. Karlsruhe appears not to have been the planned destination but was chosen because, according to former prisoners, large-

The daily routine for the construction brigade ran as follows: Wake at 5:30 A.M., leave for work at 7:00 A.M., half an hour for lunch, workday ends at 5:00 P.M. After the evening roll call at 7:00 P.M., the prisoners were shut in the container cars. The brigade worked until 2:00 P.M. on Sundays.<sup>10</sup>

Since the original files of the SS-EBB VII have survived, it is possible to reconstruct a relatively accurate profile of this construction brigade.<sup>11</sup> Of the 505 prisoners who left Auschwitz on September 18, 1944, 107 were listed as permanently or temporarily absent by April 1, 1945. The largest group, 38 prisoners, was transferred to Auschwitz (3 prisoners), Mittelbau (19), or Sachsenhausen (16) because they were physically weak; 36 had escaped; 10 had been handed over by the SS for punishment—7 to the Gestapo and 3 to the Leonberg subcamp. Temporarily, 11 prisoners were held in hospitals; 12 men died, at least 8 by train accidents or during bombing raids, 1 from poisoning; 2 prisoners were shot by members of the SS. In the same time period, there were 54 arrivals from other camps (4 from Mittelbau, 49 from Buchenwald, and 1 from the SS-EBB VIII); 4 came back from the Gestapo, 7 from the hospital, and another 7 were recaptured after their escape. On April 1, 1945, the day of the evacuation preparation, there were 470 prisoners in the SS-EBB VII. Compared to the prevailing terrible conditions in the main camps at this time, the death rate of 12 prisoners among 569 prisoners is relatively low. However, this does not take into account the fate of the prisoners transferred back to the main camps.

Schäfer did not transfer the prisoners back to the main camp for punishment but to the local police stations in Karlsruhe or Stuttgart, for example, when the prisoners were caught with food taken from the rubble. There was usually an additional entry in the records that a prisoner had refused to work, stirred up trouble, or was planning to escape. In the last weeks of the war, the Stuttgart Gestapo no longer wanted this responsibility. The prisoners were handed back to the construction brigade. As a result, Schäfer introduced other punishment measures. A container car was stripped down to serve as a “Bunker” prison, in which prisoners were locked up for disobedience, contact with civilians, escape attempts, or other supposed infractions. In addition, Schäfer sent prisoners to the Konzentrationslager (KL) Leonberg, a subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp in the vicinity of Stuttgart.<sup>12</sup>

On February 20, 1945, Gerhard Weigel, since autumn 1944 Inspector of All Construction Brigades in the WVHA, ordered “special measures for work-shy foreigners” following a visit to Stuttgart. In connection with the SD and Gestapo, there was to be erected within the SS-EBB VII a “Work Education Camp for Foreigners in Empty Railroad Wagons.”<sup>13</sup> A few days later, on February 23, 1945, the Stuttgart Gestapo transferred the first “education prisoner.” Up to 30 forced laborers were transferred to the construction brigade. The education prisoners were provided with the same living and work conditions (as the rest of the brigade); however, they could be let go after a short period of time.<sup>14</sup>

According to the accounts of survivors, the evacuation of at least a part of the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VII was unusual.

After receiving the order to leave from Stuttgart authorities, SS-Obersturmführer Schäfer decided to divide the train into two parts because of the poor transport situation. The first transport left the city on April 2, 1945, in the direction of Friedrichshafen and, according to a statement of a survivor, arrived in Aulendorf, north of Ravensburg on the upper reaches of Lake Constance.<sup>15</sup> This group was evidently driven on a forced march, where some prisoners were killed.<sup>16</sup>

The second transport with about 200 prisoners left Stuttgart on April 3, 1945, under the command of Schäfer, also in a southerly direction. Three days later it arrived at Biberach. Because of the nearby French troops, everything was in disarray, and the SS men had to fear that they would soon be imprisoned. In this situation, according to two survivors, the prisoners recommended to Schäfer that in case Biberach was captured, he should disguise himself as an officer in the Wehrmacht, and they would give him a character reference. In exchange, Schäfer would give the construction brigade over to the French. With the exception of two SS men, Schäfer thereupon dismissed all of the guards. The prisoners continued to work in Biberach until April 23, and Schäfer continued to maintain the appearance of a functioning concentration camp.

After an order to vacate, the train started out on April 23, 1945, with a new locomotive. Near Bad Schussenried the prisoners, now in unlocked container cars, overpowered the locomotive engineer and were thus freed. The German troops had already left Schussenried, and the French soldiers, after giving the prisoners weapons, continued their advance. In the now-leaderless city, the prisoners acted as an occupation administration until a proper military administration could be installed. Survivors Krosnowski and Miziewicz wrote about the last days in Schussenried: “Two months after liberation the little town came permanently under French military occupation—and the prisoners, once they had regained their strength and become used to their freedom, dispersed, each to meet his own fate.”<sup>17</sup>

After 1945, Schäfer became a prisoner of the French but was not prosecuted because of his activities in the SS-EBB VII. Preliminary proceedings started in the Federal Republic of Germany were halted in 1972. In Schussenried the memory of the “Polish Train” remains alive. A collection of contemporaneous reports includes the following: “The people of Schussenried at first did not know what was happening. In the first few days there were hardly any French in Schussenried. The Poles seized the opportunity and took command. No one dared do anything against the Poles.”<sup>18</sup> The people of Schussenried reluctantly accepted that “the Poles” had been given the official city halls as accommodation by the French occupying administration. Nine of the freed prisoners died in Schussenried as a result of their imprisonment in the concentration camps. There is no memorial to these victims on their gravestones.

**SOURCES** Records on the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VII are comparatively extensive. Ryszard Krosnowski took documents

with him when he escaped and gave them to Polish forced laborers in Stuttgart for safekeeping. From there, they reached the Polish Red Cross and the Auschwitz Memorial (APMO, D-Au-I-3, Microfilm Nr. 1960, fol. 1–80). Copies of the documents can be found in the BA-B, Bestandsergänzungsfilm Nr. 72205. In addition, the files of the above-mentioned investigation at BA-L (IV 406 AR-Z 150/72) as well as the reports of the survivors Ryszard Krosnowski and Aleksander Miziewicz (“7. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade,” *HvA* 5[1962] are important sources. The door of “Haus Silber,” the former Gestapo prison in Stuttgart on Dorotheen Strasse, still has the writing of a former prisoner of the 7th Construction Brigade—“Capo Michat, 7. SS-Baubrygady K. L. Auschwitz Gef.-Nr. 162262 Polak Radom Zeromskiego 3”—documented by Roland Müller, *Stuttgart zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus* (Stuttgart: Theiss, 1988), p. 628. Further sources have been made available in a dissertation on the SS-Construction Brigades: Karola Fings, *Die Kommunen, der Krieg und die Konzentrationslager. Himmels SS-Baubrigaden* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2004).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

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2. Ryszard Krosnowski and Aleksander Miziewicz, “7. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade,” *HvA* 5(1962): 45.

3. SS-Baubrigade VII, October 27, 1944, BA-B, Bestandsergänzungsfilm Nr. 72205; APMO, D-Au-I-3, p. 42.

4. Krosnowski and Miziewicz, “7. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade,” pp. 49–50.

5. Kurt Schäfer, born June 8, 1911, BA-B, BDC/RS, SSO.

6. Attorneys Schäfers, December 12, 1972, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 150/72, p. 244.

7. Julian R., May 18, 1975, *Ibid.*, p. 306.

8. Krosnowski and Miziewicz, “7. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade,” p. 46.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 46–56; prisoners’ list with 488 names, BA-B, Bestandsergänzungsfilm 72205; APMO, D-Au-I-3, pp. 5–13 (369 Poles, 116 Russians, 1 Norwegian, 1 Lithuanian, and 1 stateless person).

10. Instruction Kurt Schäfer, n.d., BA-B, Bestandsergänzungsfilm Nr. 72205; APMO, D-Au-I-3, p. 67.

11. For the following, APMO, D-Au-I-3, pp. 1–80.

12. *Ibid.*; Krosnowski and Miziewicz, “7. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade,” pp. 49–53.

13. Gerhard Weigel, March 2, 1945, BA-B, NS 19/771.

14. Krosnowski and Miziewicz, “7. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade,” p. 52; BA-B, Bestandsergänzungsfilm Nr. 72205; APMO, D-Au-I-3.

15. Walter Hermanutz, “Die Jahre 1945–1947 in Schussenried. Der gestrandete KZ-Zug am Bahnhof Schussenried” (MSS, Schussenried, 1999), p. 1.

16. Kriminalaussenstelle Biberach/Riss, March 8, 1972, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 150/72, pp. 129–141.

17. Krosnowski and Miziewicz, “7. SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade,” pp. 55–56.

18. Hermanutz, “Die Jahre 1945–1947 in Schussenried,” p. 2.

## SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADE VIII (SACHSENHAUSEN AND MITTELBAU)

The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VIII (SS-EBB VIII), consisting of 504 prisoners, was formed on November 20, 1944, in Sachsenhausen. A few days later the prisoners were taken over by the Mittelbau concentration camp under the numbers 100504 to 101006 [*sic*].<sup>1</sup> As with all other SS construction brigades, from January 1945 it formed part of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The prisoners were overwhelmingly Polish and Russian, but there were also French, Germans, Dutch, Italians, Yugoslavians, and Latvians.<sup>2</sup>

Along with the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VII, the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VIII was ordered to repair railroad tracks near Stuttgart. The Stuttgart rail network, as well as the city itself, had been severely damaged during continued bombing raids.<sup>3</sup> The Daimler-Benz, Robert Bosch, and Heinkel-Hirth plants, important for fighter production, had already dispersed some of their production facilities, but the attacks endangered the many remaining plants important to the Luftwaffe, as well as the military supplies that were sent through Stuttgart. In September and October, additional attacks resulted in the collapse of traffic around the main railroad station as well as at many stations in the suburbs.<sup>4</sup> The SS-EBB VIII was sent to Stuttgart-Cannstatt where a destroyed train tunnel was to be repaired and a sidetrack laid down. The prisoners of this construction brigade at times also worked on the Stuttgart Castle and its park.<sup>5</sup>

In December 1944, the construction brigade was transferred from Stuttgart to Offenburg. The Offenburg supply railroad station was located on the upper Rhine River on the Basel-Mannheim route. As a transshipment center, it was an important location due to the strategically important trade with Switzerland and Italy. On November 27, 1944, the train station was the target of a large attack, which paralyzed the transport system on the right bank of the Rhine.<sup>6</sup> The SS-EBB VIII reached Offenburg on December 20, 1944.

SS-Obersturmführer Walter Becker, an architect, was in command of the construction brigade until the end of the year. He was born on September 24, 1892, in Mannheim and had joined the SA in 1929 and the SS in 1932. Starting in April 1940, he was part of what became Amtsguppe C “Construction” of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). From 1940, he was head of construction in Breslau, and later in Posen and Nikolajewsk.<sup>7</sup> Becker was followed on January 1, 1945, by SS-Untersturmführer Herbert Zoeger, a businessman born on October 14, 1901, in Fröbeln (Silesia). Until his appointment with the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VIII, Zoeger had no full-time function within the SS.<sup>8</sup> Survivors agreed that Becker was a “very bad man,” and under his



leadership, hunger and terror ruled. It is alleged that in Stuttgart he personally shot a prisoner after a roll call. He is said to have volunteered for frontline service and was therefore replaced by Zoeger.<sup>9</sup> Zoeger, on the other hand, is overwhelmingly described as humane. In total, the SS guards numbered 73 men, including a number of former railroad men, most born in the 1890s and almost without exception all with a low SS rank.<sup>10</sup>

The SS-EBB VIII was stationed in Offenburg on a track between a school and an inn, in clear view of the local residents. On the initiative of the city mayor, the prisoners were later transferred to a former "Camp for Workers from the East." The mayor was not concerned that the prisoners could be the victims of air raids but rather that the long train could draw the attention of the Allied bomber pilots to the city.<sup>11</sup> The train itself remained at the freight station.

Between February 21 and 23, 1945, Gerhard Weigel, the "Inspector of All Construction Brigades" in the WVHA, visited Offenburg. He reported to Berlin: "General inspection of the work at the large shunting yard. The work of the 8th SS-Construction Brigade is particularly noteworthy as within a short time the through traffic—above all supplies for front line troops—is rolling at night. I ordered night work. This, however, can only be done under difficult conditions because heavy and constant artillery from Strasburg disrupts the work. The losses suffered by the 8th SS-Construction Brigade and the 10th SS-Construction Brigade are considerable."<sup>12</sup>

Included in the "heavy losses" were 10 prisoners who, according to survivors, were killed during bombing raids. On February 15, 1945, the construction train at the freight railroad yard was hit and almost completely burned up.<sup>13</sup> Weigel thereupon ordered that the construction brigade should move to Darmstadt to rebuild the train. The SS-EBB VIII remained in Darmstadt for just two weeks and was then deployed in the suburb of Erzhausen.<sup>14</sup>

In the middle of March 1945, the construction brigade moved with stops for cleanup work through Halle, Plauen, Pilsen, and Passau to Freilassing near Salzburg. It could not go any further, as Salzburg was about to fall. In his denazification proceedings in 1947, Zoeger stated that in the middle of April he received orders from Berlin to shoot the prisoners when he could not advance any further. He decided that on May 2, 1945, when he could not get in contact with a superior, to take responsibility for releasing the prisoners himself.<sup>15</sup> Survivors stated that on this day Zoeger delivered a speech and declared that he would release them on his honor as a German officer. Details of the release were then negotiated with a group of prisoners.<sup>16</sup> According to a survivor, five Soviet prisoners then tried to escape, whereupon the SS opened fire and shot one of them.<sup>17</sup> Zoeger dismissed the SS guards in the direction of Salzburg, distributed to the prisoners official release passes, and received in return a declaration testifying in his favor from many of the prisoners. On the night of May 2–3, 1945, the train, with the help of German railroad employees traveled to Bergen near Traunstein. There, according

to a survivor, all the prisoners of the SS-EBB VIII, "including those driven to the very depths of human existence," were set free.<sup>18</sup>

Two survivors independently stated that the number of prisoners freed in Bergen was 216; a third put the number at 262. On January 1, 1945, the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VIII consisted of 436 prisoners.<sup>19</sup> What had happened to the remaining prisoners? According to a survivor—who did office work, probably working in the administration—at least 80 prisoners had been sent to Sachsenhausen, Dachau, or other camps; around 15 had died during bombing raids or because of illness; and 100 had escaped.<sup>20</sup> Zoeger himself stated in 1972 that in Halle he sent two railroad cars full of the sick in the direction of Sachsenhausen because a military hospital had refused to take custody of them, and Zoeger did not want to travel with the sick anymore. Furthermore, according to the recollections of another prisoner, some prisoners—possibly in Passau—were transferred to the SS-Baubrigade XI and traveled with it to Ebensee.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the above-mentioned shooting of 5 prisoners, 3 prisoners were believed to have been shot in Offenburg—a prisoner who had reached down to grab a cigarette butt, a mentally disturbed prisoner, and a recaptured escapee.

The SS camp leader, Becker, heavily incriminated by statements of survivors, stated in 1947 in a Nürnberg internment camp that as an architect he did not have an opportunity to be "politically active."<sup>22</sup> By the time the Ludwigsburg State Prosecutor's Office investigated the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade VIII in the 1970s, Becker had already died. In order to credibly defend himself in front of the court during his hearing, Zoeger claimed to have experienced an inner change after taking over the construction brigade. He stated that what remained of his belief in the National Socialist leadership collapsed on the day that he first saw the prisoners. It is true that up until this time Zoeger had not had professional contact with the concentration camp system. The certificate that the prisoners gave him on May 2, 1945, the day of their release, was helpful. The text of the declaration, signed by 14 Polish and Soviet prisoners, read: "On January 1, 1945, Herr Herbert Zoeger took command of the SS-EBB VIII, which consisted of Polish and Russian political prisoners. The entire time up until the present day Herr Zoeger did all that he could to improve our living conditions and protect our health and lives. With our own free will we sign this document with gratitude."<sup>23</sup> Preliminary proceedings started by the Regional Court in Offenburg were discontinued in 1974.

**SOURCES** There is nothing at the Offenburg Railroad Station to memorialize the prisoners of the SS-EBB VIII. Bernd Boll, "Konzentrationslager auf Schienen. Eisenbahn-Baubrigaden der SS in Offenburg 1944/45," *Ortenau* 73(1993): 481–485, relied mostly on the files held by the BA-L (IV 406 AR-Z 171/73) and on the inspection report of Gerhard Weigel at the BA-B (NS 19/771), but he also found some papers in the ASt-OG (NL Rombach; 18-2-16 Plans). Scattered single sources on the SS-EBB VIII were found in a dissertation on the SS construction brigades: Karola Fings, *Die Kommunen*,

*der Krieg und die Konzentrationslager. Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2004).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

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2. Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp, prisoners' lists, November 30, 1944, AG-MD, Film B1, pp. 195–205.
3. Roland Müller, *Stuttgart zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus* (Stuttgart: Theiss, 1988), pp. 457–479.
4. Bundesbahndirektion Stuttgart, "Die Leistungen der Deutschen Reichsbahn im Bezirk der früheren RBD Stuttgart während des 2. Weltkrieges," Stuttgart 1954, BA-B, R 5 Anh. I/85, p. 3.
5. Walter G., April 5, 1972, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 171/73, pp. 197–199; Zenon L., March 18, 1972, *ibid.*, pp. 272–276; and Witold K., June 26, 1972, *ibid.*, pp. 407–408.
6. Bernd Boll, "Konzentrationslager auf Schienen. Eisenbahn-Baubrigaden der SS in Offenburg 1944/45," *Ortenau* 73(1993): 481–485.
7. Walter Becker, born September 24, 1892, BA-B, BDC/RS, SSO.
8. Herbert Zoeger, born October 14, 1901, in *ibid.*, BDC/PK, RS, SSO.
9. Nikolaj W., November 14, 1971, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 171/73, pp. 16–19.
10. SS-EBB VIII, January 15, 1945, RGVA, 1361/1/14, pp. 15–16.
11. Boll, "Konzentrationslager auf Schienen," p. 496.
12. Gerhard Weigel, March 2, 1945, BA-B, NS 19/771.
13. "Bericht über wichtige Ereignisse während des 2. Weltkrieges im Bezirk der Reichsbahndirektion Karlsruhe," BA-B, R 5 Anh. I/44, p. 36.
14. Herbert Zoeger, August 1, 1972, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 171/73, p. 304.
15. Herbert Zoeger, August 16, 1947, in *ibid.*, p. 460.
16. Zenon L., March 18, 1972, in *ibid.*, pp. 272–276.
17. Adam Z., March 16, 1973, *ibid.*, pp. 277–280.
18. Wiktor A., April 22, 1972, *ibid.*, p. 400.
19. SS-EBB VIII, prisoners' list of names, January 1, 1945, AG-S, R 122/14.
20. Nikolaj W., November 14, 1971, BA-L, IV 406 AR-Z 171/73, pp. 16–19.
21. Jerzy J., April 22, 1972, *ibid.*, p. 405.
22. Personnel file Walter Becker, *ibid.*, p. 185.
23. Declaration signed by several unnamed prisoners, May 2, 1945, *ibid.*, p. 476.

## SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADE IX (SACHSENHAUSEN)

The first volume of the *Catalogue of Camps and Prisons in Germany and German-Occupied Territories Sept. 1st, 1939–May 8th, 1945* of the International Tracing Service (ITS), edited in July 1945 in Arolsen, contains the following reference to the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade IX (SS-EBB IX): "CC Kdo. of Sachsenhausen, established around the end of Nov.

forty-four, of five hundred pris., this Baubrigade was employed in railway repair work in Stuttgart until end of Dec. Work was continued in Offenburg near Strasbourg, until end of Febr. 45, then the brigade moved to Darmstadt and, half an hour before the Allied troops entered Darmstadt, via Frankfurt/M., Würzburg, Nürnberg, Regensburg, Pilsen, Salzburg, and Linz, to Ebensee (Netherlands Red Cross)."<sup>1</sup>

Based on this source, researchers, including state prosecutors, assumed that SS-EBB IX had actually existed.<sup>2</sup> However, a recent investigation indicates that the creation of this construction brigade was planned but never actually carried out.<sup>3</sup>

The basis for this conjecture is that for the SS-EBB IX in contrast to the rest of the SS construction brigades—not one contemporary source has been found. Even though the Dutch report suggests that the files of this construction brigade were completely burned at the end of February 1945 in Darmstadt during an attack on the administration car of the construction brigade,<sup>4</sup> it is still remarkable that neither prisoner lists are available from the ITS,<sup>5</sup> nor are there variation reports, kept in electronic format, in the AG-S that contain any reference to the SS-EBB IX.<sup>6</sup> According to the Dutch report, up to 250 prisoners of this construction brigade are said to have been killed in bombing raids. However, the documents kept at the cemeteries in Stuttgart, Offenburg, and Darmstadt, the supposed sites of the brigade's deployment, contain no reference to victims of the SS-EBB IX.

Gerhard Weigel, the "Inspector of All Construction Brigades" in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), visited Offenburg between February 21 and 23, 1945, the period in which the SS-EBB IX was said to have been stationed in Offenburg. He mentioned the SS-Baubrigaden VIII and X but not IX.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the supposed evacuation goal, the Mauthausen Ebensee subcamp, has no record of the brigade—unlike the SS-Baubrigaden XI and XII.<sup>8</sup> The AG-M likewise does not hold any documents on the SS-EBB IX.

Bernd Boll based his assertion that the SS-EBB IX was in Offenburg on diary entries of the mayor who wrote about "two long trains with concentration camp prisoners" on December 25, 1944. This does allow for the possibility that two construction brigades were stationed in Offenburg at that time. However, the construction brigade trains were, owing to their length of up to 50 railroad cars, often parked in two rows on different tracks, so this cannot be seen as sufficient evidence for the existence of the SS-EBB IX.<sup>9</sup> Inquiries by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) have revealed no further evidence about the SS-EBB IX to date. The name of a single SS officer for the brigade cannot be ascertained.<sup>10</sup>

A comparison of lists of names eventually supplied an explanation. Five of six known Dutchmen who, after the war, were regarded as missing from the SS-EBB IX, or who—as survivors of the SS-EBB IX—were considered by the Ludwigsburg State Prosecutor as possible witnesses, are to be

found on the prisoners lists for the SS-EBB VIII from January 1, 1945.<sup>11</sup> As the sites the survivors mentioned and the details of their activities correspond to those of the SS-EBB VIII, one can now assume that the survivors' statements, which until now have been attributed to the SS-EBB IX, should be attributed to the SS-EBB VIII.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

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2. Bernd Boll, "Konzentrationslager auf Schienen. Eisenbahn-Baubrigaden der SS in Offenburg 1944/45," *Ortenau* 73(1993): 480–514; BA-L, IV 406 AR 1122/71.

3. Karola Fings, *Die Kommunen, der Krieg und die Konzentrationslager. Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2004).

4. Studie über die "SS-Baubrigaden," herausgegeben vom Auskunftsbüro des Niederländischen Roten Kreuzes (Nationales Ermittlungsbüro), la Haye, April 1949, BA-L, Binder Collections 311h, Picture Nr. 259ff; State Prosecutor Amsterdam, April 18, 1975, *ibid.*, IV 406 AR 1122/71, p. 71.

5. ITS, 24.1.1972, *ibid.*, p. 9.

6. Statement by the AG-S to the writer, March 19, 2001.

7. Gerhard Weigel, March 2, 1945, BA-B, NS 19/771.

8. *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem*, p. 378.

9. Boll, "Konzentrationslager auf Schienen," p. 496.

10. BA-L, IV 406 AR 1122/71.

11. SS-EBB VIII, Häftlingsnamensliste, 1.1.1945, AG-S, R 122/14.

## SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADE X (BUCHENWALD AND SACHSENHAUSEN)

The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade X (SS-EBB X) was the only SS construction brigade that was made up of Jewish prisoners. It was established in December 1944 with 504 prisoners from the Buchenwald concentration camp and sent on January 2, 1945, to Offenburg to repair the railroad infrastructure there. Three days later, as with the other SS construction brigades, it came under the control of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.<sup>1</sup> The train was stationed in the heavily damaged Offenburg train station, an important transportation center in the Southwest. In contrast to the prisoners of the SS-Baubrigade VIII, who arrived in Offenburg about two weeks earlier and who were housed in a former forced labor camp, the prisoners of the SS-EBB X had to live in the railroad cars.<sup>2</sup>

The head of SS-EBB X was SS-Obersturmführer Ludwig Petz, who was born on June 9, 1912, in Munich. He was an architect and since 1938 had worked full-time at various SS construction sites. Beginning in November 1941, he was a

member of the Construction Inspectorate "Balkan," part of the Higher-SS and Police Leader's (HSSPF) office in Serbia. On October 15, 1944, he was appointed head of the SS-EBB X.<sup>3</sup> The guards consisted almost exclusively of railroad employees who were called up for a short time in accordance with an October 29, 1944, agreement between the German Ministry of Transport and the Waffen-SS. After a four-week training course in the Dachau concentration camp, they were assigned to the railroad construction brigade.<sup>4</sup> The 60 railroad men were mostly around 45 years old. The eldest was born in 1884 and the youngest in 1905.<sup>5</sup>

Except for 11 prisoners, the SS-EBB X comprised Hungarian Jews as well as a smaller group of Polish and Czech Jews.<sup>6</sup> The use of Jewish prisoners in a construction brigade was later stopped—whether by Heinrich Himmler personally or the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) cannot be ascertained. It was expressly ordered that only "Aryan" prisoners could be used in the construction brigades. Instructions for a transport of prisoners to the SS-Baubrigade XII in Buchenwald in February 1945 stated that "two hundred Aryans" were to be made available.<sup>7</sup> The reason for this instruction is that in the construction brigades it was never possible to prevent contact completely with the surrounding community and escapes were numerous. The SS-EBB X's prisoner-functionaries were 11 non-Jewish German prisoners who were transferred from Dachau and Mauthausen to Buchenwald.<sup>8</sup>

One of these functionaries, Josef D., described the construction train as follows:

The Eisenbahnbaubrigade consisted of a staff of SS men (ca. six men, ca. forty to fifty SS guards, ca. twelve Kapos, and ca. five hundred Jewish prisoners). A special train was assembled at the train station at Buchenwald for them, which consisted of approximately fifty to sixty cars. The prisoners were put in cattle cars. The guards were billeted in a simple passenger car. The staff was in well-equipped saloon cars. In addition, there was a car for tools and supplies and for the prisoners' kitchen. The SS staff and guards had special cooking facilities. The car for us Kapos was equipped with wooden bunks and wood shavings. There were twelve of us in the car. The Jewish prisoners, on the other hand, were cramped together and had to sleep two or three to a wooden bunk without a straw bag. The wooden bunks were double-storied. There were a good forty to fifty prisoners in a car.<sup>9</sup>

At any one time, groups of 98 Jewish prisoners and 2 prisoner-functionaries were put to cleanup work on the Offenburg railroad facilities. A survivor reported as follows: "The work conditions on the construction train were very poor. The food was miserable. Many prisoners were in a terrible condition; they had hernias and other illnesses. The equipment was poor. The prisoners had to do work on the



rails with their bare hands.”<sup>10</sup> What made conditions worse was that the prisoners had no protection during the bombing raids. In the beginning they sought protection in the surrounding compound. Then this was forbidden, according to Gerhard M.: “This type of self-protection was banned by a railroad official from Offenburg. When fighters attacked we had to seek cover under the railroad cars. However, as the cars were the targets we suffered heavy losses.”<sup>11</sup> A report after the war by the Karlsruhe Railroad Directorate on an attack on the Offenburg freight yard on February 18, 1945, stated: “sixteen prisoners from the SS-Baubrigade X were killed and thirty injured.”<sup>12</sup>

At the beginning of March 1945 the SS-EBB X was withdrawn from Offenburg. From March 7 to March 25, 1945, the train stood on a railroad line between Leutershausen-Wiedersbach and Schalkhausen. The prisoners had to repair railroad facilities at Ansbach, 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) away. From April 2, 1945, the train was stationed in a patch of forest about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Ansbach, in the direction of Munich.

A former non-Jewish prisoner stated that for the Jewish prisoners “it was not possible to speak favorably about most of the guards.”<sup>13</sup> Jewish survivors have not mentioned any unusual brutality by the guards. The reports on the prisoner-functionaries do not give a clear picture. Two prisoner-functionaries are accused specifically of mistreatment, and others are said to have disapproved of mistreatment and in part prevented it.

One Jewish survivor found particularly demeaning the punishment meted out to six prisoners in the SS-EBB X for stealing food—they were whipped in Offenburg at the beginning of March 1945. He recalls that they were at first threatened that they would be shot or hanged. Finally they were whipped by a Kapo. The next day they were whipped again, and finally they had to drop their trousers and thank the “SS leadership.”<sup>14</sup> A former prisoner-functionary said that he had personally interceded with Petz on behalf of the prisoners and prevented them from being shot.

So far as the available numbers can determine, it appears that the death rate in the SS-EBB X was not higher than in other railroad construction brigades. Of the 504 prisoners, 414 reached the evacuation destination. According to survivors, 20 or 30 prisoners were exchanged for other prisoners from Sachsenhausen.<sup>15</sup> Altogether the survivors mention up to 40 dead from bombing raids and around another 20 deaths; 4 murder victims are mentioned: 1 or 2 prisoners are said to have been shot in Offenburg for misappropriating food—a Polish Jew was beaten to death in Ansbach, and another was hanged. During the relatively short period of time between March 8 and April 2, 1945, there were 17 victims, according to the diary of a former prisoner. However, the causes of death were not named.<sup>16</sup>

On April 2, 1945, the construction brigade left Ansbach and passed through Fürth and Nürnberg. After April 14, 1945, the train was stuck in Undorf near Regensburg—a destroyed bridge prevented it from moving. Rumors circulated

among the prisoners that they were all to be shot in a forest. An SS guard is supposed to have said that Himmler ordered that all of the prisoners on the construction trains were to be blown up with hand grenades. According to one survivor, only about 10 SS men stated that they would carry out this order. Petz is supposed to have distanced himself from those plans.<sup>17</sup> As the train was no longer operational, Petz finally had the prisoners start walking on April 19. They marched mostly at night due to bombing raids.

Apparently a few prisoners were shot on the march, but the numbers are uncertain. Former prisoner-functionaries have stated that there was a shooting detachment that shot prisoners who could not march any further. On the other hand, a Jewish survivor has stated that no more than five or six prisoners were shot on the march. On April 27, 1945, the aforementioned 414 prisoners reached the Dachau concentration camp, where on April 29, 1945, they were liberated.<sup>18</sup>

Petz and his closest colleagues ran off near Moosburg, after going two-thirds of the way.<sup>19</sup> By the time the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg investigated the SS-EBB X, Petz had died. The Regensburg police, which in 1974 questioned 125 people in various locations about the concentration camp prisoners, stated the following after the lack of cooperation from the local population: “It is not possible to state whether the interviewees in fact could no longer remember as in several places we were confronted with a lack of understanding and an unwillingness to cooperate. The people today did not want to have anything to do with what happened. Besides, many were afraid that they could be prosecuted for looting the construction train. Probably almost all of the interviewees looted the train.”<sup>20</sup> In 1975, the more-than-1,000-page comprehensive file was closed with a recommendation that it not be reopened.

**SOURCES** The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade X was first written about in an essay on the use of Offenburg as a marshaling area: Bernd Boll, “Konzentrationslager auf Schienen. Eisenbahn-Baubrigaden der SS in Offenburg 1944/45,” *Ortenau* 73 (1993): 480–514. In consideration of the special situation of the Jewish prisoners in the SS construction brigades, a dissertation was dedicated almost 10 years later and has since been published as Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005). For the dissertation, other widely scattered sources, almost all of which have been mentioned in this essay, were used.

The most important primary sources are the judicial files at ZdL (IV 406 AR-Z 254/72), now BA-L, with additional documentation in THStA-W, BA-B, CChIdK, and NARA.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Karteikarte über Häftlingsüberstellung Eisenbahnbaubrigade X mit 504 Häftlingen am 5.1.1945 nach Sachsenhausen, in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 132, p. 18.

2. Josef D., March 8, 1974, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 254/72, pp. 495–500.

3. BA-BL, BDC/RS, SSO, Ludwig Petz, born June 9, 1912.
4. Reichsbahnoberinspektor B., September 27, 1948, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 254/72, p. 462.
5. 8. SS-EBB, January 30, 1945, CChIdK, 1361/1/14, p. 29.
6. Transportliste, January 2, 1945, and Transportzettel, NARA, Buchenwald-Film 34, fr. 31208-31216.
7. Arbeitsstatistik, February 23, 1945, THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 135.
8. Rapportführer des Schutzhaftlagers K.L.B., n.d., ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 254/72, p. 98.
9. Josef D., March 8, 1974, in *ibid.*, p. 495R.
10. Josef D., March 8, 1974, in *ibid.*, p. 499.
11. Georg M., June 5, 1972, in *ibid.*, p. 315.
12. "Bericht über wichtige Ereignisse während des 2. Weltkrieges im Bezirk der Reichsbahndirektion Karlsruhe," in BA, R 5 Anh. I/44, p. 36R.
13. Josef D., March 8, 1974, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 254/72, p. 497R.
14. Jozef L., November 26, 1974, in *ibid.*, p. 455.
15. Josef D., March 8, 1974, in *ibid.*, p. 495.
16. Gerhard M., March 3, 1946, in *ibid.*, p. 46.
17. Leon S., May 10, 1972, in *ibid.*, p. 303; Josef D., March 8, 1974, in *ibid.*, p. 498.
18. Figures and dates according to the files of ITS and correspondence with the ZdL in *ibid.*, pp. 404, 411, 499, 821, 822, 1018.
19. Josef D., March 8, 1974, in *ibid.*, p. 499.
20. Polizeidirektion Regensburg (Police Command Regensburg), 15.5.1974, in *ibid.*, p. 534.

## SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADE XI (NEUENGAMME AND SACHSENHAUSEN)

The establishment of the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XI (SS-EBB XI) was planned since November 1944. The railroad construction brigade left the Neuengamme concentration camp for the first time on February 13, 1945, with 504 prisoners. It did not leave prior to that date because the train to carry the prisoners and supplies was not yet completed. Its destination was the freight and switching yard at Soest, a junction for all east-west transport, which had almost been completely destroyed on December 4–5, 1944, and where the prisoners were to undertake repair work. Temporarily stopped by a bombing raid just before Lippstadt, the SS-EBB XI reached the city of Soest on February 15, 1945.<sup>1</sup> As with all other SS construction brigades, it was formally made part of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp beginning in January 1945.

Since the Soest train station was the target of Allied bombing attacks on an almost daily basis, the train, with its 50 cars in which the prisoners and the SS security detail lived, could not stay there. Until February 25, 1945, the train was stationed on a stretch of rail at Lippstadt in Benninghausen. This meant long marches to work, which resulted in the train being returned to Soest. On February 28, 1945, it was

almost completely destroyed in Soest. The prisoners were taken to a barn on the Schulze-Lohöfer farm near Bad Sasendorf.

Franz Heider, an engineer born on September 13, 1910, in Steinach in Thuringia, was the leader of the SS-EBB XI until March 1945.<sup>2</sup> Although Heider had been a member of the Nazi Party and the SS since 1931, it was only with this appointment that he reached the rank of SS-Untersturmführer. He had been denied promotions for two years because in 1943 he did not take the shortest route on an assignment. Heider had been a member of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) since 1942 and was the head of the SS-Construction Inspectorate "Balkan" in Serbia with the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) from July 1942 until its retreat in October 1944. Survivors described Heider as "bearable." According to the camp elder (Lagerältester), Adolf K., he banned the beating of prisoners.<sup>3</sup> Heider himself stated that he was reassigned from the construction brigade in March 1945 to construct airfields in southern Germany and the neighboring regions of Austria. According to a report from the camp elder, with Heider's successor, Kurt Wittwer, came "for the first time the famous methods of the SS into the brigade." SS-Oberscharführer Wittwer was born on May 4, 1912, in Berlin and brought with him two years in the SS-Baubrigade I, where he was infamous among the prisoners.<sup>4</sup> Wittwer and another SS-Hauptscharführer, along with two Kapos, are alleged in particular to have brutally abused prisoners who attempted to escape.

Most of the prisoners came from the Soviet Union and Poland. But there were also prisoners from Denmark, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Among the German prisoners, who were the construction brigade's prisoner-functionaries, there appears to have been great rivalry. It was also reported that in Benninghausen a German Kapo beat to death Dutchman Jan Derk Bunink, who was born on January 7, 1926, in Zwolle.

The SS security detachment numbered 85 men in total, most of whom were old railroad employees who were temporarily posted to SS-EBB XI.<sup>5</sup> Among them was Edmund P. who at a denazification court in Regensburg in 1947 tried to create the impression that he had nothing to do with the concentration camp prisoners:

I am a career railroad man and was forcibly called up to the Waffen-SS on December 28, 1944. I was trained in the so-called SS Training Camp [Übungslager] Dachau. There I was trained as an infantryman for about six weeks. Finally, I and other railroad men were sent to a fourteen day course at the Dachau Railroad Station. On March 10, 1945, we were transferred to the Eisenbahnbau train XI at Soest, Westphalia. We were immediately sent in to repair destroyed railroad stations. I was the Eisenbahn-Rottenführer and supervised the repair work. I did not watch prisoners, who were totally occupied with work. In addition there were no assaults on the prisoners.<sup>6</sup>

Survivors' reports show a completely different picture of conditions in the SS-EBB XI. At war's end, only 206 prisoners reached the evacuation destination. In Soest, the prisoners were mostly exposed to the massive bombing raids because they either had to continue working or were not allowed to seek protection in bunkers. A former prisoner had the following to say about the bombardments: "In the morning the guys would repair the tracks and in the afternoon the Tommies [the British] came and blew it all up again."<sup>7</sup> An attack on Soest on February 28, 1945, killed 33 prisoners of the SS-EBB XI; 31 were wounded, and 33 prisoners were counted as incinerated or missing.

At the beginning of March 1945, about 30 additional prisoners died from poisoning because the guards did nothing to help them. According to a survivor, who as the detachment clerk recorded the deaths in SS-EBB XI, a railroad car with methyl alcohol was broken open in the freight yard. A large group of prisoners consumed the alcohol and soon showed symptoms of poisoning such as vomiting, diarrhea, and delirium. Because the prisoners were left to themselves, Heinrich L. stated that 24 died during the day at the railroad site and an additional 6 in camp.<sup>8</sup>

A survivor has stated that as a result of the poor rations only 100 to 120 prisoners were in a position to march out to work. Another survivor has stated that despite some food handouts from the population that prisoners died daily from epidemics or undernourishment.<sup>9</sup> Up until the last days of the war, prisoners who could no longer work were selected and replaced with new workers. For example, on March 19, 1945, 128 sick and wounded prisoners were sent to Buchenwald,<sup>10</sup> in exchange for 100 Soviet prisoners who had departed Buchenwald on March 13, 1945.<sup>11</sup>

Due to the lack of sources, it is not possible to determine an exact number of victims of the SS-EBB XI. However, extrapolating from the death rates for various nationalities leads one to the conclusion that the death rate was relatively high. Of the 36 Danes in the brigade, 14 died—in contrast to the SS-EBB V, where all 35 Danes survived the war;<sup>12</sup> 3 of the Danes were victims of bombing raids, but the majority, 10 Danes, died during the evacuation. Of the 51 Dutch, 22 were repatriated, 21 died, and 8 were listed as missing.<sup>13</sup>

The evacuation march of the SS-EBB XI, which began on April 4, 1945, was the worst in comparison to that of other railroad construction brigades. About 30 sick and wounded prisoners and five Kapos remained in Bad Sassendorf. Prisoners who could no longer walk were shot on the three-day march via Lippstadt and Paderborn to Höxter, where a train was awaiting them. On April 7, a transport with sick prisoners was sent from Halle to Sachsenhausen. The remaining prisoners left Halle on April 15 and retreated, sometimes on foot and sometimes on a train, over Chemnitz and Plauen to Pilsen (Plzen). The prisoners tried to escape if a favorable opportunity presented itself. A few succeeded. There was another selection in Pilsen. A transport with sick prisoners went to Dachau, while a small group marched to Dachau. Again, prisoners were left dead or dying along the way. The column did

not reach Dachau but was liberated in Anzing. (Survivors named the place "Anzingen." There is an Anzing near Dorf, to the west of Munich, and an Anzing nearer Munich. Which location is meant is not known. Both are situated on the same railroad line.) The main transport of the SS-EBB XI traveled from Pilsen to the Mauthausen/Ebensee subcamp, where on May 4, 1945, the remaining 206 prisoners were registered.

The victims of the Soest railroad construction brigade are buried in a plot at the cemetery in Bad Sassendorf.

**SOURCES** Comparatively early, Gerhard Köhn published an article about the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XI in a local historical magazine: "Das Aussenlager des Konzentrationslagers Neuengamme bei Hamburg in Soest und Bad Sassendorf (11. SS-Baubrigade) 1945," *SoeZe* 98 (1986): 101–124. Köhn relied almost exclusively on the files of the ZdL (IV 406 AR 776/67), now BA-L. He was able to supplement many details because of his local knowledge. A new monograph on the SS-Baubrigaden has made available other sources on the SS-EBB XI: Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005). The Soest memorial to the victims, which was erected in 1945, avoided using the words "concentration camp" and neglected to describe the circumstances of death. It says: "Here rest ninety-five citizens of various nationalities, who died far from their homes in the difficult years 1941–1945." See Gedenkstätten für die Opfer des KZ Neuengamme und seiner Aussenlager, ed., *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Neuengamme e.V.* (Hamburg: Selbstverlag, 2000), p. 205. It was only on May 7, 1995, on the initiative of the Soest archivist, that a new memorial stone was dedicated. On the registration of the Eisenbahnbaubrigade's survivors at Ebensee, see *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 378.

In addition, a chronicle of the railroad man Wilhelm Trockel (ASt-So, Sj 61) was valuable, as it contained some information about the "concentration camp train." In particular, materials from the AG-NG (Ng 6.4.91; Erinnerungsbericht Nr. 518), AG-S (IV 26), CChIdK, and FGNS-H (13-7-5-5) are noteworthy. A Danish publication describes in detail the living conditions of the prisoners and provides a detailed sketch of the evacuation route: Jørgen H.P. Barfod, *Helvede bar mange Navne. En Beretning om Koncentrationslejre og Fængsler, hvor der sad Danskere 1940–1945* (Copenhagen: Forlaget Zac, 1969).

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Sta. Ludwigsburg, January 11, 1972, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR 776/67, p. 153.
2. BA-BL, BDC/RS, SSO Franz Heider, born September 13, 1910.
3. Adolf K., September 8, 1947, AG-S, IV 26, p. 17.
4. BA-BL, BDC/RS Kurt Wittwer, born May 4, 1912.
5. SS-EBB XI, March 20, 1945, CChIdK, 1361/1/14, pp. 64–70.



6. Edmund P., June 16, 1947, ZdL IV 406 AR 776/67, p. 287.
7. Karl N., n.d., FGNS-H, 13-7-5-5.
8. Heinrich L., July 10, 1968, ZdL IV 406 AR 776/67, pp. 91–93.
9. Jan J. Kreuwen, May 20, 1990, AG-N, Nr. 518.
10. Buchenwald concentration camp, March 22, 1945, ZdL IV 406 AR 776/67, pp. 190–192.
11. Buchenwald concentration camp, March 13, 1945, *ibid.*, p. 187.
12. Barfod, *Helvede har mange Navne*, pp. 244–248.
13. Excerpts from a Report by the Dutch Red Cross, 1945, in FGNS-H, 13-7-5-5.

## SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADE XII (SACHSENHAUSEN)

The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XII (SS-EBB XII), consisting of 504 prisoners, was established in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The majority of the prisoners were Soviets and Poles, but there were also French, Dutch, Czechs, Yugoslavs, Spaniards, Italians, and Hungarians. A few German prisoners were included as prisoner-functionaries. The task of the railroad construction brigade was to build and refurbish railroad lines for the Ardennes offensive, the last large German offensive in the West.

On Christmas Eve, December 24, 1944, the construction brigade left the camp and remained in Lahnstein, near Koblenz, until January 8, 1945. Then it was transferred about 50 kilometers (31 miles) up the Rhine to Bad Kreuznach, where it remained for almost two months.<sup>1</sup> In Bad Kreuznach the train was stationed on the “Red Ley,” a gorge on the Nahe River.<sup>2</sup> Prisoners and guards lived on the 50 cars of the train, which was provided with a supply car, a kitchen car, and a tool car. At the beginning of March 1945, the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XII was sent to Grossen-Buseck via Mainz and Frankfurt am Main. The prisoners had to work at the nearby railroad station at Giessen, which had almost been destroyed.

The prisoners were put to work at the request of the Mainz Railroad Directorate. This is confirmed in a report by SS-Sturmabführer Gerhard Weigel, who had been the “Inspector of All Construction Brigades” (Inspekteur sämtlicher Baubrigaden) in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) since the autumn of 1944. On February 17, 1945, Weigel inspected the construction brigade and held talks with SS-Hauptsturmführer Rudolf Goetze and the vice-president of the Mainz Railroad Directorate, Dr. Schrag, as well as senior railroad officials Steissenreuther and Dr. Kampf. On March 2, 1945, he reported to Hans Kammler, the head of Office Group C of the SS-WVHA: “There are no particular complaints at the SS-BB [Baubrigade] XII. According to the statements by the Mainz Railroad Directorate, their deployment is very worthwhile.”<sup>3</sup>

Goetze was the head of the SS-EBB XII. He was born on March 9, 1908, in Berlin and was a doctor of engineering. Goetze joined the SS in 1933 and before his assignment with

the construction brigade had worked on SS construction projects.<sup>4</sup> After the war Goetze tried to play down his actions in the construction brigade. The infamous Gustav Sorge, a long-serving SS man in the construction camps, supported him. Sorge was a longtime SS member and was very familiar with the concentration camp system. He got the nickname “Iron Gustav” due to his brutality in street and hall fighting against political opponents in 1931–1932. Sorge organized the creation of the construction brigade in Sachsenhausen and was appointed as the brigade’s leader but had to resign after getting wounded in Lahnstein.<sup>5</sup> Along with a handful of SS who belonged to the Leadership Staff, the guard detachment consisted of 70 SS men born in the 1890s. The overwhelming majority of these men, as with the other SS construction brigades, were former railroad workers called up to the SS for a short period of time.<sup>6</sup>

One of these railroad workers, Otto Stumpf from Bad Kreuznach, said the following after the war on his recruitment:

As a railroad worker I was ordered to Sachsenhausen on December 14, 1944. There, several thousand colleagues waited on their coming, difficult lot. It was all the more sad for there were only older men, between the age of forty-five and sixty, almost none of whom were party members. There were even comrades there that could hardly speak German as they came from Poland or Czechoslovakia. . . . Coming back to Sachsenhausen, I must say that it was not possible for me to get a glimpse of the concentration camp there, or to speak with anyone on the inside. Its condition first gave me cause to think that everything was not quite right with the camp. After the construction train was ready, I had the opportunity to speak with the prisoners personally about the woeful circumstances in the concentration camp. After every answer one could see the joy that they possessed, that they could now leave this camp.<sup>7</sup>

The conditions in the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XII were marked by undernourishment and violence, like the other concentration camps; 37 victims of the railroad construction brigade were buried in the Jewish cemetery between Bad Kreuznach and Bretzenheim. Hunger, strict isolation, and a special brutality by the SS and Kapos, led by Sorge and the Kapo Otto Dümpelmann, stand out as the causes of the deaths. The above-mentioned guard added the following: “The SS staff was mostly young men who had not served at the front. Their sole task was hand-in-hand with the Kapos to torture us and the prisoners and to pilfer supplies and money from the construction train.”<sup>8</sup>

Survivors have reported many violent deaths. A drunken SS man is said to have shot the Kapo Fiete Leistner in Bad Kreuznach.<sup>9</sup> Among the victims in Grossen-Buseck, where the construction brigade was stationed during the beginning of March and where 11 dead prisoners were registered

between March 12, and March 24, 1945, was a victim of an execution.<sup>10</sup> The prisoner had escaped during a bombing raid on March 18, 1945, but was quickly caught in some nearby houses. An SS leader gave the order to hang this man. The hanging was justified on the basis that the man was wearing civilian clothes and therefore had "looted." Otto Dümpelmann carried out the execution. Dümpelmann was a former Luftwaffe soldier who was sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp because of numerous disciplinary punishments. Because of his healthy condition, he was known by the nickname "Fat Otto."

On April 10, 1962, during its proceedings against Dümpelmann, the Giessen jury court stated that the following events occurred:

In the meantime it was early afternoon and the prisoners had to step in front of the burned wagon. The SS also assembled. The prisoner was brought forward and after a short statement on the fate of looters the prisoner had to step onto the wagon's running board, where the accused put the rope, tied to the wagon's lamp holder, around his neck. The prisoner then had to jump or he was pushed. The rope broke. He was lifted, lifeless, from the ground, possibly by prisoners commanded to do so. The accuser took his belt off, attached it to the lamp holder, and then set the noose around the throat of the victim, and left him hanging in the noose.<sup>11</sup>

The SS-EBB XII also transported large numbers of prisoners during the last days of the war. A total of 156 sick and weakened prisoners are said to have been sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp.<sup>12</sup> In return, 200 new prisoners arrived from Buchenwald at the beginning of March 1945.<sup>13</sup>

The SS-EBB XII left Grossen-Buseck on March 23, 1945, and traveled to Eisenach via Alsfeld and Bad Hersfeld. Here the train had to be evacuated, and the prisoners marched on foot to Erfurt. On April 1, 1945, the train headed to Dresden via Leipzig. It remained there for a few days and then headed for Linz via Pilsen (Plzen). Here, according to the statement of a railroad man, about 300 prisoners were released on the initiative of the railroad workers.<sup>14</sup> The construction train with 214 prisoners reached the Mauthausen subcamp of Ebensee on May 4, 1945.

After 1945, no one from the leadership group of the SS was brought to justice for crimes committed while in the railroad construction brigade. Sorge was convicted in 1959 of a number of murders committed in other camps and sentenced to life in prison. Only the murder committed by the Kapo Dümpelmann was punished. Dümpelmann was sentenced to two and a half years in prison in 1962 as an accessory to homicide.

**SOURCES** The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XII was mentioned in detail for the first time in a dissertation, published as Karola

Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005). Far-flung local histories also give worthwhile information: Klaus Steup, *Aufrecht geben . . . wenn alles in Scherben fällt: Busecker Alltag in der Nazi-Zeit. Erinnerungen und Dokumente* (Grossen-Buseck: Selbstverlag, 1986); "Mobiles Konzentrationslager hinterliess Blutspur: Der Heimatforscher Bernd Vorläufer-Germer hat Spuren einer 'SS-Brigade' entdeckt," *FR* (Hochtaunuskreis), November 12, 1999. The admission of the SS-EBB XII survivors to Ebensee is listed in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 378.

Important primary sources are the judicial files of the ZdL (IV 406 AR-Z 33/74) at BA-L. The judgments on Sorge and Dümpelmann were published in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: University Press Amsterdam, 1978), vols. 15, 18, a collection of German judicial decisions on National Socialist crimes published in Amsterdam. Mention is made of the SS-EBB XII in THStA-W, CChIdK, and FGNS-H. Otherwise, one must tediously search other sources. A collection of letters and reports in the AVVN-D (Bad Kreuznach correspondence) gives cause for optimism that local historical research will bring further details to light.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: University Press Amsterdam, 1978), 18: 386; File Notes State Prosecutor, June 16, 1976, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 33/74, pp. 33–36.
2. Hugo S., May 31, 1949, in AVVN-D, Schriftwechsel zu Bad Kreuznach.
3. The Inspector of SS Workers at the Front and SS Construction Brigades, March 2, 1945, BA, NS 19/771.
4. Rudolf Goetze, born March 13, 1908, in *ibid.*, BDC/RS, SSO.
5. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 15: 420.
6. SS-EBB XII, January 30, 1945, CChIdK, 1361/1/14, 31.
7. Otto Stumpf, n.d., in AVVN-D, Schriftwechsel zu Bad Kreuznach.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Friedrich T., August 27, 1966, FGNS-H, 13-7-5-5.
10. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 18: 389; as well as the Mayor Grossen-Buseck, March 9, 1946, in Klaus Steup, *Aufrecht geben . . . wenn alles in Scherben fällt: Busecker Alltag in der Nazi-Zeit. Erinnerungen und Dokumente* (Grossen-Buseck: Selbstverlag, 1986), p. 30.
11. *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, 18: 388.
12. Hubert Salzmann, May 31, 1949, in AVVN-D, Schriftwechsel zu Bad Kreuznach.
13. Arbeitsstatistik Buchenwald, February 24, 1945, in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 135; and File Notes, March 1, 1945, in *ibid.*, KZ Buchenwald Nr. 4, Bd. 7/1, p. 74.
14. Otto Stumpf, n.d., AVVN-D, Schriftwechsel zu Bad Kreuznach.

## SS-EISENBAHNBAUBRIGADE XIII (DACHAU AND SACHSENHAUSEN)

On January 18, 1945, the last SS construction brigade was formed at the Dachau concentration camp.<sup>1</sup> Consisting of 504 prisoners, the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XIII (SS-EBB XIII) first worked until the end of January in Bavarian Reichertshofen. As with all of the other construction brigades, the SS-EBB XIII was administered after January 1945 by the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The prisoner group was very heterogeneous, consisting of over 100 Soviets and large groups of Germans, French, Poles, Italians, Belgians, Yugoslavians, and Czechs. In addition, seven other nationalities were listed on the transport list.

The SS-EBB XIII was assigned to the Erfurt Railroad Directorate and worked from February 1945 on the two railroad lines heading southwest to Frankfurt am Main and Koblenz. It operated simultaneously at four different locations: two larger groups worked at Aumeau near Limburg, building a siding at the Ennerich Tunnel, as well as at the Limburg railroad station, which was an important railroad junction with lines heading to all parts of Germany. Detachments of the SS-EBB XIII were sent for short periods of time to Fulda and Mücke, on the stretch between Giessen and Bad Hersfeld.

At the various locations it was the rule that segments of the train were put on branch lines. In Limburg, the three train sections were parked next to each other at the railroad station and were surrounded by a cordon of guards. It was from this “camp” that the prisoners were led to work.<sup>2</sup> Another part of the train stood at the Weilburg railroad station on the “Plattenkaute” on branch lines. From there the prisoners were led daily to work on the railroad lines Runkel-Aumenau and Ennerich-Eschhofen.<sup>3</sup>

Bernhard Kuiper was the leader of the SS-EBB XIII. He was born on August 30, 1907, in the East Frisian town of Möhlenwarf.<sup>4</sup> Kuiper was an architect who had built concentration camps since 1934. At first he worked at Esterwegen, then at the Berlin concentration camp “Columbia,” and finally in Sachsenhausen. From 1940 he was a member of the SS-Main Office for Budget and Buildings (Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten, HHB). His professional advancement was closely connected with his membership in National Socialist organizations. He joined the Nazi Party in April 1933 and the SS in October 1934. From May 1937 to August 1939, he was part of the SS-Sicherheitsdienst. When the SS-Obersturmführer took over the SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XIII on November 15, 1944, he was directly pulled away from the advancing Red Army with the SS-Economic Unit “Russia South” and sent back into Germany.<sup>5</sup> In addition to other, mostly unnamed SS members, the guards consisted of a large group of old railway men. The railroad men were temporarily recruited into the SS and took about a four-week course in Dachau.

Gerhard Weigel, the Inspector of All Construction Brigades (Inspekteur sämtlicher Baubrigaden) in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), inspected the SS-

EBB XIII and the places where it worked on February 11, 1945. He had a discussion with the president of the Erfurt Railroad Directorate, Dr. Reabes, and praised the “very good results” that the construction brigade had achieved “despite the short period that it had been at work.”<sup>6</sup> At the same time he declared the construction train to be a “model train.” In Weigel’s opinion, this train, which had been put together in Dachau by the SS-owned Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke GmbH (German Equipment Works, DAW) using experience gained from previous trains, set an exemplary standard for hygiene and other matters.

Nevertheless, the conditions in the SS-EBB XIII were by no means “exemplary.” Many prisoners died from hunger and illness, were killed in bombing raids, or were shot. In the very early days of the construction brigade, there was an outbreak of typhoid. As a result, several prisoners were sent back to Dachau on January 30, 1945, where some of them died.<sup>7</sup> In Aumenau alone, 14 prisoners were killed in bombing raids.<sup>8</sup>

After the war, survivors accused the roll-call leader, Hans Penkowski, of being responsible for numerous prisoner deaths. Penkowski is alleged to have either shot five prisoners or given the order to shoot them in a forest near Limburg in February 1945. He has also been accused of the murder of a Romanian prisoner. A survivor stated that Penkowski had the nickname Machine Pistol (Maschinenpistole) because he had the custom of shooting aimlessly at prisoners. He died during a bombing raid on March 21, 1945.<sup>9</sup> Several prisoners have stated that prisoners were shot in Limburg in the camp area “like rabbits.” The SS are said to have shot at prisoners trying to escape or those who were not quick enough to get out from under cover once the bombing raids were over.<sup>10</sup> It was reported that a Russian prisoner, who had attempted to escape and was recaptured, was forced to wear a sign that said “I am here again.” After this humiliation, it is said that the Kapos beat him to death.<sup>11</sup>

Due to the paucity of sources, it is not possible to determine the exact numbers of those killed in the SS-EBB XIII. Data from the International Tracing Service (ITS) put the number of Belgians at over 15; 8 of these prisoners—more than half—did not live past liberation. In February 1945, 2 died from unknown reasons, 3 died in Dachau, and 3 died in Buchenwald.<sup>12</sup>

On March 4, 1945, 77 prisoners were chosen in Buchenwald and sent to the SS-EBB XIII. Three days later the following entry was entered in the Work Statistics: “The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XIII is dissolved and all the prisoners have been put on the transport ‘Desert.’”<sup>13</sup> At this point, signs of the dissolution of the construction brigade were already evident. In the middle of March, the different prisoner groups at the various locations were sent to the Mücke train station, some on foot and some by train. About 230 prisoners marched from there to Wetzlar. During the march, exhausted and fleeing prisoners are said to have been shot. From Wetzlar, the prisoners were taken in a train in open cars to Buchenwald. There, 185 prisoners of the SS-EBB XIII were registered.<sup>14</sup> It would seem that not all prisoners arrived



simultaneously at Wetzlar, as U.S. troops caught up with a group of marching prisoners at the end of March in the Wetzlar environs and freed them.

As with other construction brigade leaders, the former SS-Obersturmführer Bernhard Kuiper hid his responsibility for the SS construction brigade. In a denazification proceeding in 1948, he was successful in portraying his activities as an architect in the SS as being forced. Although there were statements that Kuiper had “emphasized his role as a member of the SS and SD during the Hitler regime” and had ruthlessly represented the interests of the Nazi Party, the court accepted Kuiper’s own statements. As was usual in denazification proceedings, Kuiper was asked what he knew about concentration camps, Jewish persecution, and the situation of forced laborers, both male and female. He denied having an inner understanding of the concentration camp system. He said: “I knew that the prisoners had to work, but I did not know in detail what they did. . . . I knew things which were relevant to the construction sector. Otherwise it was impossible to hear anything. I thought that life in the concentration camps was not pleasant. What the disciplinary punishments were in the camp, I cannot say.”<sup>15</sup>

Kuiper concealed that he was the responsible leader of the SS-EBB XIII. For the relevant period he admitted to have worked at the Erfurt Railroad Directorate. In a detailed biography, which he wrote in January 1946 while interned in Neuengamme, he even suggested resistance conduct: “In the spring of 1945 I was given my last post as part of the Waffen-SS. It was with the Erfurt Railroad Directorate as a member of the staff of the construction detail. I worked with the railroad engineers, in a democratic sense and as a result of their requests engaged in difficult negotiations with the military commander at Schleiz/Southeast Thuringia toward the end of April which prevented 250 railroad workers from being called up to the Volkssturm.”<sup>16</sup>

The prosecutors for the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg saw through Kuiper’s tactical maneuvers, as in the 1970s they were busy with the events in the SS-EBB XIII and in conjunction with which they questioned Kuiper. However, it was already too late for a successful investigation. Many witnesses had already died or could not exactly remember about the happenings of the con-

struction brigade due to the elapsed time. The State Prosecutor’s Office at the State Court in Limburg closed the proceedings on March 20, 1974.

**SOURCES** The SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade XIII was first mentioned in a published dissertation on SS construction brigades, Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft, und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigaden* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005).

The dissertation refers to the sparse and widely held sources, almost all of which are referred to in this article. The most important source is the investigation files of the ZdL (IV 406 AR-Z 33/74) at BA-L. Additional archival sources can be found in BA-B, BA-K, AG-B, and ITS.

Karola Fings  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. KL Dachau Transportliste, January 18, 1945, BA-L, ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 33/74, pp. 53–64.
2. Herbert G., March 15, 1973, in *ibid.*, pp. 245–247.
3. August B., August 23, 1972, in *ibid.*, p. 111.
4. BA-B, BDC/PK, RS, SSO Bernhard Kuiper, born August 30, 1907; BA-K, Z 42 III/1526.
5. “Im Zuge der Verlagerungsaktion beim SS-Wirtschafter ‘Russland-Süd’ freigewordene SS-Führer,” n.d., in ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 33/74, p. 79.
6. Der Inspekteur der SS-Frontarbeiter und SS-Baubrigaden, March 2, 1945, BA, NS 19/771.
7. ITS, Bescheinigungen über belgische Häftlinge, in ZdL IV 406 AR-Z 33/74, pp. 393–397.
8. Hubert A., August 30, 1972, in *ibid.*, p. 117; and Sta. Ludwigsburg, January 25, 1974, in *ibid.*, p. 454.
9. Francois H., September 25, 1973, in *ibid.*, p. 412.
10. Sta. Ludwigsburg, January 25, 1974, in *ibid.*, p. 451.
11. Jaroslav K., May 16, 1973, in *ibid.*, p. 331.
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13. KL Buchenwald, Arbeitsstatistik, March 4 and 7, 1945, in THStA-W, NS 4 Buchenwald Nr. 135.
14. Entry Note, April 1, 1945, in *ibid.*, KZ Buchenwald Nr. 4, Bd. 7/1, p. 10; “Nach Buchenwald wegen Feindnähe zurückgenommene Kommandos (n.d.), AG-B, 61-0-15-2.
15. Protokoll Spruchgerichtsverfahren, October 29, 1948, BA-K, Z 42 III/1526.
16. Lebenslauf Kuiper, January 29, 1948, in *ibid.*

## STUTTHOF



An SS guard at the entrance to the Stutthof concentration camp, 1941.  
USHMM WS #12196. COURTESY OF AMS

## STUTTHOF MAIN CAMP

From September 2, 1939, until late April 1945, a concentration camp existed near the town of Stutthof (later Sztutowo), some 40 kilometers (25 miles) east of Danzig (Gdańsk). The camp lay less than 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) south of the Baltic Sea and within 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) west of the Bay of Königsberg.

From its beginnings in September 1939 until January 1942, the Stutthof camp was under the control of the Danzig SS and police authorities. In January 1942, it was incorporated into the SS concentration camp system under the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). The Stutthof camp filled a number of distinct and differing roles in the period of its existence.

First, in the initial period after September 1939, what came to be known as the Stutthof civilian prison camp (*Zivilgefangenenlager*) was used as the main point for the collection and imprisonment of Poles and Jews forcibly removed from the Polish Corridor and from the former Free City of Danzig. By the end of January 1940, the camp held 4,500 prisoners, of whom at most 400 to 500 were Jews.<sup>1</sup> Most of the Jews were killed by one method or another, and by mid-1941, only a handful of them remained alive.

The original guard force for Stutthof consisted of some 50 Danzig police reservists and Nazi Party activists, called the Wachsturmbann Eimann. They were men who had been hardened in their hostility to the Poles by their participation in the ethnic struggle in Danzig in the 1930s. The first commander of the camp was Obersturmbannführer Max Pauly.

Second, from 1940 on through the end of the war, Stutthof functioned as the main *Arbeitserziehungslager* (work education camp) in Danzig–West Prussia. Forced laborers—mostly Poles and Soviet citizens—who did not work as the Germans wanted them to were sent to such camps for a sentence of from 28 to 56 days, to correct their attitudes. For many, it was a death sentence.

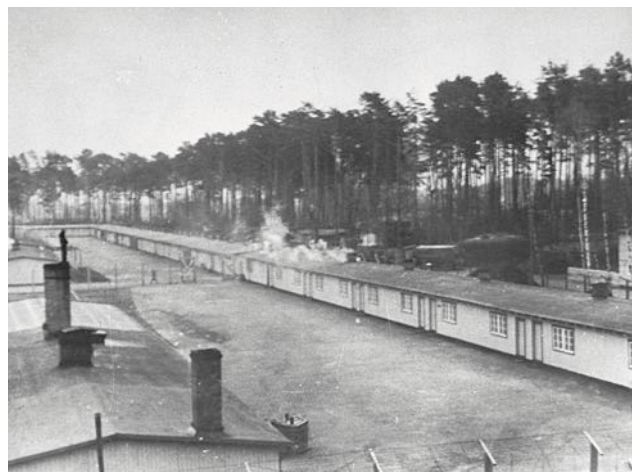
Third, after its absorption into the WVHA camp system, Stutthof grew into a regular, though lesser, member of the constellation of concentration camps. A steady flow of German prisoners—among them so-called career criminals (*Berufsverbrecher*), “asocials,” political prisoners, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and a handful of homosexuals—was added to the camp population, though overall it remained predominantly Polish until mid-1944. German prisoners were often appointed to the positions of Kapo and barracks block leaders, and a fair number of them found an outlet for their criminal tendencies in their maltreatment of the non-German prisoners.<sup>2</sup> A smattering of prisoners of other nationalities, most of whom were committed to the camp as political prisoners, added an international aspect.

Fourth, Stutthof functioned as the distribution hub for prisoners dispatched to the subcamps of the Stutthof camp

system. The sums received for the use of prisoner labor by state and private employers (1 to 3 Reichsmark [RM] per day) were crucial, for the camp had to be entirely self-financing. Among their assignments, the labor detachments from Stutthof worked on river regulation and flood prevention in the Vistula delta, excavated for water lines and sewers in the German cities of East Prussia, and labored in brickworks and gravel pits—the hardest types of physical labor. From 1941, as replacements for German workers who had been called up, smaller labor gangs from Stutthof were assigned to private workshops and to factories in and around Danzig. But these crews never numbered together more than a few hundred of Stutthof’s prisoners—until the late summer of 1944, when the influx of tens of thousands of Jews from the Baltic ghettos radically changed the nature of the camp.

In that final phase, from the summer until the fall of 1944, Stutthof acted as the great overflow camp of Eastern Europe, into which poured over 25,000 survivors of the great Baltic Jewish ghettos (Kaunas, Vilnius, and Riga). Simultaneously, more than 16,000 Hungarian Jews, overwhelmingly women, arrived in the camp from Auschwitz (as that camp had also been overloaded with prisoners). To this massive influx were added thousands of Polish Jews from the Łódź and Białystok ghettos and additional thousands of Polish civilians seized after the crushing of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising. It was thus only in the summer of 1944 that Stutthof assumed the profile that is associated with major concentration camps such as Auschwitz and Mauthausen, in terms of prisoner population and scale.

The initial transport of prisoners sent to the Stutthof site in September 1939 was housed in tents. The prisoners first



The old section of the Stutthof concentration camp. 1941.  
USHMM WS #12192, COURTESY OF AMS



cleared a rectangular plot of land at the selected spot, 100 meters (328 feet) from the Danzig-Königsberg highway but screened from view by a dense stand of pines. In this clearing they erected double barbed-wire fences, barracks, latrines, a bathhouse, a kitchen, and an infirmary, as well as workshops. This complex constituted the “Old Camp.” A guardhouse, warehouses, administration buildings, housing for the guard detachment, and a large brick headquarters building, the *Kommandantur*, completed the complex. Toward the end of 1941, when all this was in place, the camp held approximately 6,500 prisoners.

Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler’s visit to Stutthof at the end of November 1941 marked the beginning of the camp’s incorporation into the IKL (Inspectorate of Concentration Camps)/WVHA system. On his return to Berlin, Himmler instructed Oswald Pohl to enlarge the camp to a capacity of 25,000 prisoners and to establish large armaments and military repair workshops under the control of the SS-owned Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke GmbH (German Equipment Works, Ltd., DAW).<sup>3</sup> Within weeks of Himmler’s visit, the bureaucratic steps necessary to implement Stutthof’s change of status were complete. The nearby brickworks and quarry, which had been operated by prison labor, were taken over by the SS-owned Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke (German Earth and Stone Works, DESt).

Construction of the “New Camp” commenced in earnest in mid-1942. Prisoners deployed in the forest detail (*Waldkolonne*) felled trees, pulled stumps, and leveled the area, using only hand tools and muscle power. This labor detail was regarded as the most punitive of those to which prisoners were assigned. In addition to constructing the barracks, guard



Prisoners eat their noon meal during Stutthof’s construction, October 1939. At the time, Stutthof was not part of the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL).

USHMM WS #12190, COURTESY OF AMS

towers, and fences, the prisoners also built a crematorium for the disposal of the corpses of those who died in the camp. This facility began operation in September 1942. In 1944, the New Camp was expanded with the addition of hastily erected barracks to house the influx from the Baltic states and Auschwitz.

Along with these changes associated with expansion and incorporation into the WVHA system came a change of command. In September 1942, SS-Sturmabführer Paul Werner Hoppe replaced Pauly as commandant.

The SS-Death’s Head Battalion Stutthof expanded as the camp expanded. It grew from fewer than 100 men in the camp’s first year to a full battalion of some 500 men by the end of 1942.<sup>4</sup> The SS guards secured the perimeter of the camp on foot and from the watchtowers, escorted labor details to and from job sites, and guarded the prisoners while at work. Prisoners attempting to escape were shot without warning; according to a former officer of the SS guards, merely to approach the warning strip inside the barbed-wire fence of the camp or the security zone established by the guards at outdoor work sites was regarded as attempted escape.<sup>5</sup> As the war went on, the guard force increasingly consisted of ethnic Germans recruited in Yugoslavia, Slovakia, and Romania. The guards were assisted by up to 18 attack dogs.<sup>6</sup>

Topography and demography both added to the prisoners’ plight. To the south and west of the camp, the terrain was alternately wooded and swampy, which made outside scrutiny impossible and escape difficult. Moreover, the local population was almost entirely German, so there was little chance that an escaped prisoner could find food or shelter anywhere in the vicinity. The camp was situated on ground that lay below the level of the Baltic. The dampness that resulted from the high-water table was a significant contributing factor to



Prisoners erect the barracks foundations at Stutthof, September to October 1939, at which time the camp was not part of the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL).

USHMM WS #51332, COURTESY OF AMS

the camp's high mortality rate. In the winter, vicious winds blew off the sea into the exposed camp.

All told, about 110,000 registered prisoners passed through the camp, of whom at least 65,000 perished; Polish postwar sources put the death figure at 80,000, to include the number of prisoners who were never registered in the camp rolls but who died or were killed there. The most common cause of death was *Vernichtung durch Arbeit*, annihilation by work, which involved a combination of physical exhaustion, disease, malnutrition, exposure to a harsh climate, and abuse. Those too weak to work who clung to life were killed with lethal injections or, after the construction of a small gas chamber in September 1943, by gas.

Surviving records from Stutthof include the sole surviving death register (*Verstorbene VII*), which covers the period January to April 1944, the prisoner registration records (*Einlieferungsbücher*), and the records of the civil registry office of the village of Stutthof. The *Einlieferungsbuch* for the period from August 27, 1942, to January 8, 1943, contains typical examples of the fates of the prisoners. Each entry contains the prisoner's name, date and place of birth, infraction and sentencing authority, and final disposition; 3,266 prisoners were officially registered entering Stutthof in this period. The 274 prisoners in one 10-page section of the book serve as an illuminating sample. Of these, 222 were committed to Stutthof for "corrective labor," 15 were sentenced to the camp as career criminals, 7 as so-called asocials, 24 as political prisoners, 5 as Jehovah's Witnesses, and 1 as a homosexual. By national origin they included 105 Russians, 94 Poles, 35 Germans, 25 ethnic Germans, 5 Lithuanians, 1 Gypsy, 1 U.S. citizen (a political prisoner), 1 Estonian, 2 Dutchmen, 1 Czech, 1 Slovak, 2 Frenchmen, and 1 stateless person. By gender, there were 224 men and 50 women.



Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler and entourage inspect Stutthof, shortly before its transfer to IKL control, November 23, 1941. Pictured from left to right are Himmler's adjutant, Karl Wolff; commander of the SS senior district Vistula (*Oberabschnitt Weichsel*), Richard Hildebrandt; Himmler; Inspector of Concentration Camps, Stutthof commandant, Max Pauly; Stutthof camp leader, Alfred Dittmann (foreground); and Stutthof labor deployment leader, Albert Schwartz.

USHMM WS #51377, COURTESY OF IPN

After the completion of their sentences, 74 of the corrective labor prisoners were released, but 53 others were dead within two months' time. The sentences of the remaining 95 corrective labor prisoners were converted to incarceration for the duration, and 60 of these people also died in the following months; 35 corrective labor prisoners were transferred to other camps. Of the prisoners from this sample who remained at Stutthof, only 14 were shown as alive at the time of the camp's evacuation. The most frequently cited cause of death was "allgemeine Herz- und Körperschwäche" (generalized coronary and physical weakness). Other listed causes of death included "intestinal catarrh," "edema," and tuberculosis.<sup>7</sup> The typhus that periodically devastated the camp was never listed as a cause of death, nor was another frequent cause: death by lethal injection, administered in the camp hospital to those too weak to work. A hint of this practice is given by the place of death shown in the records, the notation "Krbau," which stands for *Krankenbau*—the hospital.

A sample from the aforementioned register confirms this grim tale. Over the course of three days, January 27 to 29, 1943, 330 prisoners were committed to Stutthof, 298 of them for corrective labor. Within two months, 88 were dead, with another 79 perishing after another two months in the camp. By the time of evacuation in 1945, 250 were shown to have died, and the fates of the other 80 cannot be precisely determined.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to overwork, the cold, and constant abuse at the hands of guards and Kapos, bad diet was a key contributor to prisoner mortality. The standard fare included a breakfast of adulterated bread and grain coffee, a midday meal of thin soup, and more bread and coffee in the evening. By contrast, the guard dogs received 2 kilograms (4.4 pounds) of meat per day.<sup>9</sup>

At night the prisoners slept on bare wooden bunks. Many of them, particularly the large intake in the second half of 1944, had no blankets. Sanitary facilities were limited to cold water spigots in the barracks washrooms. The prisoners' clothing was washed and deloused only every several months. The toilets were pit latrines, which were periodically cleaned by the prisoners the Nazis most despised, the Jews and Polish Roman Catholic priests.

The Political Department at Stutthof maintained separate registers of prisoners' deaths. Only one of these was saved from destruction; it covers the period from January to April 1944. It lists some of the same causes of death contained in the *Einlieferungsbücher*—plus others, such as the February entries for 1 Pole "hanged in accordance with orders"; another "shot for offering resistance to state authority"; and 16 Red Army officers shot, with no justification given, simply an "E" (for *exekutiert*) entered next to their names in the death book. On March 15, 1944, 6 Jewish prisoners were shot "for offering resistance."<sup>10</sup> Executions by hanging were carried out in front of the assembled prisoners. In addition to the execution of prisoners such as these, Stutthof also served as the place of execution for prisoners sent by the Gestapo from Danzig, Königsberg, and other places. These prisoners were

not registered as inmates in the camp. One Polish expert calculated 180 deaths by execution took place from the fall of 1939 to the end of 1943. It is likely that at least an equal number of prisoners were beaten to death by the most brutal Kapos, such as Waclaw Kozłowski and Josef Pabst. Still, it was the covert execution by injection that was by far the most frequent method employed at Stutthof.

Plans for the evacuation of Stutthof, ready in the fall of 1944, called for evacuation by sea, with Neuengamme as the main destination. In mid-January 1945, the nearby subcamps were shut down and the prisoners returned to the main camp. Some of the camp records were burned, particularly the sensitive materials of the Political Section and the camp hospital. On January 25, the evacuation commenced—but by forced march. The orders specified that this evacuation would take the form of 11 columns of 1,000 prisoners each. This represented about one-half of the camp's population (just over 23,000) at the time.

The weather could hardly have been worse, with daily temperatures hovering below -18°C (-0.4°F) and deep snow blanketing the roads. The prisoners received 0.5 kilograms (1.1 pounds) of bread and 57 grams (2 ounces) of margarine as their entire ration. Most of them gobbled it up as soon as it was issued, and for 3 days they received no additional food. The prisoners were cut down by cold, hunger, sickness, and the SS guards, who shot those who could not keep up. After 11 days, the columns had moved between 120 and 170 kilometers (74.6 and 105.6 miles) to the west, and the exhausted prisoners moved into temporary camps. Only 7,000 of the original 11,000 prisoners remained. The survivors were then put to forced labor, digging antitank ditches for the Wehrmacht, in which hundreds more died. The survivors were liberated at the beginning of March 1945.

At Stutthof, the camp descended into chaos. After the evacuation columns departed, the remaining prisoners were not fed for days, nor did they go to work or stand roll call. Hunger and typhus claimed up to 200 lives per day, and by early April the population had declined to fewer than 5,000 prisoners. Another 500 perished by the time of the first evacuation by sea on April 25, 1945; the Nazis were determined that no living concentration camp prisoners should be liberated by the Red Army. There were fewer than 2,000 women prisoners still alive, most of them Jewish, along with just over 2,500 men. Some 3,000 prisoners marched to Danzig, where they were loaded onto river barges for the voyage to territory still in German hands. After a journey of some five days, one barge eventually ended up in Denmark; the others were stranded between Kiel and the island of Rügen. A second group of just over 1,000 departed on April 27. Approximately a third of the evacuees did not survive to see liberation.

The first trial of Stutthof personnel, which commenced in Gdańsk in April 1946, included one SS sergeant, six female guards and eight Kapos. Five of the Kapos were sentenced to death, as were five of the female guards and the SS sergeant.

Pauly was sentenced to death by a British military tribunal and executed in October 1946, but for his subsequent service at Neuengamme—not for his actions at Stutthof. Hoppe was tried and convicted in West Germany in 1955; he served seven and a half years of a nine-year sentence. The SS noncommissioned officers in charge of the camp hospital where the lethal injections were administered were tried and convicted in Tübingen in 1964.<sup>11</sup>

**SOURCES** Virtually all the published works on the Stutthof main camp and subcamps are in Polish, with a few in German. This essay relies heavily on Donald Steyer, ed., *Stutthof: Hitlerowski Obóz Koncentracyjny* (Warsaw: Interpress, 1988), in particular the essays by Marek Orski, Mirosław Gliński, and Danuta Drywa. Additional information is available from the National Stutthof Museum Web site.

The detailed transport lists from the summer and fall of 1944 are preserved in the AMS, Collection I-I. Detailed information that includes names and personal data of individual prisoners who entered Stutthof throughout its existence is contained in the camp's nearly complete series of Einlieferungsbücher (camp entry registers), which are held in AMS, 10, Collection I-II. Other records can be found in NARA, RG 242, as reflected in the notes, and the USHMMA contain Stutthof records as well as relevant memoirs.

Michael MacQueen

## NOTES

1. NARA, RG 242, T-580/68/329 January 30, 1940, letter of IKL Glücks to RFSS Himmler, re: Gefangenenlager im Weichselgau.
2. See records of the Trial of Johann Paulus, et al., Specjalny Sad Karny w Gdańsku, IPN, Warsaw, file reference SSK-G 46-17.
3. See T-580/321, Report by IKL on the Acquisition of Land at Stutthof, January 23, 1942.
4. Guard strength given in Headquarters Order no. 39, December 29, 1942, in AMS, Folder I-I-1.
5. Statement of former SS-Lieutenant Paul Ehle to the Schönböcken Police (BRD), September 13, 1961, in case file EL 317 III Ks 5/63, investigation of defendants Haupt, Knott, and Lüdtko, StA-L.
6. Report of Veterinary Inspection of Stutthof Guard Dogs, January 9, 1943, and Identity Covers for Guard Dogs, November 18, 1942, both AMS, Folder I-VI-1.
7. Camp Entry Register, consecutive prisoner numbers 15254 through 18520, AMS, Folder I-II-7.
8. Camp Entry Register, consecutive prisoner numbers 18521 through 21798, AMS, Folder I-II-8.
9. Order issued by the commander of the 3rd Company, SS-Death's Head Battalion Stutthof, March 2, 1943, Maintenance of Service Dogs, AMS, Folder I-VI-1.
10. Verstorbene VII, January 5 to April 7, 1944, AMS, Folder I-II-20.
11. Case EL 317 III Ks 5/63; the sentence is reprinted in the series *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, vol. 20 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1979).





## STUTTHOF SUBCAMP SYSTEM

As soon as the Stutthof concentration camp began operating, its administration created subcamps outside the camp proper to put prisoners to work in industry, farming, or other services. There were two main motivations that caused the camp authorities to form new units under central command. On the one hand, sending prisoners off the camp premises was an effective way to ease the overcrowding at the main camp and to obtain funds and other resources that would keep it operating. On the other hand, there was a more or less constant demand for labor by government institutions, companies, and private individuals from 1939 to 1945. SS-Obersturmführer Albert Schwartz, who was the farm camp director from 1940 to 1941, filed the following account before an investigating officer of the American Military Court (AMC) in Freising on September 12, 1945:

The Stutthof camp maintained its own agricultural farm, growing most of the vegetables needed for the [sub]camps there, and also had its own cattle and slaughterhouse. Big shops were constructed in which work was done for private companies in Elbing and Danzig. The money paid for this work amounted to such large sums that not only the upkeep for the camp, the food, and clothing for the prisoners could be fully paid, but considerable means were left over to build a big administration office from this money.<sup>1</sup>

The organizational history of the subcamps is a complex reflection of the Stutthof main camp's changing circumstances. Some started out as independent camps in their own right, operating as transit and detention camps parallel to Stutthof under the Danzig Prison Camp Command (Kommandantur der Gefangenenlager Danzig) and the SS-"Vis-tula" Main Sector Office (Oberabschnitt "Weichsel"), and were later absorbed into the Stutthof system. Other sites began as subcamps of those parallel camps, while still others were under the Stutthof main camp from the start. Likewise, the life cycles of the camps varied; they opened and shut down at different times and sometimes reopened later. In all cases the authority to open a subcamp lay with the commandant of the main camp, in consultation with his superiors. Labor assignments were based on contracts made between the Danzig or Elbing employment office, the army command, police headquarters, and a government agency, company, or private individual. The contracts set forth the type and duration of employment; the terms of work; and the conditions for lodging, prisoner supervision, and compensation.

Each of the subcamps operated with a large degree of independence. The central command in Stutthof coordinated economic and financial business and maintained central pris-

oner records, while the subcamp staff handled the day-to-day operation of the camp and monitored the working conditions.

It is not difficult to establish the names of all the permanent camps operating under one central command, but it is considerably harder to determine the names of the small work groups, generally called external labor detachments (Aussenkommandos), which were poorly documented because of the duration of their work, the number of prisoners in each group, and the detachment's distance from the main camp. The documentation chiefly consists of prisoners' files and correspondence with the Danzig Gestapo about prisoners, recording when and where they worked, as well as the testimony and accounts of former camp prisoners filed after the war.

An examination of the subcamp essays that follow establishes that 28 subcamps throughout the province of Danzig-West Prussia belonged to the Stutthof camp in the period from autumn 1939 through the end of 1941. Except for a few instances, that number does not include the Bauernkommandos, the farm detachments that, according to Schwartz's testimony, employed approximately 3,000 prisoners in the autumn of 1939. (Some 700 people were working on farms in January 1940.)<sup>2</sup> The detachments were named after the employers to whom they were hired out and the localities the farms were in, and they can be identified through the camp administration's notes on prisoner employment or financial records. In April 1940, the Stutthof camp assumed the central command of civilian prisoner camps; it took over the Grenzdorf civilian prisoner camp as well as the subcamps (Matzkau, Westerplatte, and external detachments in Danzig, Oliva, and Gdynia) of the Danzig-Neufahrwasser camp, which was being shut down.

The greatest number of Stutthof subcamps were formed from 1942 through 1944, after the camp had been incorporated into the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), which consequently brought the camp into the range of influence of SS economic policy and resulted in the intensive exploitation of prisoner labor. Stutthof's commandant made the decision to organize the subcamps, in consultation with and with the consent of the WVHA. Of Stutthof's 66 documented subcamps, 38 were created between early 1942 and the end of 1944: 28 of those in 1944, including 19 camps with Jewish prisoners from Stutthof from June to October 1944.<sup>3</sup>

A total of 26,251 Jews were sent to the new camps in 1944; and including non-Jewish prisoners, there was a total of approximately 33,000 prisoners at all the subcamps—the height of employment outside the main camp for the entire period the camp was in operation. They were put to work manufacturing and repairing weaponry, repairing tracks and military airfields,

building fortifications, clearing bombs, and performing other hard labor. They were chiefly hired out to Luftwaffe airfields, the Organisation Todt (OT), and private businesses. As of January 24, 1945, just before Germans began to evacuate the subcamps, there were still more than 22,500 prisoners in them, of whom over 18,500 were Jews.<sup>4</sup>

The subcamp entries that follow do not represent the entire external workforce at Stutthof. The entries do not include the stationary or semistationary external detachments (in the latter case, the prisoners returned to the main camp every day). Most of those were associated with farms and were formed annually by the dozen in the Danzig–West Prussia Reich District from 1939 through 1945. Each one of the farm camps employed from a handful to more than a dozen prisoners for a fee.

In many instances, the accounts and testimony of former prisoners make up for the gaps in the archival records or vestigial information in camp records. They are the only source portraying the living and working conditions in those detachments and their effects on prisoner life. The main principle in those detachments was to derive maximum benefit from slave labor, benefiting both the camp administration who collected fees for each day of work and the employers to which prisoners were hired out at artificially low prices.

**SOURCES** There are a small number of historical essays devoted to the history of the subcamps of Stutthof. However, there is no synthetic historiography, which would deal holistically with the issues, except in the unpublished dissertation by Józef Matynia, written in the late 1960s: “Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof 1939–1945” (Ph.D. diss., Pedagogical College, Gdańsk, 1969). The organizational system of the subcamp and employment of prisoners were researched by Mirosław Gliński: “Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945),” *StZeMu*, no. 3 (1979); and by Marek Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999). The German edition incorporates this issue in a monograph of the Stutthof concentration camp. The following publication includes papers by Mirosław Gliński and Marek Orski: *Stutthof. Das Konzentrationslager* (Gdańsk, 1996) (translation of the Polish edition from 1988: *Stutthof, Nazi Concentration Camp*). Monographs of some larger subcamps have been published; among them are *Brusy-Dziemiany*, Gdynia, *Elbląg, Nadbrzeże Near Elbląg, Police, Słupsk, Subcamps for Jews*, and these were written by Danuta Drywa, Maria Elżbieta Jezierska, Krzysztof Dunin-Wasowicz, Marek Orski (and the co-author in the paper about Gdynia: Elżbieta Grot), Zygmunt Szultka, and Tadeusz Wolski. The monograph about the subcamp in Brusy-Dziemiany (Bruss-Siphienwalde), by Marek Orski, appeared in English: *The Jewish Subsidiary of the Stutthof Concentration Camp (Konzentrationslager Stutthof) at Brusy Dziemiany (1944–1945)*, vol. 12 YVS, (Jerusalem: YVS, 1992).

Most archival materials relating to the organization and functioning of Stutthof’s subcamps, as well as files of the former Stutthof camp, files of the Gestapo in Danzig, and cen-

tral authorities of SS including the WVHA, are located in the AMS in Sztutowo in original form or copies of originals or transcripts of documents from other archives, especially from BA-BL. Other important sources are the stenographs of proceedings against former staff of the camp and prisoner-functionaries as well as the proceedings of the Nuremberg Trials, which took place in front of the IMT and AMT. Part of the documentation relating to trials against perpetrators from the Stutthof concentration camp is kept in the IPN in Warsaw.

Testimonies of the former prisoners, memoirs, statements, and materials of interrogations constitute a large source of documentation. These are located in different institutions dealing with the commemoration of crimes committed in the former concentration camp in Stutthof, mainly in the AMS in Sztutowo, in the IPN, in the AŻIH in Warsaw, and YV in Jerusalem.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AK-IPN, PMW-BZW (hereinafter PAM-WCO), catalog no. 327, pp. 25–26.

2. Ibid; AMS, Catalog No. I-IA-1, Nurnberg Document NO-2275, Hildebrandt’s report to Himmler on the operations of SS-Wachsturmbann Eimann.

3. This has been determined from the list of the ITS at Arolsen and the dossier of the AMS at Sztutowo. Source publications as well as essays on the Stutthof concentration camp provide discrepant numbers of Stutthof subcamps. The author of the first monographic publication on the camp’s history, K. Dunin-Wasowicz, *Obóz koncentracyjny Stutthof* (The Stutthof Concentration Camp) (Gdynia, 1970), pp. 128–136, mentions a total of 28, also including the civilian prisoner camp at Danzig-Neufahrwasser and the camps in Smukała, Thorn, and Lebrechtsdorf, which were not subcamps of the camp. Mirosław Gliński, “Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945),” *StZeMu*, no. 3, (1979): 165–180, notes about 38 subcamps and major external detachments. Marek Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–45* (Gdańsk, 1999), pp. 346–349, concurs, thus increasing the number of permanent subcamps as well as external detachments. The ITS at Arolsen list of concentration camps and subcamps—*Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979)—accounts for 107 camps including some farm detachments, labor detachments formed within one subcamp, or transit camps from the time of the land evacuation. On the other hand, Józef Matynia, “Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof 1939–1945” (Ph.D. diss., Pedagogical College, Gdańsk, 1969), established that there were 61 subcamps and external detachments, including Smukała, Thorn, and Lebrechtsdorf, transit camps formed during the prisoner evacuation not qualifying as subcamps, and other camps and detachments that also cannot be regarded as such.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6.



## ADLERSHORST

The first reference to a detachment of prisoners put to work in the Orłowo section of Gdynia (formerly Orłowo Morskie; Adlershorst from 1939 to 1945; aka Gdynia Orłowo) dates from September 13, 1939.<sup>1</sup> The date is derived from an entry on a prisoner's file card, although it cannot be equated at all with the existence of an organized group of prisoners assigned to Orłowo for a specific labor purpose at the time. No other records have confirmed the existence of a subcamp of the Danzig-Neufahrwasser, Grenzdorf, or Stutthof civilian prisoner-of-war (POW) camps in Orłowo at the time.

The first Wehrmacht divisions entered sections of Gdynia (Gdinen, then Gotenhafen during the war) by September 13, 1939. Poles fit for military service were arrested and held at two main internment camps set up by the military authorities: Gdynia Redłowo (Gotenhafen-Hochredlau) and Gdynia Grabówek (Gotenhafen-Grabau). Their identities were checked, and they were interrogated. A special committee operating at those camps from the 16th Security Police Unit of the Danzig Gestapo checked to see if the prisoners were listed in the "wanted registry" (*Fahndungsbuch*). Some of those interned wound up at the camp in Danzig-Neufahrwasser at the beginning of October 1939, or in mid-October at the latest, after the police had taken over Gdynia Redłowo and Gdynia Grabówek.

The next references to a prisoner detachment at Gdynia Orłowo noted on prisoner registration cards appear between September 18 and 28, 1939.<sup>2</sup> There is no information on the number of prisoners, where the camp was housed, and what work the camp was assigned. According to the testimony of Bolesław Przytuła, in the spring of 1940, about 50 prisoners were sent to do cleanup work at the Gdynia Orłowo City Government, where they worked until the summer of 1942. (That certainly was not the Gdynia City Hall building, which was located in Gdynia proper on Marchauer-Piłsudski-Strasse. Perhaps Przytuła meant the city offices in Orłowo or work contracted out by the municipal government to be done in Orłowo.)<sup>3</sup>

According to an entry in a prisoner's personal files, another prisoner detachment was established at Gdynia Orłowo between September 9 and December 30, 1940. Political Branch personal files contain a detachment name: Wegses Hans, Adlershorst. It is not known what type of work the few prisoners in the detachment did, nor how it was set up and how it operated.<sup>4</sup> Other data indicate that it was only in December 1940 that the first detachment of a dozen or so people was assigned to the Gdynia Orłowo concrete plant (Betonfabrik Adlershorst). It was disbanded in April 1941.<sup>5</sup>

Another large camp formed by the command of the civilian internment camp in Stutthof began operating in March 1941. About 20 prisoners from the Stutthof camp, mostly specialist tradesmen such as woodworkers, carpenters, painters, parquet layers, and upholsterers, were put to work rebuilding and finishing the home of Stutthof camp commandant Max Pauly.<sup>6</sup> The home was at 6 Seebadstrasse (later Ulica Prze-

bendowskich), which leads to the sea; the house was reportedly a present for "good service" from Albert Forster, Gauleiter and Reich governor of Danzig-West Prussia. Earlier it had belonged to an attorney from Bydgoszcz (Bromberg) named Maciaszek. The detachment's population varied as work progressed and prisoners with specific specialties were replaced. For example, prisoner Andrzej Domagała, a bricklayer by trade, worked at Adlershorst from March 8 to April 12, 1941. With the roof on, they started doing the finishing work in late autumn 1941. The interior contained such features as larch parquet floors and paneling.<sup>7</sup>

The prisoners were quartered in the private home of a Polish woman named Brydzyński. SS-Rottenführer Johannes Wall became camp commandant on March 5, 1941, and remained so until the detachment disbanded. He went through recruit training from January to March 1941, then was enlisted into the Waffen-SS. Witnesses testifying at Wall's trial in 1947 emphasized his kind attitude toward prisoners. After work and on Sundays, he would make it easier for family members or friends to visit them by making sure no one else was approaching.<sup>8</sup> Witness Franciszek Perchen, who had been sent from the Stutthof camp in March 1941 to work at the house, testified that Wall treated them kindly and let his father visit him. Nevertheless, both that witness and Waław Lewandowski pointed out that prisoners were beaten, although they heard this from other people. Besides his crimes at the Stutthof camp, the indictment also listed crimes committed at Augsburg, a subcamp of Dachau, where Wall had been transferred on September 22, 1942. The Gdańsk District Court sentenced him to five years in prison and a five-year prohibition on holding public or honorary civic offices. He died in prison in 1948.<sup>9</sup>

There is some uncertainty as to the date on which the subcamp was disbanded. Some records indicate a date as early as the end of 1941, but other records contradict that. Józef Kucharski, who testified as a witness at Wall's trial in 1947, said that in February or March 1942, he and 35 prisoners were sent from Stutthof to Adlershorst, where they stayed until July, and that Wall was in command over them. Unless there is an error in the date provided, that would mean that the detachment was disbanded only in mid-1942, that is, when the 2nd Guard Company stationed at the police barracks in Adlershorst returned to the Stutthof camp.<sup>10</sup>

Records on the escape of prisoner Piotr Dziedzic also indicate that the camp was shut down in mid-1942. He had been sent from the Lebrechtsdorf camp (with which Stutthof was associated through commandant Pauly, who was overseeing the operations of that camp and two other educational labor camps in Bydgoszcz's [Bromberg's] district of Smukała [Mühlthal] and Toruń [Thorn]) to the house in Adlershorst on December 1, 1941. He escaped on May 25, 1942.<sup>11</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Adlershorst subcamp: AK-IPN: SOGd, Catalog Numbers 94, 181; Gdańsk Provincial Court, Catalog No. 37, records of the criminal case against Johannes Wall; SSK Gd, Catalog No.

215, records of the criminal case against Edward Włociański; CA IPN-Gd, affidavit of K. Popławski, testimony of Bolesław Przytuła (Wrocław); AMS: Catalog No. I-III, files of prisoners; Catalog No. 1006, personal files of Johannes Wall; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Cyprian Wosztal, vol. 6, Stanisław Matuszczak, Alojzy J. Pilarczyk, vol. 12, Ryszard Wolbisz, vol. 18) (Gdańsk, 1939); Brunon Zwarra, *Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan, Wybór i opracowanie Brunon Zwarra* (Gdańsk, 1984); K. Ciechanowski, "Hitlerowski obóz w Gdańsku-Nowym Porcie (Zivilgefangenenlager Neufahrwasser) 1 IX 1939–1 IV 1940," *StZeMu*, no. 5 (1984); E. Grot and M. Orski, "Aussenarbeitslager Gotenhafen, filia obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w Gdyni," *StZeMu*, no. 7 (1990); M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 273.

2. AMS, sygn. I-III-41175, personal files of prisoner Marian Brawat.

3. AK-IPN Gd, record of witness examination dated October 23, 1967 (Wrocław); AMS, Catalog No. I-III-49846, personal files of prisoner Julian Wilczarski.

4. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49846, I-III-50267, I-III-50318, personal files of prisoners Julian Wilczarski, Bazyli Sakowicz, and Józef Otto.

5. Ibid., *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Accounts and recollections) (Gdańsk, 1939), account of Ryszard Wolbisz, 18: 9–10.

6. AK-IPN, SOGd, Catalog No. 94, p. 35, testimony of witness Józef Kucharski at trial of J. Wall in 1947; also, M. Gliński, p. 168; and M. Orski, p. 92.

7. AK-IPN, SSK, Catalog No. 215, pp. 11, 26–28, 69, testimony of defendant Edward Włociański dated 1945; AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-42448, I-III-42621, I-III-43660, I-III-49846, personal files of prisoners Walter Dembski, Andrzej Domagała, Józef Frost, and Julian Wilczarski. Also see *Accounts and Recollections*, 6:269, account of Cyprian Wosztal; 12:163–164, 294, Stanisław Matuszczak and Alojzy J. Pilarczyk; 12: 91, J. Matynia.

8. Witnesses K. Witczak, J. Kucharski, K. Orwińska, and Z. Poziemski.

9. AK-IPN, SWGd, Catalog No. 37.

10. AK-IPN, SOGd, Catalog No. 94, p. 35.

11. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-43016.

## BOHNSACK

The only reference to the existence of a prisoner commando in the town of Bohnsack (later Sobieszewo) near Danzig (later Gdańsk) is in the personal files of prisoners and was recorded under the date June 7, 1940. The prisoners were hired out for labor at the county construction agency (Kreisbauamt Danzig-Land, Bohnsack). They returned to the Stutthof camp on July 22, 1940.<sup>1</sup>

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

**SOURCES** The following source contains information on the Bohnsack subcamp: AMS, sygn. I-III, personal files of prisoners. Also see many of the other sources listed in the Stutthof main entry.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTE

1. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-42881, I-III-49842, I-III-49933, personal files of prisoners Stanisław Dudkiewicz, Johann von Pruhsak, and Feliks Warczyński; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 273.

## BROMBERG-BRAHNAU (DAG NOBEL)

### [AKA LAGER 15]

The Bromberg-Brahnau subcamp was formed at ammunition factory Dynamit Nobel Aktiengesellschaft (DAG) on July 15, 1944.<sup>1</sup> The prisoner camp, composed of six barracks fenced with barbed wire, was located in a forced labor camp complex near the factory premises and named Lager 15. A total of 1,000 Jewish women aged 16 to 20 were sent there to make up for the labor shortage created when a thousand workers were sent from DAG to the Magdeburg-Anhalt region for Albert Speer's Jäger-Programm.<sup>2</sup> Initially 37 SS men supervised the women; female supervisors from the Ravensbrück concentration camp took over that job on July 25, 1944. When they came to Bromberg (later Bydgoszcz), the number of SS men was reduced from 37 to 12, and the rest returned to the Stutthof main camp.<sup>3</sup>

DAG's facilities at Łęgnowo (Brahnau, aka Langenau) housed the bomb and grenade divisions, while factories nearby at Zimne Wody (Kaltwasser) produced nitroglycerine, gunpowder, and nitrocellulose.<sup>4</sup> A special Home Army report dated February 25, 1944, stated that the DAG factory was composed of 17 concrete buildings, one and two stories tall (usually not including the ground floor), as well as one or two underground levels. Groups of 2 or 3 buildings constituted stand-alone manufacturing facilities. The plants employed 31,617 persons, including 3,015 Poles, in January 1944.<sup>5</sup> The work at the factory was especially dangerous because of the contact with easily oxidized chemicals, which could cause powerful explosions.<sup>6</sup>

Besides one account and fragmentary archival records from Stutthof concentration camp, we have no other materials about the Jewish women's working and living conditions. The only account, that of Teresa Mittelman, a Hungarian Jew, described the general conditions in the Jewish camp and working conditions in a factory production department filling bombs with chemicals. Mittelman noted that the work was dangerous because of the contact with chemicals and lack of work safety measures and that the camp commandant behaved brutally toward prisoners:

We arrived on August 1, 1944, to Brahnau. The older women were sent to work in the kitchen. We got a very good lunch, so we hoped for the best. But we were disappointed. The camp was small. The Lagerführer was a beast. He used torture instruments. Often we were closed in bunkers without reason. He lived in Brahnau with his family. I worked in a munitions factory. I had to fill fifty-nine bombs daily. Later we had to carry the shells to a store. The food ration was fairly good, comparing [it] with the other camps [where] we had been. Once I got ill. I inhaled poison gas, from the shells, and fainted. A Lithuanian woman doctor treated me. The factory was hidden from strangers. Nobody knew what important things were manufactured here. We worked mostly at night. One morning as we came from work, we were told to pack immediately. As we marched off, many began to escape.<sup>7</sup>

DAG settled accounts with the camp command and indirectly with the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) for the prisoners' labor pursuant to the regulations of the time, based on rate schedules set by the SS authorities. The rate for private companies was 6 and 4 Reichsmark (RM) for each full day of work on plant premises by skilled and unskilled workers, respectively. Jewish women were put to work only in auxiliary labor positions. The only surviving roster of companies owing money to the camp in late 1944 lists 23,253 man-days calculated according to a daily rate of 4 RM. On that basis, DAG was charged approximately 43,000 RM after prisoner feeding expenses were deducted.<sup>8</sup>

Of the 1,000 women sent to Brahnau in mid-July 1944, 995 were there in late January 1945—thus mortality in the camp was comparatively low.<sup>9</sup> The administration of the Stutthof concentration camp had the duty of supplying clothing and medical aid. Subcamp commandant SS-Hauptscharführer Paul Langräbe's correspondence with the clothing warehouse in Stutthof shows that the subcamp received replacement clothing and shoes, or the tools and materials to fix them, albeit late and not always in the quantity desired. A commandant's report said that 1 person had died at camp through October 23, 1944. Health problems started up when winter came, and there was a shortage of warm clothes and shoes especially, as the subcamp commandant stated in a report, because most of the women were put to work outdoors. The commandant's letter to the director of the Administration and Management Division in Stutthof dated December 12, 1944, states that there was a shortage of winter clothing and repair materials. The commandant wrote that approximately 80 percent of the clothing was in very poor condition and repairing it was not helping much; a corresponding rate of illness due to colds was reported.

The camp population in mid-December 1944 was 996 women, as indicated by the amount of winter clothes they received.<sup>10</sup> In the five weeks up until evacuation started, 1 person died in the camp. Preparations to evacuate camp began

on January 20, 1945. The prisoner count reported for January 24, 1945, was accurate only for the initial days of evacuation; after that the population dropped with every passing day. The group of 995 female prisoners merged into one column with the women from the Bromberg-Ost subcamp to form a column of 1,290 people. The destination of the evacuation was the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.<sup>11</sup>

The evacuation route, leading toward Koronowo (Krone), then to Mąkowsko (Monkowarsk), and toward Sępólno Krajeńskie (Zempelburg), was marked by the graves of female prisoners shot by SS men from a Latvian escort, who killed women who were not up to the hardships of the march. Witnesses testified that "in the evening of January 21 Gestapo with dogs escorted approximately one thousand women and men from Bydgoszcz toward Koronowo. They set their dogs on the weak, who could not go on any longer, and beat them with their gun butts, shooting anyone who could not go on."<sup>12</sup> Near the village of Lucim, SS men shot several female prisoners to death, and 4 women were killed near Mąkowsko.

Some of the women tried to break away from the column and escape, which was risky under those conditions. Teresa Mittelmann, and a group of 16 girls, hid in a village where she was liberated three days later.<sup>13</sup> The primary column of women got to the town of Flatow (Złotów) on foot without any food. There, they were loaded onto open freight cars, in which they were transported to Tempelburg (Czaplinek). Mortality rose because of the cold and snow. In Tempelburg on January 29, 1945, the Latvian escort handed the women over to Volkssturm units that convoyed the column to Falkenburg (Złocieńec). There, the 40 survivors of the original group stopped at the local brickyard to spend the night. During the stopover, 4 prisoners disguised as male railroad workers, Erna Valk among them, escaped successfully. They reached Dramburg (Drawsko Pomorskie) after a 14-kilometer (8.7-mile) march. Posing as fugitives from the East, they joined with German refugees and received money, ration cards, and identification documents, as well as a place to live in the abandoned house of a local party leader. They and the other refugees left three weeks later for Germany, where the Americans freed them.<sup>14</sup> The remaining female prisoners were liberated in Falkenburg on February 4, 1945.<sup>15</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Bromberg-Brahnau subcamp: AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 78, records of criminal case against T. Meyer and others; SSK Gd, Catalog No. 418, records of criminal case against Wanda Klaff and others; AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IIIA-4, lists of Jewish female prisoners sent to the Bydgoszcz subcamp on July 15, 1944; Catalog Nos. I-IIIA-9, I-IVB-9, lists of camp receivables for prisoner labor; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, camp population reports; Catalog No. Z-V-57, materials on the Łęgowo camp investigation, 1970–1975, in the resources of District Commission for the Investigation of Nazi Crimes in Poland (now the Bydgoszcz branch of the AK-IPN Gd, transcripts in AMS); *Relacje i wspomnienia*, Erna Valk, vol. 8 (Warsaw, 2004); AP Gd., Der Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer Danzig-Westpreussen, Catalog No.



265I/1083, Arbeitseinsatz, Arbeitseinsatzbericht für den Berichtsmonat Juni 1944; APMO, Proces Maurera, 6: 51, a list of companies using the labor of concentration camp prisoners compiled by R. Höss, included as evidence in the Pohl and Maurer trials; 6a:156, list of Nazi concentration camps compiled by J. Sehn for the Maurer trial. Also see the Jewish Agency for Palestine, Dokumentacios Ogyosztaly, account of T. Mittelmänn; J. Grabowska, *Marsz śmierci. Ewakuacja piesza więźniów KL Stutthof i jego podobozów 25 stycznia—3 maja 1945* (Gdańsk, 1992); K. Leszczyński, "Eksterminacja ludności na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945 (woj. łódzkie, pomorskie i rzeszowskie)" *BGKBZHWP* 10 (1958); J. Matynia, "Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof" (Ph.D. diss., Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna w Gdańsku, 1969); and M. Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, pp. 125–128, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenarbeitslagers Bromberg-Brahnau dated July 14, 1944; APMO, Proces Maurera, 6:51, a list of companies using the labor of concentration camp prisoners compiled by R. Höss, included as evidence in the Pohl and Maurer trials; 6a:156, list of Nazi concentration camps compiled by J. Sehn for the Maurer trial.

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIA-4, lists of Jewish female prisoners sent to the Bydgoszcz subcamp on July 15, 1944, including 850 names divided into 10 groups of 100 persons each (150 names are missing from the fifth and eighth group of 100); Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 1, Anschriften der Aussenlager; AP Gd, Der Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer Danzig-Westpreussen, sygn. 265I/1083, Arbeitseinsatz, Arbeitseinsatzbericht für den Berichtsmonat Juni 1944.

3. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 78, p. 254, testimony of Stutthof concentration camp Schutzhaftlagerführer Theodor Meyer; SSK Gd, Catalog No. 418, p. 50, testimony of Wanda Steinhoff, SS woman from the [camp's] Bydgoszcz subcamp.

4. AMS, Catalog No. Z-V-57, pp. 69–70, materials on the Łęgowo camp investigation, report of examination of witness Oskar Kufel (transcripts from the resources of the Bydgoszcz branch, AK-IPN Gd).

5. Ibid., Intelligence Report dated February 25, 1944.

6. For example, according to Intelligence Report 12/44, about 50,000 sacks of gunpowder were burned in a warehouse fire on March 20, 1944.

7. The Jewish Agency for Palestine, Dokumentacios Ogyosztaly, account of T. Mittelmänn.

8. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IIIA-9, I-IVB-9.

9. Ibid., Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the population of the subcamps dated January 24, 1945. The surviving fragments of hospital records on the mortality rate at the subcamps do not contain any figures on deaths.

10. Ibid., Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 4–15; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, camp status reports, January–April 1945.

11. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Accounts and recollections), 8:143, account of Erna Valk; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, report of subcamp population on January 24, 1945.

12. Ibid., 8:212, J. Matynia; SMA, Catalog No. Z-V-57, witness examination reports in the Łęgowo camp investigation.

13. The Jewish Agency for Palestine, Dokumentacios Ogyosztaly, account of T. Mittelmänn.

14. AMS, *Accounts and Recollections*, 8:144–145, account of Erna Valk.

15. According to information provided by Zvia [Zvio?] Cilla Pinkasovits (Lebovits: letter, Cilla Pinkasovits to the Stutthof Museum, files, Catalog No. 274/1439/1994).

## BROMBERG-OST (REICHSBAHN)

Pursuant to a special order of the commandant of the Stutthof concentration camp dated September 12, 1944, two more subcamps for Jewish inmates were instituted effective September 13, 1944: Aussenarbeitslager Bromberg-Ost (Bydgoszcz-Wschód) and Aussenarbeitslager Russoschin bei Praust (Rusocin near Pruszcz Gdański).<sup>1</sup> In both subcamps, the Jewish women prisoners were put to work at German Railways (Deutsche Reichsbahn) sites, laying and repairing rails and loading and unloading railway ties and basalt. On Sundays, they were forced to work digging trenches. Often in the winter months, even in the late evening hours, they were forced to remove snow from the tracks and switches at the Bromberg-Ost junction.<sup>2</sup>

Some 300 Jewish women were sent to Bromberg; they had been selected from Jewish transports that came to the camp in July from Kowno (Kaunas) and in August from Riga and the Auschwitz concentration camp. SS-Scharführer Anton Kniffke was named commandant; 34 members of railway security who had been trained in handling prisoners were in charge of supervision, along with 7 female supervisors including Gerda Steinhoff and Ewa Paradies (sentenced to death at a trial in 1946), who had completed a two-week course for female supervisors held on September 14 at the Stutthof camp. The female prisoners were placed in Ober-Baurtrupp 1822, a collective camp located in the Bromberg-Ost (Bydgoszcz-Wschód) section. Two barracks were allocated for them. In November, construction was started on a small third barrack for an infirmary and an office for the prisoner foremen.<sup>3</sup>

The detachment primarily worked laying rails and repairing trackways for the German national railway, the Reichsbahn. The work was done under difficult climatic conditions, especially in late autumn and the winter. In his report dated November 13, 1944, on a camp inspection that he conducted, SS-Hauptsturmführer P. Ehle of headquarters staff noted the hard work of the female supervisors, who had to take the prisoner detachment out in the early morning in an open train and stayed on duty through the 40-kilometer (25-mile) route. The report went on to say that they stayed at their posts all day regardless of wind or rain, with no opportunity to have something hot to drink or eat. In another place, he stated that they had "no lights, no kitchen utensils, warm coats, or even winter stockings." The camp commandant had already sent

reports about the supervisors to the chief of the Administration and Management Division.

Of course, the female prisoners experienced the same conditions or worse, but they were not the target of so much concern.<sup>4</sup> Of their circumstances, Ehle stated tersely that approximately 10 percent of all the women were unfit for labor because of colds and should be replaced. The women who had been put to work at the main train station in Bydgoszcz (Bromberg), where they could warm themselves, were in the best situation, while those who worked outdoors replacing railroad ties, laying rails, and unloading and loading cars were in the worst. This state of things is confirmed by correspondence between the subcamp commandant and the Administration and Management Division at the main camp, headed by SS-Obersturmführer (becoming SS-Hauptsturmführer in November 1944) Engelbrecht von Bonin.<sup>5</sup> Reports about the detachment's poor provisioning had already reached Stutthof a month after the camp was formed. There was mainly a shortage of materials to mend clothing, as well as a shortage of stockings, which were torn by the wooden shoes (*Holzschuhe*) prisoners wore. Instead of stockings, the commandant urgently tried to get cloth leg wrappings as well as gloves, dresses, jackets, and garters.

Subsequent reports from the subcamp again concern the great damage to clothing and lack of materials to mend the prisoners' clothes, as well as a shortage of underwear. The death rate at the camp was not high; 2 inmates died over the first two months, as is confirmed by underwear orders; a third woman died in November. The population stayed the same at least until January 5, when the commandant asked the Administration and Management Division to send armbands with 297 prisoner numbers, which the camp did not have, due to a material shortage.<sup>6</sup> Then 2 more people died at the camp over the next three weeks up until evacuation began. There were 295 women in the subcamp as of January 24, 1945. They were evacuated along with the Stutthof subcamp in Bromberg-Brahna.

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information about the Bromberg-Ost subcamp: AK-IPN, SSK Gd., sygn. 418, records of criminal case against John Pauls; AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp command regarding supplies; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Erna Valk, vol. 8).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, pp. 177–180.
2. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Accounts and recollections), vol. 8, account of Erna Valk.
3. AK-IPN, SSK Gd., Catalog No. 418, p. 78, testimony of supervisor Ewa Paradies; AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 23, extract of P. Ehle's report made on November 13, 1944, after an inspection of the Bromberg-Ost labor camp.

4. AMS, *Accounts and Recollections*, vol. 8, account of Erna Valk.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 19–40.

6. Ibid., pp. 37–40.

## BRUSS-SOPHIENWALDE

The Bruss (Polish: Brusy) subcamp was formed pursuant to a special order that the commandant of the Stutthof concentration camp issued on August 24, 1944.<sup>1</sup> The camp began operation that day and was also known in correspondence as Truppenübungsplatz (troop exercise grounds) Bruss in Sophienwalde (Dziemiany). The Germans formed the camp because of the demand for labor on the construction site of the SS-Westpreussen (West Prussian) training ground. The construction work included building a special training ground for the Waffen-SS and Wehrmacht, barracks, garages, parking lots, and transportation infrastructure. Those projects were contracted out to a dozen or so private German companies from the Danzig–West Prussia district.

Sophienwalde was home to a major base for transshipping materials, as well as the SS-FAU 128 (Frontarbeitenunternehmung), the code name for the design office for expanding the training ground. All projects for developing the training ground originated at that office. This was the site of Bruss, formed in late 1942. Various groups of prisoners passed through the camp until the end of 1944: Russian, English, Dutch, and Italian prisoners of war (POWs); Jewish women from the Stutthof concentration camp; women from the Lebrechtsdorf displaced persons and labor camp; and Poles deported from Warsaw via Pruszków and the Stutthof camp after the Warsaw Uprising. Bruss was really a holding point, from which respective groups were sent to different work sites on the premises of the training ground.

SS-Oberscharführer Willy Schulz was named commandant of the subcamp; since June 29, 1944, he had been serving in the 2nd SS-Guard Battalion at Stutthof. The female prisoners were supervised by 15 SS men designated by the training ground administration and belonging to the local garrison. Jewish women were supervised by women from the Stutthof staff: Charlotte Rose, Emilia Löscher, and Marta Müller.

A transport of 500 Jewish women, mostly from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Poland, and Romania, was sent directly to Bruss, where the detachment was divided into two basic groups: the majority (400–450) were sent to a makeshift camp in Dziemiany on the shore of Lake Rżyno, while 50 to 100 people were placed in Bruss.<sup>2</sup>

Dziemiany had the most primitive conditions. The prisoners were quartered 10 to 15 each in about 30 wooden cabins. They slept directly on a thin layer of straw on the bare floor; the walls were made of thin noninsulated fiberboard. Due to weather conditions, many of them wore soaked clothes and shoes that they had no place to dry out, which fundamentally affected their health and sick rate.<sup>3</sup> Only on January 4, 1945,

was part of a new building opened in Dziemiany, in which there were rooms furnished with bunks for the women. All the Jewish women were moved to the new building within a month.<sup>4</sup>

The Jewish women were put to work mostly in auxiliary jobs, frequently with the forced laborers from Lebrechtsdorf and the Poles expelled from Warsaw. Their main occupation was building barracks and roads. Some of the hardest labor was roofing under the supervision of the Zemke company, which meant working at great heights, with a corresponding danger of injury; 10 women were put to work doing this, including Gertrude Schneider.<sup>5</sup> Many of the Jewish women were assigned to unload trucks of bricks transported from the Bruss brickyard or freightcars. Although it was not as dangerous as the roofing work, it required great physical strength.

The hard labor unloading bricks and building roads and military barracks, as well as the poor state of their clothing and shoes and the minimal food rations, although they were the same as at Stutthof but with little opportunity for getting extra food, caused diseases to spread, primarily spotted typhus and dysentery. Sick prisoners were murdered in the forest near the lake or during work.<sup>6</sup> The subcamp commandant's requests for warmer clothes and clothing repair materials were not always filled completely. In one letter, the commandant wrote that "if you do not provide the clothing we require and urgently need, there might be a drop in labor because of colds, and productivity could decrease."<sup>7</sup> Mainly there was a shortage of stockings, bandannas, and gloves, which served as protection from the cold as well as hand protection during work. Instead of gloves, the Jewish women used rags and newspapers that Poles from the neighboring camp provided to them.<sup>8</sup>

The camp diet was another drain on the women's health. For breakfast and supper, they were issued a slice of bread weighing about 100 to 150 grams (3.5 to 5.3 ounces), rarely with some margarine, and a cup of unsweetened black coffee; for lunch they got 0.5 liters (2 cups) of thin soup made of rutabagas and potatoes with a trace amount of fat. Dishes and eating utensils were also in short supply—one set for every five women. Poles from the neighboring camp came to the Jewish women's aid by making spoons and cups from wood and secretly providing them to the Jewish camp.<sup>9</sup> The death rate in the camp was considerable, although firm statistics are lacking. There are only 3 names on the incomplete lists of prisoners who died at the subcamps. Gertrude Schneider confirmed the high mortality rate in the camp, listing such major causes of "natural death" as spotted typhus, probably brought to the camp when 35 Jewish women from Stutthof were sent to replace sick prisoners who had been hospitalized in late October 1944.<sup>10</sup> Schneider reported that the prisoner population was always kept at approximately 500. She reported that Dziemiany numbered 488 persons on December 19, 1944, but by January 16, 1945, there were only 430 women in the camp, then 480 on February 1, and only 394 on February 10.<sup>11</sup> Thus the total number of Jewish women who passed through the subcamp, allowing for the high death rate, could not be less than 600 or 700.

On the morning of February 10, 1945, the camp was evacuated. Schulz probably received an order to march toward Lauenburg (Łębork), which was the destination for the prisoner columns led out of the Stutthof camp and was nearest to the Dziemiany subcamp's evacuation route; 86 women, mostly ill, were left in the camp. Schulz assured them they would stay there, but they were actually taken in trucks to the village of Leśno-Wybudowanie, where they were shot and their bodies burned.<sup>12</sup>

Of the group evacuated from Dziemiany (including Jewish women from the other detachments, mainly Bruss, who had been moved to Dziemiany earlier), 347 prisoners reached the town of Gotentof on February 17 after marching 83 kilometers (51.6 miles); there they merged with columns of prisoners evacuated from other Stutthof subcamps. They were to spend several days at the Gotentof camp to merge with other prisoner groups. Schneider rated the conditions at that camp as the worst that the women had encountered so far.

Only on March 9 were the prisoners again put in columns in the evening and sent further on their way. They covered 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) during the all-night march, reaching Chynów. Many other Jewish women who had arrived earlier were in a huge barn and on the roadside. Russian tanks entered the village the next day, March 10, 1945. No more than 250 Jewish women were still alive.<sup>13</sup> The Russians shot all the guards escorting the women, including commandant Schulz. The fate of the three women supervisors is unknown. Schneider reported that soldiers took two of them away in separate tanks; the third one disappeared.

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information about the Bruss subcamp: AK-IPN Gd, sygn. Ko 4/85, witness examination reports (Zdzisław Kaczmarczyk); AK-IPN Gd, Bydgoszcz branch, Catalog No. Ds. 106/67, materials from Brusy camp investigation; Catalog No. Ds. 11/67, report of investigation of crime committed by Germans against a group of women in Leśno on February 9, 1945; AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the branch with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Catalog No. I-VB-7, lists of prisoners who died in the subcamps; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, affidavits (Alice Block, Gertrude Schneider); G. Schneider, *Unfinished Road. Jewish Survivors of Latvia Look Back* (New York, 1991); B. Breza, "Pod hitlerowską okupacją," in *Lipusz-Dziemiany*, ed. J. Borzyszkowski (Gdańsk, 1994), pp. 330–372; M. Orski, *Poligon SS na Pomorzu Gdańskim, filia obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof i obozy dla ludności cywilnej ewakuowanej z Warszawy* (Gdańsk, 1992); Orski, "The Jewish Subcamp of the Stutthof Concentration Camp (Konzentrationslager Stutthof) at Brusy-Dziemiany (1941–1945)," *YVS* 12 (1992): 273–286.; Orski, "Cień Sophienwalde," *Pom*, no. 5 (1995).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. M. Orski, *Poligon SS na Pomorzu Gdańskim, filia obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof i obozy dla ludności cywilnej ewakuowanej*



z *Warszawy* (Gdańsk, 1992), pp. 39–56; Orski, “The Jewish Subcamp of the Stutthof Concentration Camp (Konzentrationslager Stutthof) at Brusy-Dziemiany (1941–1945),” *YVS* 12 (1992): 273–286; AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, pp. 159–160, “Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenarbeitslagers Bruss.”

2. AK-IPN Gd, Bydgoszcz branch, Catalog No. OK. By. Ds. 106/67, materials from Brusy camp investigation.

3. AMS, letter, Alice Block to the Stutthof Museum, June 23, 1999.

4. G. Schneider, *Unfinished Road. Jewish survivors of Latvia Look Back* (New York, 1991), pp. 15–16.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

6. AMS, Catalog No. I-VB-7, lists of prisoners who died in the subcamps; Schneider, *Unfinished Road*, pp. 12–13.

7. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 162, Schulz to Stutthof concentration camp headquarters dated October 29, 1944. G. Schneider corroborated these facts in her camp memoirs.

8. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ko. 4/85, report of examination of witness Zdzisław Kaczmarczyk; Orski, *Poligon*, p. 115.

9. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. OK. Gd. Ko 4/85, report of examination of witness Zdzisław Kaczmarczyk.

10. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6.

11. Schneider, *Unfinished Road*, pp. 14, 16, 18; AMS, account of G. Schneider dated January 11, 1990.

12. AK-IPN Gd, Bydgoszcz branch, Catalog No. Ds. 11/67, report of investigation of crime committed by Germans against a group of women in Leśno on February 9, 1945.

13. According to the estimates of Gertrude Schneider’s mother, G. Schneider, *Unfinished Road*, p. 23.

## DANZIG (*BETONFABRIK*)

Beginning on June 28, 1940, 70 prisoners from the civilian prisoner camp at Danzig-Neufahrwasser were sent to work at the concrete plant (*Betonfabrik*) in Danzig-Langfuhr (Gdańsk Wrzeszcz), at what was then 235 Adolf-Hitler-Strasse.<sup>1</sup>

The owner of the plant was a Polish ethnic German (Volksdeutscher), a member of the Nazi Party (NSDAP) who changed his name from August Roszkowski to August Röskau in 1942.<sup>2</sup> The prisoners were quartered 200 meters (219 yards) from the plant and the owner’s residence, in half-dismantled barracks on the same street. A person named Jablonski was commander of the guard over the prisoners. Three prisoners escaped from the detachment on August 15, 1940. One of the escapees said in his account:

I got into a detachment in Wrzeszcz that worked at the concrete plant. There were seventy of us. Tomczyk, the son of the circus performer, was there. On August 15, [1940], we went to pour water on some concrete elements that had been produced, and, taking advantage of the SS men’s inattention, we got into a room where some civilian workers’ clothing was hanging—it was Sunday; Tomczyk, myself and one more man changed clothes and escaped. I went via Gdańsk, Tczew, and Olsztyn, and finally reached Warsaw.<sup>3</sup>

The subcamp was shut down on December 1, 1940.<sup>4</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this entry: AMS, sygn. I-III, prisoner personal files; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (*Accounts and Recollections*) (Tadeusz Masio, vol. 9); *Danziger Einwohnerbuch mit allen eingemeindeten Vororten und Zoppot* (Danzig, 1942); M.E. Jezierska, “Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów” *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992); J. Matynia, “Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof” (Ph.D. diss., Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna w Gdańsku, 1969).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-III-49995, I-III-50056, personal files of prisoners Grzegorz Marszałkiewicz and Stefan Tryek (or Tryko).

2. *Danziger Einwohnerbuch mit allen eingemeindeten Vororten und Zoppot* (Danzig, 1942), 1:316, 4:235.

3. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 1:139, account of Tadeusz Masio.

4. According to various authors, this occurred between the spring and autumn of 1941. We can establish an exact date, December 1, 1940, based on the labor assignment entry for prisoner Grzegorz Marszałkiewicz. M. Gliński, “*Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945)*,” *StZeMu*, no. 3 (1979):168, situates it in Danzig Suchanino, not in Wrzeszcz, which the account of Tadeusz Masio, former prisoner of this subcamp, clearly indicates. The same error was repeated after that publication in a monograph on the camp published in 1988. They were two different detachments, although they did a similar type of work. *Stutthof. Das Konzentrationslager*, (Gdańsk: Wydawn, 2003) p. 230.

## DANZIG (*DANZIGER-WERFT*)

### [AKA DANZIG-TROYL, LAGER TROYL]

The Danziger-Werft subcamp was formed pursuant to a special order that the commandant of the Stutthof concentration camp issued on August 25, 1944. The subcamp began operating a day later.<sup>1</sup> Besides the work detail (*Aussenkommando*) Danziger-Werft, there was also an external work camp (*Aussenarbeitslager*), Danziger-Werft. Initially 300 non-Jewish men were sent to work at the government shipyard; they had been picked from among skilled fitters, lathe operators, mechanics, and metalworkers, mostly recruited from people working at the German Equipment Works (DAW) shops, especially the gun repair shops. Most of the people who “volunteered” for the work detail were from the Danzig and Gdynia (Gotenhafen) area and hoped to have contact with their families, as well as to escape from the camp. The group included Poles arrested in late 1942 for belonging to underground organizations such as the Home Army’s Armed Combat Union and the Gray Ranks; in 1944, they were joined by Varsovians who arrived in May from Pawiak prison and from transports sent to Stutthof during the Warsaw Uprising.

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The prisoners helped to build new warships, especially submarines; they were to replace German specialists called up to the Wehrmacht. SS-Oberscharführer Albert Paul Höldtke was the subcamp's commandant from August 26 to November 13, 1944; when he was transferred to the Stoboi subcamp, SS-Oberscharführer Willy Redder took the position. The guard unit consisted of 15 SS men assigned from the Stutthof camp and an unknown number of German navy sailors. Subsequent prisoner transports arrived on August 25, 1944 (300 people); September 19 (100); and October 5 and 31 (120 and 100, respectively). The last transport documented was sent on November 21, 1944, and it included 170 people.<sup>2</sup> Thus, a total of 795 prisoners were sent to Danziger-Werft.

The camp was located in the Danzig-Troyl (Gdańsk-Przeróbka) section of Danzig, so the prisoner detachment has also been called Danzig-Troyl or Lager Troyl, the name used for the camp address.<sup>3</sup> Each prisoner column was taken by narrow-gauge railway to the mouth of the Vistula River in Nickelswalde (Mikoszewo), then by a large riverboat to Danzig. They were quartered in a complex of seven wooden barracks previously occupied by civilian shipyard workers who had been moved somewhere else. The prisoners' job was to fence the grounds, then to erect watchtowers. Each barrack was furnished with double-decker bunks, and one barrack housed the kitchen. Each separate room in the barracks was numbered in sequence.<sup>4</sup> According to a former prisoner of the subcamp, the camp was located "right on the street that ran from the canal to the city," from where prisoners were ferried daily to the workplace.<sup>5</sup> Knowing the area where the Danziger-Werft shipyard was located, which was on the left bank of the Motława River north of the mouth of the Radunia, the camp had to be on Przetoczna Strasse.<sup>6</sup>

The day after the arrival of the first group of prisoners in Danzig, the entire transport was sent to the shipyard. Here, civilian engineers briefly spoke with the group to ascertain the skills of the prisoners assigned to work in specific departments at the shipyard. They were mainly put to work in the foundry, the forge or fitting shop, in earthmoving, transport, cleaning the camp, and clearing the city of rubble. Work at the shipyard was done in two shifts of 12 hours each.<sup>7</sup> Prisoners worked at the shipyard in the same workstations as other forced laborers; for instance, Zbigniew Raczkiewicz was put in a four-man Polish-French group (two prisoners and two French prisoners of war [POWs]), assembling fans in one of the submarine sections. Besides their work, they also shared a common plight, and the Frenchmen expressed their solidarity by sharing what they received in International Red Cross packages with the Poles.

Camp chronicler Raczkiewicz rated conditions in camp and at work as better than, or at least no worse than, those at the Stutthof camp.<sup>8</sup> Each prisoner occupied one bunk and could move freely about the entire camp. There were no harsh discipline procedures, and the camp supervisors were not brutal, with two exceptions. The first was Max Musolf, the first camp elder, who was replaced in November 1944 by Czesław Gdaniec, a Pole from Danzig who treated the pris-

oners more decently. The second exception was the second commandant, Willy Redder, who was especially brutal and often beat prisoners himself.

The shipyard was in charge of camp food supplies; it delivered food and issued dinners, which were low in calories and meager in portions. Meals were made in camp on the free Sunday. It is no wonder that many prisoners looked for opportunities to get something extra to eat, availing themselves of the assistance of family and friends—especially those from Gdynia, who supplied prisoners with food through civilian workers who risked exposure and severe punishment.<sup>9</sup> The prisoners also took advantage of help from corrupt SS men, who let them meet their families to obtain cigarettes or gifts of food. After awhile, people could also leave food packages for inmates in the camp office, although the packages were searched thoroughly before reaching their recipients.

The prisoners were not well provided with shoes or clothing. This is evidenced by correspondence of the subcamp's commandant to the clothing warehouse at the main camp. The commandant's justification for requesting 600 pairs of shoes was that "this camp has no capability of providing prisoners with shoes. The workshops we have can only provide the most urgent shoe repairs."<sup>10</sup> The chief of the clothing warehouse, SS-Unterscharführer Willy Knott, refused the request, saying there was a shortage of shoes.

In September 1944, the camp records list the first escape of three prisoners, who fled during the night shift at the shipyard and were caught 14 days later and sent to the Stutthof camp. There is no information on their punishment. Two more prisoners escaped a month later; there is no information on whether or not they were caught.

There were several successful escapes in January and February 1945 as the camp's shutdown was approaching and supervision slackened. Czesław Szlachcikowski escaped successfully. When the guard was not watching, he left a barrack outside camp where he was working as an electrician, unnoticed, dressed in clothes his wife had sent him. Among the other successful escapees were Edmund Wyszeccki, Włodzimierz Steyer, Bogusław Popkowski, and two Englishmen, Theo Ellsmor and Thomas Mitchell. The chances of a successful escape were the greatest for prisoners who could depend on the help of people beyond the barbed-wire fence and who had civilian clothing and fake identification papers. The Russians who dared to escape failed, as did many Varsovians.<sup>11</sup>

Work stopped at the shipyard on January 17, 1945. There were 789 prisoners in the camp as of January 24, 1945. Camp conditions deteriorated: there was a food shortage, and the shipyard and personnel had been evacuated, so there was hardly any chance of getting extra food from outside. Every day a transport column would take out the bodies of dead prisoners to the crematorium at the Medical Academy or the cemetery in Saspe. The detachment's evacuation began on March 24, 1945, in several stages; the last group of prisoners reached the Stutthof camp in early April.<sup>12</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Westerplatte subcamp: AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports of Stanisław Czarnota, Katowice and Kraków divisions; AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; sygn. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; sygn. I-IVH-5, miscellaneous materials on the Stutthof concentration camp subcamp; sygn. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, (Kazimierz Dymczyk, vol. 24; Gerard Knoff, vol. 6; Zdzisław Kolanko, Zbigniew Raczekiewicz, vols. 9, 15, 25; Włodzimierz Steyer, vol. 18); "Um Holm und Helling," in *Danziger Werft Aktiengesellschaft 1844–1944* (Danzig, 1944); K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Obóz koncentracyjny Stutthof* (Gdynia, 1970); J. Grabowska, *Marsz śmierci. Ewakuacja piesza więźniów KL Stutthof i jego podobozów. 25 stycznia–3 maja 1945* (Gdańsk, 1992); B. Hajduk, "Finanse, przemysł i rzemiosło" and "Gospodarka gdańska w okresie drugiej wojny światowej," in *Historia Gdańska*, ed. E. Cieślak, vol. 4/2 (Sopot, 1998); M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992); M. Orski, *Ostatnie dni obozu Stutthof*, 2nd ed. (Gdańsk, 1998); Orski, "Struktura państwowa i skład narodowościowy obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992); K. Steyer, "Z problematyki ucieczek z KL Stutthof," *StZeMu*, no. 2 (1977); M. Wojciechowski, *Stocznia Gdańska. Fakty i liczby* (Gdańsk, 1968); *Stutthof. Das Konzentrationslager* (Gdańsk, 1996).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, p. 165.
2. Ibid., Kommandanturbefehle; sygn. I-IVH-5, p. 164, commandant's order dated November 20, 1944, regarding moving 170 prisoners to Aussenarbeitslager Danziger Werft.
3. AMS, sygn. I-IVH-7, "Anschriften der Aussenarbeitslager: Danzig, Danziger Werft, Lager Troyl."
4. AK-IPN Gd, report of examination of witness Stanisław Czarnota dated September 18, 1972 (original at Kraków division); AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:61, 227–229, accounts of Zdzisław Kolanko, Zbigniew Raczekiewicz; J. Matynia, pp. 110–111, 270.
5. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:233, account of Zbigniew Raczekiewicz.
6. On the location of the camp, former prisoner Gerard Knoff is of a similar opinion (AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 6:42). He says that the camp was near the present Ul. Ku Ujściu in Przeróbka on the Kashubian Canal; Ul. Przetoczna is an extension.
7. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Kpp 42/72 (Kraków), report of examination of witness Stanisław Czarnota; AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:61, 228, 15:161, accounts of Zdzisław Kolanko and Zbigniew Raczekiewicz.
8. Of a similar opinion were Zdzisław Kolanko (see above) and Stanisław Czarnota. AK-IPN Gd, witness examination report dated November 7, 1972 (original at Katowice division).
9. Zbigniew Raczekiewicz recalls this (AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:230–231, as well as his account in vol. 15).

10. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 73, letter of SS-Oberscharführer Willy Redder to Stutthof concentration camp headquarters dated January 2, 1945.

11. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:233–234, account of Zbigniew Raczekiewicz; 18:12, Włodzimierz Steyer.

12. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 6:43–44, account of Gerard Knoff; 9:62–63, 235–236; 25:126–129, Zdzisław Kolanko, Zbigniew Raczekiewicz; 24:26, Kazimierz Dymczyk; AK-IPN Gd, report of examination of witness Stanisław Czarnota dated November 7, 1972 (original at Katowice division).

## DANZIG (SCHICHAU-WERFT)

In 1944, the Schichau-Werft AG Elbing shipyard signed two contracts to employ prisoners at the Elbing shipyard and its Danzig branch. The Schichau-Werft subcamp was formed pursuant to a special order of the Stutthof concentration camp commandant dated September 12, 1944, effective September 13, 1944. SS-Oberscharführer Hans Wansel from the 1st Guard Company (1./SS-Totenkopfsturmbann KL Stutthof) was named its commandant. Some 500 Jewish women were initially chosen for the transport. They were brought to Danzig (Gdańsk) by ship from the harbor at Fischerbabke (Rybina) near the camp to the Schichau-Werft shipyard harbor in Danzig. Besides the commandant, 20 female supervisors were designated who were to be assigned to Danzig upon completing a special course. Until then, 10 guards from the 3rd Company were on duty; they returned to the Stutthof camp when the female supervisors arrived on October 18, 1944.<sup>1</sup> Navy sailors also served as supervisors at the shipyard and in the camp.

From October 16 to November 23, 1944, more Jewish prisoner transports were sent to Danzig. They were selected out of a total of 1,100 men, which increased the maximum population of the entire detachment to 1,600 prisoners. Jews from Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, and Hungary prevailed in the first transports, while in late October, Jews from the Netherlands, France, and Hungary were sent from the Auschwitz concentration camp.<sup>2</sup>

Jewish prisoners were put to work both as skilled workmen and as helpers. Since there was a shortage of German skilled workers, the prisoners were trained as welders, smelters, and plumbers. The prisoners were quartered in former prisoner-of-war (POW) barracks (Soviet, French, and Italian POWs had lived there, in that order) in Danzig Kokoski Stalag XX A, Burggraben, which had been handed over for use by the Wehrmacht command in September 1944; therefore, it was also called SS-Aussenkommando Burggraben, Danzig Kokoski, and SS-Lager Burggraben.<sup>3</sup>

Working conditions at the Danzig shipyard, to which the prisoners had a long and arduous trip, were hard to bear, especially on the night shift. In addition, when the prisoners finished the night shift, they were often faced with day work at the camp, such as loading and unloading material. Besides assembling submarines, Jews also worked



building anti-aircraft shelters for the workers employed at the shipyard, which in their opinion was among the hardest labor at the camp.<sup>4</sup>

Besides the arduous daily commutes to work from Kokoszki to Danzig in unheated train cars with the windows knocked out, the prisoners received starvation food rations. The supply of clothing and shoes, as well as food, of which the administration of Stutthof concentration camp was in charge, was inadequate, which is confirmed by correspondence of the subcamp's commandant with the clothing warehouse at Stutthof.<sup>5</sup> At camp, they slept in unheated barracks, sleeping from five to six hours. They would leave for work at 5:00 A.M. and worked from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., with a half-hour break for lunch.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the guards and women supervisors in the women's barrack, the prisoners were supervised in camp by Jewish foremen prisoners (Kapos). As former subcamp prisoner Josef Katz states, they were just as brutal as their counterparts at the Stutthof camp. Among the most cruel were a Latvian Jew, Glücksmann, and a Pole called Chamek (which means "brute"), who had the positions of camp elders. Katz unambiguously described both of them as "animal characters." Just after liberation, Chamek was shot by Russian soldiers, and Glücksmann fled.<sup>7</sup> Another Kapo, Henryk Kleiman, a Polish Jew, was tried by the Płock District Court in 1949 (at a circuit session in Płońsk). His indictment charged him with serving as a Kapo or barrack elder from late 1944 onward. In this position, he "smashed skulls with rocks, choked people, [and] crushed heads with his feet." Earlier he had been at the Auschwitz concentration camp, where he behaved just as brutally as at Kokoszki. By judgment of the district court dated July 14, 1949, and appellate court dated February 18, 1950, he was sentenced to death. The court was not persuaded by his good reputation at Stutthof, finding that the good did not make up for the wrongs he had inflicted.<sup>8</sup>

Despite the seemingly extreme conditions, many Jews treated their stay at Schichau-Werft as an improvement of their plight in comparison with the Stutthof main camp, where they were constantly in danger of losing their lives. At Kokoszki, each of them received a plate, a cup, and a spoon for his or her own use, as well as a single bunk, while at Stutthof four prisoners slept in one bunk made up of three levels.<sup>9</sup>

The difficult living conditions in camp, the exhausting work, and malnutrition caused a high sick rate among prisoners. It increased in December 1944 when an epidemic of spotted typhus and typhoid fever broke out. According to the affidavit of Katz, several Jews died every day. Reports by the subcamp's commandant dated December 15 and 17, 1944, state that 497 women were sent back to Stutthof, which was directly connected with the typhus epidemic in camp. Those people went to the hospital.<sup>10</sup> There were only 991 prisoners in the camp in late January 1945.<sup>11</sup> The burial register at the Zaspa cemetery listed 91 Schichau-Werft prisoners, and the Stutthof hospital also recorded some deaths.<sup>12</sup> The number of deaths must have been considerably greater than that because the central camp sent more transports to replace the sick and

dead. The dead were buried in mass graves near the camp or were taken out to be burned at the Danzig Medical Academy crematorium. The people buried at Kokoszki were exhumed in May 1994, and on November 5, 1994, the remains of 20 prisoners were solemnly laid to rest in a common grave at the Zaspa cemetery.<sup>13</sup>

In its last stage of operation, the Schichau-Werft camp was designated as a collection point and evacuation transit camp for Stutthof prisoners. All work at the shipyard ceased, beginning in January 1945. The prisoners were put to work removing snow from the streets or railroad tracks. Ever-increasing hunger prevailed in camp, and the sick and death rate increased; as many as 20 people died per day. On February 10, 1945, the 991 Jews remaining in camp were evacuated toward Lauenburg (Lębork). After leaving the evacuation camps in Rybno, Tawęcín, and Goddentow (Godętowo) near Lauenburg, some prisoners from the reevacuation route along with other evacuation columns were liberated at Chynów on March 10, 1945; others went back to the camp in Stutthof via Danzig. In late April 1945, they were evacuated by sea to Germany. The death rate in the group of Jews evacuated from Kokoszki was very high but difficult to establish. The high death rate was the result of shooting the sick and weak, as well as cases of infectious diseases, starvation, or extreme emaciation from marching or digging trenches. The number of deaths is estimated at a minimum of 100 people (from the column sent to Rybno and Tawęcín) as well as several dozen people from the group that reached Goddentow.<sup>14</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this entry: AAN, Division VI, records of the KG AK, Division II—Lombard, sygn. 203/III-6; AK-IPN, SO Płock, Catalog Nos. 246–249, records of criminal case against Henryk Kleiman; SSK Gd, Catalog No. 418, records of criminal case against Wanda Klaff and others; AK-IPN, witness examination reports (Aleksander Arendt); AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle, Sonderbefehle; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog Nos. I-IVH-5, I-IVH-7, correspondence of the branch with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Catalog No. Z-V-23, reports collected by the Polish Red Cross, Lębork, 1945; Lasik, Stutthof ac.; materials on the Kokoszki camp (compiled by K. Ciechanowski); Cmentarz-Zaspa, compiled by Andrzej Chudy; K. Ciechanowski, "Los nasz dla was przestroga ma być—nie legendą," *DB*, November 3, 1994; K. Doenitz, *10 Jahre und 20 Tage* (Frankfurt am Main, 1964); D. Drywa, *Podobozy, (Aussenarbeitslager) KL Stutthof dla więźniów narodowości żydowskiej* (in print, typescript at AMS); J. Grabowska, *Marsz śmierci. Ewakuacja piesza więźniów KL Stutthof i jego podobozów. 25 stycznia—3 maja 1945* (Gdańsk, 1992); M. Andrzejewski, *Elbląg w latach 1918–1939 (Elbląg from 1918 to 1939)* (Gdańsk, 1987); Z. Binerowski, "Materiały statystyczne produkcji okrętowej stoczni Schichaua z lat 1855–1943," *LibGed* 1 (1967); S. Gierszewski, *Elbląg. Przeszłość i teraźniejszość*, 3rd ed. (Gdańsk, 1970); J. Katz, *One Who Came Back. The Diary of a Jewish Survivor* (New York, 1973); F. Mamuszka, *Elbląg i okolice* (Gdańsk, 1987); J. Ratz, "Surviving Burggraben," in *Muted Voices. Jewish survivors of Latvia Re-*

member, collected and ed. Gertrude Schneider (New York, 1987); *Stutthof. Ein Konzentrationslager. vor den Toren Danzigs*, ed. H. Kuhn (Bremen, 1995); H. Wojciechowski, *Stocznia Gdańska. Fakty i liczby* (Gdańsk, 1968); *100 Jahre Schichau 1837–1937, Herausgegeben anlässlich des hundertjährigen der Schichau-Werke* (Elbing, 1937).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, pp. 175–176, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenarbeitslagers Schichau-Werft Danzig; Lasik, Stutthof ac.

2. Ibid., pp. 175–176, 218, 226, 234, Kommandanturbe-  
fehle no. 69, 71, and 73, October 15, 22, and 30, 1944; and Cata-  
log No. I-IVH-5, commandant's order of November 22, 1944,  
regarding moving 242 prisoners to Schichau-Werft Danzig.

3. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 1, 45–55, Anschriften  
der Aussenarbeitslager and correspondence of the SS-  
Kommando Burggraben subcamp with Häftlingsbekleidungs-  
kammer in Sztutowo (Stutthof) on clothing supplies; L.  
Biernacki, "Życie na cmentarzu," *Fa*, February 15, 1998.

4. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 418, pp. 129–130; AK-  
IPN Gd, Catalog No. Zn 8/47, report of examination of wit-  
ness Aleksander Arendt dated 1947; K. Ciechanowski, "Los  
nasz dla was przestroga ma być—nie legenda," *DB*, November  
3, 1994; AMS, materials on the Kokoszki camp, compiled by  
K. Ciechanowski; M. Gliński, *Organizacja obozu koncentracyj-  
nego Stutthof*, p. 176; J. Katz, *One Who Came Back. The Diary of  
a Jewish Survivor* (New York, 1973), pp. 223–235; *Stutthof. Ein  
Konzentrationslager vor den Toren Danzigs*, ed. H. Kuhn (Bre-  
men, 1995), pp. 159–162 (abridged memoirs of J. Katz).

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 145–155.

6. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 418, pp. 129–130, tes-  
timony of Jeheskiel Gliksberg.

7. Katz, *One Who Came Back*, pp. 226–227.

8. AK-IPN, SO Płock, Catalog No. 246–249.

9. J. Ratz, "Surviving Burggraben," in *Muted Voices. Jew-  
ish Survivors of Latvia Remember*, collected and ed. Gertrude  
Schneider (New York, 1987), p. 215; Katz, *One Who Came  
Back*, p. 224.

10. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 51, Wansel to  
Häftlingsbekleidungskammer dated December 20, 1944.

11. Ibid., Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, report on the camp's pop-  
ulation on January 24, 1945.

12. Ibid., Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's  
population, April 1945; Catalog No. I-VB-7, lists of prisoners  
who died in the subcamps; A. Chudy, *Cmentarz Zaspa* (AMS);  
Katz, *One Who Came Back*, pp. 231–233.

13. K. Ciechanowski, "Los nasz dla was przestroga ma  
być—nie legenda," *DB*, November 3, 1994; K. Ciechanowski's  
dossier on the Kokoszki camp, including reports from on-site  
inspections on September 13, 1993, and May 4, 1994 (copies at  
AMS); L. Biernacki, "Życie na cmentarzu," *Fa*, February 15,  
1998.

14. AMS, Catalog No. Z-V-23, reports collected by the  
Polish Red Cross, Łębork, 1945; AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No.  
ZN 8/47, report of examination of witness Aleksander Arendt;  
M. Orski, *Verzeichnis der Nebenlager und grösseren Aus-  
senkommandos des KZ-Stutthof* (Gdańsk, 1996), p. 277; Katz,

*One Who Came Back*, pp. 233–258; Ratz, "Surviving Burggra-  
ben," pp. 217–219; D. Drywa, *Podobozy (Aussenarbeitslager) KL  
Stutthof dla więźniów narodowości żydowskiej* (in print, type-  
script at AMS).

## DANZIG (SCHULEMANN)

A new work detachment was established from Stutthof on July  
11, 1941. Employment entries in prisoner files confirm the  
date that this subcamp opened.<sup>1</sup> At the Stutthof camp, the la-  
bor supply announced recruitment for finishing work at Dr.  
Kurt Schulemann's private obstetrics clinic being expanded at  
23 Sandgrube Strasse (later Reverend Rogaczewski Ulica) in  
Danzig (later Gdańsk).<sup>2</sup> According to Walerian Kilanowski's  
account, 25 people signed up and were sent to Danzig that  
day.<sup>3</sup> Another account states that Dr. Schulemann personally  
came to the Stutthof camp and picked prisoners for construc-  
tion work in the commandant's presence.<sup>4</sup>

The prisoners were quartered on the street side of the sec-  
ond floor of the building under construction. Guards from  
the Stutthof camp oversaw them; their role was limited to se-  
curing the premises where prisoners worked and preventing  
escapes. Conditions in the detachment were decidedly better  
than those at the Stutthof main camp. The prisoners wore  
civilian overalls without camp markings, worked under the  
supervision of civilian foremen, and were safe from any perse-  
cution by the guards.

After two months in camp, two prisoners, Walerian  
Kilanowski and Kazimierz Dębski (aka Dębczak), began to  
plan their escape, at first independently of one another. They  
carefully observed the immediate area to plan an escape route  
and recorded the guards' daily shifts. They designated a farm  
in Stara Kiszewa near Koscierzyna that belonged to the fam-  
ily of Michnikowski, a fellow prisoner in the same detach-  
ment, as the first stage of their escape. As their escape date  
they picked Saturday, August 16, 1941, after work had ended  
and before the evening roll call had begun. They took advan-  
tage of the momentary absence of any SS men, who all went  
into town every week at the same time, except for the one who  
was on duty. Six days later the escapees successfully reached  
the Michnikowski farm in Stara Kiszewa, where they received  
aid. The next day, refreshed and dressed in new clothing and  
underwear, they set off for German-occupied Poland, where  
they survived until the end of the war.<sup>5</sup>

The consequences of that escape for the Danzig detach-  
ment's prisoners themselves is not known. There are no other  
stories on the escape except for that one account. Work at the  
clinic construction site continued in spite of it, and the de-  
tachment was shut down only on October 30, 1941. When the  
subcamp was disbanded, the prisoners were put to work by the  
national office of the Reich Food Producers (Reichs-  
nährstand) in Danzig. On November 21, 1941, the remaining  
prisoners returned to the Stutthof camp.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this es-  
say: AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports of Franciszek

Studziński; AMS, sygn. I-III, prisoner personal files; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Henryk Tempczyk, vol. 1); *Danziger Einwohnerbuch mit allen Vororten und Zoppot 1940, 1941* (Danzig, November 1940); *Danziger Einwohnerbuch mit allen eingemeideten Vororten und Zoppot 1942* (Danzig, 1942); M.E. Jezierska, “Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów,” *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992); K.Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Ruch oporu w hitlerowskich obozach koncentracyjnych 1933–1945* (Warsaw, 1979).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-III-40702, I-III-49852, I-III-49966, personal files of prisoners Piotr Biegielmayer, Alojzy Usarek, and Antoni Wasilewski.

2. According to *Danziger Einwohnerbuch mit allen Vororten und Zoppot 1940, 1941* (Danzig, November 1940) and *Danziger Einwohnerbuch mit allen eingemeideten Vororten und Zoppot 1942* (Danzig, 1942), Dr. Kurt Schulemann was the owner of a private clinic (*Privatklinik*) engaged in obstetrics and gynecology.

3. Walerian Kilanowski’s recollections in AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia* (1: 326, former prisoner Henryk Tempczyk’s compilation “Kolejarze w KL Stutthof”).

4. AK-IPN Gd, report of examination of witness Franciszek Studziński dated October 4 and November 2, 1972 (Bydgoszcz).

5. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 1: 329–331; M.E. Jezierska, “Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów,” *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992) : 130–131.

6. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-49852, personal files of prisoner Alojzy Usarek; AK-IPN Gd, report of examination of witness Franciszek Studziński dated November 2, 1972 (Bydgoszcz).

## DANZIG

### (SS-HAUPTVERSORGUNGSLAGER)

The operation of this small detachment in Danzig (later Gdańsk), probably composed of just a few prisoners, is confirmed by a labor assignment entry dated June 23, 1940, in a prisoner file regarding the escape of Polish prisoner Leo Miotek.<sup>1</sup> The fugitive was apprehended two hours later in his own apartment in Danzig Orunia and punished by being assigned to a penal company and receiving seven whippings at the post of 25 lashes each. The report filed for camp commandant M. Pauly on the chase contained the prisoner’s testimony that “he only wanted to bring a couple of shirts back for himself, as there was no change of clothing at camp, and he intended on returning.”

The prisoners worked at the SS-Main Supply Depot (SS-Hauptversorgungslager), presumably helping to sort and arrange the various items being stored in the warehouse. When the work was completed or the camp commandant decided to disband the detachment, the group returned to the main camp at Stutthof.

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this entry: AMS, sygn. I-III, prisoner personal files; M.E. Jezierska, “Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów,” *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTE

1. AMS, sygn. I-III-50196, prisoner personal files; M. Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999), p. 355.

### DANZIG (SS-OBBERABSCHNITT WEICHEL)

The SS-“Vistula” Main Sector office (SS-Oberabschnitt Weichsel, XX Wehrkreis) was instituted pursuant to Heinrich Himmler’s decision of December 14, 1939. Until then, Danzig and Pomerania were under the SS-Königsberg Main Sector office (SS-Oberabschnitt Nord-Ost, Königsberg). From April 1, 1940, to September 30, 1941, SS-Oberabschnitt Weichsel took over camp funding from Danzig Police Headquarters (Schutzpolizei), except for staff maintenance expenses. All camp income from prisoner labor went directly into the funds of the Main Sector office, which had its own independent policy for prisoner employment.

A limited liability company named Weichselland was founded in October 1941 on the initiative of SS-Oberabschnitt Weichsel. The exact details on how the company was established and operated are not known. What is known is that upper officers of the SS-Vistula Main Sector office became partners in the company, which was formed to find jobs for and exploit the labor of political prisoners. Although the camp management was taken over by the Danzig Security Police on October 1, 1941, SS-Oberabschnitt Weichsel looked after the interests of its own company in the contracts it signed with the Gestapo, as the company was guaranteed prisoner labor in its shops in the camp and at facilities in Danzig.

The first references to prisoner labor on premises belonging to the SS-Oberabschnitt Weichsel command in Danzig are in the camp commandant’s correspondence with the Danzig Gestapo Office in the matter of releasing two prisoners put to work in tradesmen’s jobs.<sup>1</sup>

A letter dated November 10, 1941, shows that both had been assigned for some time to do work at SS-Oberabschnitt Weichsel headquarters in Danzig. One of the prisoners was a metalworker by trade from Grudziądz, arrested on September 14, 1939, in Gdynia. They began the work prior to September 25, 1941, as evidenced by the Gestapo’s initial letter of that date regarding both prisoners. When pressed again in the same matter on January 5, 1942, the Stutthof camp commandant announced that the work would be completed on January 20, 1942, which actually happened. Both of them were released from camp the next day.<sup>2</sup>

Another SS-Oberabschnitt Weichsel detachment was formed in November 1942. Records of the Prisoner Employ-



ment Department and the Management and Administration Agency show that the subcamp operated in November 1942, then from January to February 1943, and from June through September 1943. Records are incomplete, so it cannot be established whether the subcamp existed the entire time or just during those months.<sup>3</sup> It is also not known how many prisoners worked in those detachments, the type of work they did, or the makeup of the guard unit. Nor is it known exactly where the subcamp headquarters was located or where the prisoners worked (possibly at Stutthof or Danzig).

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this entry: AMS, sygn. I-III, prisoner personal files, correspondence of Stutthof camp headquarters with the Danzig Gestapo Office; Catalog Nos. I-IIIA-9, I-IVB-9, lists of camp receivables for prisoner labor.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn I-III-43660, Lagerkommandantur Stutthof to the Danzig Gestapo Office, November 10, 1941, and January 12, 1942, on labor assignments for prisoners Józef Frost and Bernhard Sipion.

2. Ibid., prisoner Józef Frost's personal file.

3. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IIIA-9, I-IVB-9, list of camp receivables for prisoner labor.

## DANZIG-HOLM

Beginning on October 16, 1944, 100 Jewish women were put to work at the Danzig-Holm (Gdańsk-Ostrów) naval shipyard, a subsidiary of the Danzig shipyard. SS-Unterscharführer Josef Forstner was designated as the subcamp's commandant. Pursuant to the special order that created the camp, the staff also included seven German sailors and one trained woman supervisor from the Stutthof camp.<sup>1</sup> There were four female supervisors: Gerda Steinhoff (sentenced to death by the Gdańsk Special Criminal Court in 1946) and Lieselotte Oberauf served until December 18, 1944; and Elisabeth Thimm and Charlotte Weber from December 19, 1944.<sup>2</sup>

The Jewish women were primarily from Poland and Hungary. They were mainly quartered in workshops in a separate camp that bordered a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp. There had been a large camp complex next to it at the naval shipyard since 1942; the complex included prisoners and POWs of 13 nationalities, primarily Poles and Frenchmen but also Russians, Dutchmen, Belgians, Italians, and others. The camp had 50 barracks, in which approximately 3,200 people were quartered in the autumn of 1944, including Stutthof concentration camp prisoners.<sup>3</sup>

Before the Jewish women left for Danzig, the commandant ordered that they be issued warm winter clothing, shoes in good condition, gloves, and soap. Besides that, in October 1944, the subcamp's commandant asked the Stutthof clothing warehouse manager to send additional supplies. They were

delivered in late October 1944 and included 20 pairs of shoes and 20 pieces of women's underwear. In his next letter of November 1, 1944, the commandant reported that the new underwear and shoes had already been expended and requested delivery of another 30 pairs of shoes and clothing, 80 pairs of underwear, as well as 100 pairs of gloves and woolen yarn for darning. Orders were generally filled meticulously. Warm winter clothing such as coats, foot wrappings, and gloves, and materials to mend clothes and shoes, were ordered in late autumn and the winter months.<sup>4</sup> The concern with which the Stutthof provisions officer and the Danzig subcamp's commandant strove to secure seasonally appropriate clothing and shoes for the women is striking.

A naval kitchen at the adjoining POW camp supplied the camp with food and cooked the meals. On average, the daily ration was about 170 grams (6 ounces) of bread and 1 liter (1 quart) of soup a day, with two spoonfuls of jam issued at supper with the bread.<sup>5</sup> Such high standards were not always observed, as one of the camp's female supervisors testified at trial in Danzig. Still, it was only due to the feeding and systematic change of clothing and shoes that the detachment had the same population in late January 1945 as it did at the outset, with no loss of life. There were still 100 people in the camp on January 24, 1945, the same people who had arrived there in mid-October 1944.<sup>6</sup>

The special care for the inmates' physical fitness was doubtless due to the fact that they were put to work in a shipyard that made submarines for the Kriegsmarine, along with the manufacture of rocket weapons, the production of which was supposed to be a major trump in the decisive phase of World War II. That is how the Germans intended to regain naval superiority.

The origins of the industry at Ostrów (Holm) date back to the early years of the twentieth century, when a special railway line connecting the island to land was built in 1905 for freight traffic. The line was closely associated with the electrical engineering works that had been established and the railroad shops at Przeróbka (Troyl). A submarine base was established on the island during World War I, and two new wet docks were built for the base.

The Jewish women worked for the Marine-Bauleitung Danzig-Holm, which was in charge of the navy site on Ostrów Island. The women were not put to work in direct production of the submarines but in earthmoving projects. G. Steinhoff testified at trial in Gdańsk in 1946 that the women worked crushing rock and doing earthmoving work, which could have been for workshop expansion projects in the shipyard and adjoining areas. She thought the work was easy compared with the conditions at camp, where Jewish women were more liable to be treated badly. Here are some excerpts from the stenographic record of the trial:

**Judge:** What kind of labor did the prisoners do?

**Gerda Steinhoff:** They crushed rock and did earthmoving work.

- Judge:** Did you ever hit a prisoner?
- Gerda Steinhoff:** No, because I ran the entire camp office and had no direct contact with the prisoners. The Lagerführerin supervised the prisoners and sometimes beat them.
- Judge:** If the Lagerführerin did not punish a prisoner who was working poorly, would you punish such a woman and how would you do so?
- Gerda Steinhoff:** I would keep the prisoner in camp as punishment.
- Judge:** Which means that it was worse at camp than at labor?
- Gerda Steinhoff:** Yes, labor was a relief.<sup>7</sup>

The detachment was evacuated to the Stutthof camp in late March and early April 1945, at the same time as the two remaining Danzig subcamps, that is, the Danziger-Werft and Schichau-Werft shipyards. We do not know how many prisoners reached the main camp. Some of them perished during the bombings of Danzig, some escaped, and the rest reached the Stutthof camp in reduced numbers. They were faced with another evacuation by sea in late April 1945.

**SOURCES** Trial proceedings of the Gdańsk Special Criminal Court are held at the AK-IPN. See, in particular, SSK Gd, sygn. 7, records of criminal case against Gustav Zuchaschewski; sygn. 418, records of criminal case against Wanda Klaff and others; sygn. 422, records of criminal case against Józef Reiter and others, sentences of judgment; and sygn. 423, stenographic record of criminal case against John Pauls and others. Documents containing information on the Danzig-Holm subcamp can be found also at AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; sygn. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; sygn. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Lasik, Stutthof ac; and "SS-frauen-megery ze Stutthofu," *DB*, April 28, 1946.

Secondary sources providing information on the Danzig-Holm subcamp include: M. Gliński, "Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945)," *StZeMu.*, no. 3 (1979); Marek Orski, *Ostatnie dni obozu Stutthof*, 2nd ed. (Gdańsk, 1998); Jerzy Stankiewicz and Bohdan Szermer, *Gdańsk: Rozwój urbanistyczny i architektoniczny oraz powstanie zespołu Gdańsk-Sopot-Gdynia* (Warsaw, 1959); and M. Wojciechowski, *Stocznia Gdańska: Fakty i liczby* (Gdańsk, 1968).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, pp. 209–210, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenarbeitslagers Marine-Bauleitung Danzig-Holm, dated October 15, 1944.
2. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, sygn. 418, 422, records of criminal case against Gerda Steinhoff and Józef Reiter; AMS, Lasik,

Stutthof ac; "SS-frauen-megery ze Stutthofu," *DB*, April 28, 1946, stenographic records of G. Steinhoff's testimony.

3. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, sygn. 7, pp. 9–10, testimony of Wachleiter Gustav Zuchaschewski.

4. AMS, sygn. I-IVH-7, pp. 79–83.

5. G. Steinhoff's testimony at trial in Gdańsk, "SS-frauen-megery ze Stutthofu," p. 3; AK-IPN, SSK Gd, sygn. 423, G. Steinhoff's testimony at trial in Gdańsk.

6. AMS, sygn. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population.

7. "SS-frauen-megery ze Stutthofu," p. 3

## DANZIG-LANGFUHR

The archival materials surviving from the former Stutthof camp recorded another Stutthof external detachment set up in Danzig's Langfuhr section (Gdańsk-Wrzeszcz). It operated from January 2, 1940, to December 2, 1941.<sup>1</sup> The employer was a police headquarters, to which prisoners were hired out to build barracks for a Police School (Führerschule, Truppenwirtschaftslager der Waffen-SS, Danzig-Langfuhr, TWL-Langfuhr). There are more details on this detachment in the stenographic record of the 1949 trial of Bogdan Wilhelm, who was put to work in the Wrzeszcz detachment as a cook from June to August 1940.<sup>2</sup>

The detachment numbered considerably over 100 people. Wilhelm said there were approximately 100 to 120 prisoners; other witnesses say as many as 180 prisoners. The prisoners worked building barracks for the Police School training center. They were quartered in barracks on the construction site. The police provided the detachment's food, which Wilhelm transported in and distributed. The standard evening meal consisted 0.5 liters (2 cups) of soup per prisoner, which did not always serve everyone because of limited rations. Witnesses have testified that Wilhelm would beat prisoners who demanded additional portions on the arms with a ladle in order to restore order as dinner was being issued and would also put sand into the soup. The defendant testified that he did so "out of concern that there would be a scabies infection" from sick people taking remnants of food out of the kettle and also to discipline prisoners while keeping their infractions secret from the SS men, whom he thought would employ much more repressive measures if the infractions were reported. Sometimes as dinner was being given out, Wilhelm was accompanied by Józef Reiter, a Polish foreman prisoner, who would beat the crowding prisoners with a tree root approximately 0.9 meters (3 feet) long and 4 centimeters (1.6 inches) thick.<sup>3</sup> Despite the witness testimony against Wilhelm, the court found no grounds in the testimony to administer any punishment under the Polish National Liberation Committee decree of August 31, 1944, on punishment for Fascist and Nazi criminals, and it acquitted Wilhelm on the charge of abusing his fellow prisoners.<sup>4</sup>

The subcamp was probably disbanded on December 2, 1941, which is corroborated by the final records in prisoner files concerning sending prisoners from the TWL-Langfuhr detachment to the Stutthof camp that day.<sup>5</sup> Studies of pris-

oner files have not corroborated the existence of another detachment at Danzig-Langfuhr, which began on November 18, 1941.<sup>6</sup> This reference is to the same type of labor and the same subcamp operating continuously from January 1940 but with many prisoner exchanges between Stutthof and Danzig (especially in summer and autumn 1941).

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Danzig-Langfuhr subcamp: AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 167, records of criminal case against Bogdan Wilhelm, Gdańsk, 1949; SSK Gd, sygn. 417, records of criminal case against Józef Reiter and others; AMS, sygn. I-III, prisoner files; and ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-III-42619, I-III-44292, I-III-49860, I-III-49909, I-III-49999, I-III-50005, I-III-50267, files of prisoners Jan Dolny, Jan Gulczyński, Stanisław Nowakowski, Bogdan Wilhelm, Bonifacy Moszczyński, Józef Kwiatkowski, and Bazyly Sakowicz. According to ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945): Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 275, the detachment existed until May 13, 1941, but a Gdańsk Wrzeszcz subcamp was reinstituted on November 18, 1941. However, no surviving documents indicate such a distinction.

2. AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 167.

3. Józef Reiter was tried at the Gdańsk Special Criminal Court in 1946 and sentenced to death. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, sygn. 417, report of examination of Józef Reiter, dated 1945.

4. AK-IPN, SO Gd, pp. 12–15, 47–50, 92–93, testimony of defendant and witnesses Jan Cyganik and Władysław Gąsior.

5. AMS, sygn. I-III-42619, I-III-49959, I-III-50069, files of prisoners Jan Dolny, Stefan Puszczałak, and Władysław Walczak.

6. See ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS*, p. 276.

## DANZIG-MATZKAU

A work detachment in Matzkau (later Maćkowy), a section of Danzig (Gdańsk), was first a subcamp of the Neufahrwasser civilian detention camp set up on the premises of Danzig's SS-Heimwehr barracks. The initial group of approximately 20 prisoners arrived on or around September 20, 1939. According to a prisoner in that transport, a "sizable" group of prisoners—Poles arrested in Danzig at the beginning of the war—was sent out of Neufahrwasser. More transports were sent to the subcamp in subsequent months; there were already over 250 people in the camp in early November 1939. They were housed in a large empty space where they slept on a layer

of straw on the floor. SS-Rottenführer Hans Rach was the group's commander.<sup>1</sup>

The earliest references to the detachment's existence in prisoner files are from February 1940.<sup>2</sup> When the camp headquarters was moved from Neufahrwasser to Stutthof, the Matzkau detachment was made into a subcamp under the Stutthof camp commandant. Its population was unstable; small groups of prisoners were frequently moved to other sites, such as Danzig-Westerplatte, Grenzdorf, or the Stutthof main camp. These changes are confirmed by prisoner files marked with entries on transfers about where they lived and worked.<sup>3</sup>

Initially, the prisoners were put to work laying foundations and then expanding the barracks and utility buildings of the Matzkau structure. The barracks were then designated as a penal camp for SS members (*Strafvollzugslager*). The prisoners also did household and cleanup work on barrack premises; for example, there were 18 prisoners in the Wehrmacht clothing warehouses; others did gardening or worked in the kitchen. They began installing new shooting stations, as well as central heating pipes and a sewage system in the expanded section of the barracks in the spring of 1940. The work was done in the open air, regardless of weather conditions such as rain or strong winds. In early April 1940 (according to entries in prisoner files in May 1940), approximately 250 prisoners were selected from the Stutthof camp and transported to Matzkau. Another group of 50 prisoners was delivered from Stutthof in August 1940, and yet another transport was sent in the autumn of the same year. The camp's population grew to approximately 300 prisoners in late 1940. Construction work at the barracks was reaching its end in January 1941; thus, a few weeks later the camp population was reduced to 100. The population also kept dropping regularly as prisoners were released from camp.<sup>4</sup>

Initially, in the autumn of 1939, camp conditions were exceptionally hard. The prisoners slept on the damp straw, with no coverings. They were not provided with a change of underwear and could not perform daily hygiene, which contributed to the spread of lice infestation. Food rations were no different than those received at the Neufahrwasser camp. The prisoners were each issued 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of claylike bread, a bit of beet jam or margarine, and a cup of bitter coffee for breakfast and lunch. For dinner they each got 0.75 liters (3 cups) of watery soup with some flour and sometimes a herring. The food situation improved after the administration granted permission for food packages from families to be delivered to camp. They were divided freely among all the prisoners. At the end of the year, each prisoner received a pair of wooden shoes and a blanket when an officer from Danzig Prisoner Camp headquarters inspected the camp. But there was a shortage of warm gloves and sweaters.

A Polish clergyman from the Pelplin seminary escaped from the detachment in early December 1939. His escape was successful and caused no repercussions among the other prisoners; there are no references to this escape at all in the documentation of former prisoners.<sup>5</sup> Another effective way of getting out of camp was through self-injury. One prisoner



used a reed to perforate his nasal septum, causing a hemorrhage. He reported to the foreman and was released from Matzkau and sent back to Stutthof.<sup>6</sup>

The Danzig firm of Römer u. Dehlert Danzig, Unternehmung, Hoch u. Tiefbau was in charge of the construction work. Several prisoners worked in the firm's engineering office as construction engineers. They lived in appreciably better conditions than those who were put to work at manual labor; they were better fed, they slept separately with the kitchen staff, and they were permitted to move about the entire camp. Prisoners who came to the camp in the summer of 1940 stated that the working conditions and food were tolerable; the guards did not persecute them as they did at Stutthof; moreover, Leo Römer, the firm's owner, saw to it that the prisoners were well fed, for which he paid in the entirety.<sup>7</sup>

During the autumn of 1940, several dozen prisoners were sent out to do farmwork. A list of prisoners with occupational skills was compiled at camp in March 1941, and 30 of them with specialties in the trades were chosen and moved to Stutthof. On April 1, 1941, the entire group was released from camp and moved to the Jost barrel factory in Danzig as hired laborers.<sup>8</sup>

SS men from the Stutthof camp supervised the detachment beginning in mid-1940. The names of several of them are known: SS-Rottenführer Otto Arnold, Max Scholl, and Emil Wenzel, as well as SS-Unterscharführer Ernst Friedland. No information on the camp staff in 1941 or the subcamp's management is available. Two staff members were held responsible after the war: Wenzel was sentenced to 10 years in prison at a trial in Gdańsk in 1947, and the Toruń District Court sentenced Arnold to 3 years in prison that same year.<sup>9</sup>

The camp was shut down when all contracted work had been completed in August 1941 and the prisoners returned to Stutthof. The last record concerning labor at Matzkau in prisoner files ends on August 11, 1941.<sup>10</sup>

**SOURCES** In addition to the sources mentioned in the Stutthof Subcamp system entry, the following sources were consulted in writing this essay: AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 76, records of criminal case against Theodor Meyer and others; Catalog No. 79, sentences of judgment; SOT, Catalog No. 88, records of criminal case against Otto Arnold; AK-IPN/Gd, witness examination reports of Antoni Janiewicz, Wrocław; AMS, Catalog No. I-III, camp prisoner files and staff personnel files; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (vol. 15, Edmund Nitkiewicz); R. Duzik, *Wspomnienia. Los obrońców po kapitulacji Westerplatte* (Łódź, 1981) (copy at AMS); *Gdańsk 1939. Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, Wybór i opracowanie Brunon Zwarra (Gdańsk, 1984); W. Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu. Wspomnienia więźnia obozu*, 2nd ed. (Bydgoszcz, 1984); *DanVorp* August 18, 1939; September 26, 1939.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ds. 76/64, report of examination of witness Antoni Janiewicz (Wrocław); *Gdańsk 1939*.

*Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, Wybór i opracowanie Brunon Zwarra, (Gdańsk, 1984), account of Stanisław Szymański. According to the account of Kazimierz Wróblewski, the initial group of 300 prisoners was brought from the Neufahrwasser camp only in November 1939. Likewise, W. Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu. Wspomnienia więźnia obozu*, 2nd ed. (Bydgoszcz, 1984), pp. 21–22, reports that in early November 1939 there were already 250 prisoners living in camp besides those from the transport in which he arrived.

2. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49929, I-III-49945, files of prisoners Mieczysław Pklechawski and Czesław Nowakowski. They were sent to Matzkau on February 19, 1940; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS*, p. 287.

3. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49959, I-III-49981, I-III-50131, I-III-50136, personal files of prisoners Stefan Puszczak, Antoni Wojtkowski, Marian Jasnoch, and Ewaryst-Albin Prószyński.

4. *Gdańsk 1939*, accounts of Franciszek Mokwiński and Stanisław Szymański; R. Duzik, *Wspomnienia. Los obrońców po kapitulacji Westerplatte*, (Łódź, 1981) (typescript at AMS); AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia* (15:114–115, account of Edmund Nitkiewicz); Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, pp. 21–29.

5. *Gdańsk 1939*, account of Stanisław Szymański; Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, pp. 23–27.

6. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ds. 76/64, report of examination of Antoni Janiewicz (Wrocław).

7. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 1:114–115, account of Edmund Nitkiewicz.

8. Duzik, *Wspomnienia*.

9. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 76, 79; SOT, Catalog No. 88, records of criminal case against Otto Arnold.

10. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-49917, personal files of prisoner Tadeusz Pisarczyk.

## DANZIG-OLIVA (REITSCHULE)

A Stutthof subcamp, Danzig-Oliwa (Gdańsk-Oliwa) consisted of several prisoners who worked at the Huth Riding School (Huth-Reitschule). Prisoner employment records show that the subcamp was in operation from July 16, 1940, to June 21, 1941.<sup>1</sup> Huth subleased the prisoners from the civil prisoner camp at Danzig-Neufahrwasser, and the prisoners probably worked keeping the premises clean. The business is not listed in the Danzig address directories surviving from 1927–1928 and 1941–1942.

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Danzig-Oliwa subcamp: AMS, sygn. I–III, prisoner files; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979); M. Gliński, “Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945),” *StZeMu*, no. 3 (1979); Marek Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTE

1. AMS, sygn. I-III-44781, I-III-50053, I-III-50177, files of prisoners Franz Gromada, Antoni Straszak, and Robert Lipiński; see ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 277; M. Gliński, “Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945),” *StZeMu*, no. 3 (1979): 164.

## DANZIG-OPITZSTRASSE [AKA OPITZSTRASSE/GRUPPENFÜHRER]

From April 7 to November 11, 1941, a group of tradesmen prisoners (bricklayers, metalworkers, painters, toolmakers, etc.) were put to work on the premises of the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) headquarters for Danzig–West Prussia at 2 Opitzstrasse in Danzig (later ul. Orzeszkowa in Gdańsk’s Wrzeszcz section). The detachment’s name, Opitzstrasse (or Opitzstrasse/Gruppenführer), appears in prisoner files. All the prisoners working there were Poles who had been arrested in September 1939 in Gdynia and Danzig and then put in the civilian prisoner camp at Danzig-Neufahrwasser.<sup>1</sup>

The Danzig–West Prussia HSSPF administration, whose area of control was the same as that of the military Defense District XX (Weichsel), started operations when SS-Gruppenführer Richard Hildebrandt was named to his post on September 21, 1939. It was initially located at the police headquarters on Karrenwall Strasse (later Okopowa) and later, from April 1940 at least, at 2 Opitzstrasse. The same building also housed the SS and police court facilities (SS- und Polizeigericht IV) as well as those of the Reich Commissariat for the Strengthening of Germanism (RKFDV). The prisoners were put to work building garages for SS motorized units.

Antoni Ryzyszkiewicz worked in the detachment as an auto mechanic. According to his account, the detachment was still operating in 1942. After a while, he was arrested for copying keys to the clothing warehouses and stealing 20 SS uniforms, a typewriter, and other items for the Polish underground organization in Bory Tucholskie. He was put in a Danzig prison and received the death sentence, which was later commuted to incarceration at the Stutthof concentration camp and assignment to a penal detachment at the Stutthof brickyard.<sup>2</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Danzig-Opitzstrasse subcamp: AMS, sygn. I-IA-4, records on the Stutthof camp’s change in status; sygn. I-III-, prisoner files; and *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Antoni Ryzyszkiewicz, vol. 2).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-III-43660, I-III-49846, I-III-49853, I-III-50191, I-III-50104, files of prisoners Józef Frost, Julian Wilczarski, Władysław Wędzik, Wincenty Siemak, and Cyprian Wosztal.

2. Ibid.; and *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 18:142, account of Antoni Ryzyszkiewicz.

## DANZIG-SCHELLMÜHL (CARSTENS)

Two prisoner detachments were created in the Schellmühl (Młyniska) section of Danzig (Gdańsk) from 1940 to 1944. The first was organized in 1940. The information on the employment of a small detachment at the Hans Carstens private meat import-export company contains notes on prisoner files dated from March 27 through July 30, 1940. Poles Henryk Raczynski and Leon Wojasiński were put to work in the Carstens company as master butchers.<sup>1</sup> The business was located at Englischer Damm 16. No exact data on the number of prisoners assigned to this work are available. They were dispatched by the civilian prisoner camp at Danzig Neufahrwasser and probably housed on-site due to the continuous nature of the business.<sup>2</sup>

SS-Rottenführer Oskar Gottschau, a Stutthof concentration camp staff member, testified at trial in 1947 that in the spring of 1940 he supervised the work of 30 Stutthof camp prisoners in a factory in Schellmühl. That could have been the Carstens company. In that same trial, the Danzig District Court sentenced him to 10 years in prison.<sup>3</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Danzig-Schellmühl subcamp: AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 75, records of criminal case against Kurt Dietrich and others; sygn. 80, sentences of judgment; AMS, sygn. I-III-, prisoner personal files; *Danzig wirbt für seine Industrie: Alphabetisches Stichwortverzeichnis der Danziger Industrie-Erzeugnisse. Die Firmen der Danzigs Industrie und Handwerk*, ed. Handelskammer zu Danzig (Danzig, 1933); ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979); and Marek Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999).

Marek Orski  
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## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-III-49885, I-III-50216, personal files of prisoners Leon Wojasiński and Henryk Raczynski.

2. ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 275; Marek Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999), p. 351.

3. AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 75, p. 104; sygn. 80, sentence of judgment.

## DANZIG-SCHELLMÜHL (OTTO JOST)

Another subcontractor of prisoner labor in Schellmühl (Młyniska) was Otto Jost, the owner of a barrel factory

(*Fassfabrik*). Based on the fragmentary documentary materials available, a group of prisoners hired out for labor at the factory was put to work there at two different times. The first period was from late December 1940 to August 1941; then again from October 23 to December 7, 1944.<sup>1</sup> The first and last dates in the prisoners' files reflect these times. Based on the surviving documentary materials and records on former prisoners, no additional information on this detachment is available.<sup>2</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this entry: AMS, sygn. I-III-, prisoner personal files; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Accounts and recollections), (AI), tape recording of I. Andrzejewski's account; listing of transports of prisoners sent from the Stutthof main camp to the Jost factory on April 29 and October 30, 1941; *Danzig wirbt für seine Industrie, Alphabetisches Stichwortverzeichnis der Danziger Industrie-Erzeugnisse. Die Firmen der Danzigs Industrie und Handwerk*, ed. Handelskammer zu Danzig (Danzig, 1933); A. Duzik, *Wspomnienia. Los obrońców po kapitulacji Westerplatte* (Łódź, 1981), pp. 6–7 (copy at AMS).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-III-49852, Catalog No. I-III-43070, personal files of prisoners Alojzy Usarek and Stanisław Dziuba; see M. Orski, *Verzeichnis der Nebenlager und grösseren Aussenkommandos des KZ-Stutthof* (Gdańsk, 1996), p. 275; AMS, AI, account of Izydor Andrzejewski (tape recording, 1999); and AMS, Z Collections, a listing of transports of prisoners let out of the Stutthof camp and sent to the Jost factory on April 29 and October 30, 1941, n.p.

2. Orski, *Verzeichnis*, p. 275.

## DANZIG-WESTERPLATTE

The first group of 1,200 prisoners from the civilian prisoner camp at Danzig-Neufahrwasser was sent to Westerplatte on September 15, 1939.<sup>1</sup> Initially, the group was a semistationary work detachment. For the first two weeks the prisoners did not return to camp, sleeping in the ruins of destroyed buildings in the summer clothing in which they had been arrested. Among them were Polish priests and Jews.

The prisoners worked in groups to clear the premises of the former garrison at Westerplatte, which had been the scene of heavy fighting during the German invasion. The prisoners' labor consisted of removing bombs, unexploded shells, and barbed-wire entanglements; leveling the site; and demolishing destroyed buildings and repairing damaged ones.<sup>2</sup> Clearing the premises of unexploded shells was among the most dangerous jobs because there were often explosions that wounded prisoners and tore their clothes to shreds. Later, all the building material (bricks, wall tiles, and so on) was loaded onto barges at the port canal and hauled by tugboat to the Stutthof camp, which was then under construction.

Young men from the Reich Labor Service (RAD) aged 17 to 18, as well as SS men from the Danzig-Neufahrwasser camp, supervised the prisoners. The inmates remembered one of them well: SS-Untersturmführer Kurt Mathesius, of whom one prisoner wrote that he was "Lord of life and death in Westerplatte at that time."<sup>3</sup> Many prisoners were murdered by SS men as they were working. In addition, the young German supervisors from the Labor Service would often beat prisoners with their gun butts and bats for no reason.

The prisoners were not given any food during their workday except for a piece of bread and coffee for breakfast. They ate what they found in the ruins of the barracks, such as moldy bread, canned foods, and vegetables from the garden, although some of the young men from the Labor Service took pity on the Polish Catholic priests and gave them some of their food rations. Many prisoners became ill due to the low temperatures and their insufficient clothing, which was inappropriate for the season and ragged from work. Some 400 to 500 prisoners normally worked at Westerplatte each day.

On September 18, 1939, due to Hitler's planned visit to Danzig and Westerplatte, all the prisoners were removed from the peninsula and held on the seashore, surrounded by a cordon of SS men, for a period of one to three days (depending on the account). Following a triumphal entry into the city on September 19, during which he received the cheers of crowds of enthusiastic Germans, Hitler, in the company of Hermann Göring, visited the section of Westerplatte that the prisoners had cleared.<sup>4</sup>

On September 28, 1939, after the detachment had been operating for two weeks, the prisoners were taken back to the Danzig-Neufahrwasser camp.<sup>5</sup> New prisoners were sent in their place, although they were not quartered at Westerplatte but were returned to camp each evening after work.<sup>6</sup> The new detachment numbered approximately 500 people in December 1939.<sup>7</sup> SS-Untersturmführer Kurt Mathesius became the subcamp's commandant in January 1940. SS-Unterscharführer Oskar Gottschau and four SS men supervised the detachment; Gottschau's duties also included guarding Westerplatte from entry by any civilians.<sup>8</sup> At the Stutthof Trial in 1947, Gottschau received a sentence of 10 years in prison.

The subcamp operated as an external detachment with brief pauses until late February 1940, when Stutthof camp headquarters created a permanent subcamp (Aussenstelle Westerplatte) at the Westerplatte site. Commandant Pauly selected 300 Polish prisoners for the transport on March 2, 1940. They were loaded into trucks and moved to Westerplatte.

The prisoners continued to remove rubble and put the site of the burned barracks in order. Some of the buildings that were in danger of collapsing were dismantled; the others were repaired and turned over to the army. The work had probably been ordered by the army, to which the barracks had belonged until World War I. Some of the building material reclaimed from the battlefield was taken to Stutthof to be reused in the camp's expansion.



The work, which lasted from 6:00 A.M. until dusk on weekdays and until 4:00 P.M. on Sunday, required great exertion. The workers had to maintain a fast pace; if anyone slowed down or left for a moment, he could be shot for feigning work or attempting to escape. Camp commandant SS-Untersturmführer Paul Ehle (who took over command in March 1940) and the dozen or so staff members were held responsible for those killings. Stanisław Matuszczak witnessed one such event:

Some of us were so emaciated that they did not have the strength to stand. At a roll call, Oberscharführer Binke said that those who could not walk and were staying inside were to go out into the fresh air, which would do them good. He assigned them to the job of cutting wicker. After the roll call, we had to escort them out to the work site. There were sixteen of them. I heard shots at about twelve o'clock. As we returned from our labor detachments, we saw Peters and two other SS men standing where the prisoners had been cutting wicker, and the shot prisoners lying on the ground. All sixteen had been shot.<sup>9</sup>

The prisoners were quartered in former army barracks, which had damaged roofs that leaked. There were no panes in the windows, and the empty spaces were filled with barbed wire. The floor was lined with hay that had been there since the previous winter. The prisoners were not provided with even the most primitive sanitary necessities for washing or shaving. The SS men finished off extremely emaciated prisoners with their guns. There was no infirmary at the subcamp; sick people were not given medical care. The most emaciated and disabled were taken back to Stutthof.

Several prisoners attempted to escape from camp in 1940. No matter what the outcome for the escapees, each attempt ended badly for the prisoners in camp. The punishment was 20 lashes with a stick and the forfeiture of one dinner. Only one prisoner's account is available, that of Matuszczak:

The first escape was by two prisoners from what was called the "foreman" group, who were assigned to serve the SS men in their living quarters: They made their beds, cleaned their boots, kept their rooms clean, etc. The prisoners picked a very appropriate time to escape, April 20, [1940], the Führer's birthday, on which the SS men had a drinking spree and went to bed. The prisoners then left and never came back. We do not know their names. The escape was successful, which did not happen too often. . . . The next attempt was made by a prisoner whose name we do not know. All we know is that he was from Wejherowo. He had gotten pretty far from Westerplatte, already reaching Jelitkowo. A chase was ordered immediately, and two other prisoners were taken along so as to identify the fugitive more quickly. They found him! Chased down,

he started to run away when he saw the SS men, then the search party opened fire on him. His fate was sealed. He fell dead under the bullets. Accounts by the prisoners accompanying the chase say that if he had not started to run away, he might not have drawn the attention of the search party, because at that time all prisoners still wore their own clothes in which they'd been taken. Although it was sometimes shabby, the clothing did not draw attention like the camp striped uniform did.<sup>10</sup>

Several SS men from Stutthof served as supervisors in the Danzig-Westerplatte subcamp. These SS men were among the 13 supervisors confirmed in the records.<sup>11</sup> The subcamp was shut down in mid-June 1941 when the entire Westerplatte site was cleared. Approximately 50 prisoners were sent to work at the sawmill and chemical works in Danzig's Stogi section; the others returned to the Stutthof main camp.<sup>12</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Westerplatte subcamp: AK-IPN, SOGd., sygn. 78, records of criminal case against T. Meyer and others; AK-IPN Gd, Oświadczenia (Affidavits), J. Januchowski; AMS, Lasik, Stutthof; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Franciszek Raclawski, vol. 2; Władysław Konarzewski, vol. 4; Anzelm Rudłowski, vol. 5; Cyprian Wosztal, vol. 6; Mieczysław Filipowicz, vol. 9; Józef Szarkowski, vol. 14; Stanisław Stachyra, vol. 21); account of Kazimierz Brzuszkiewicz; AP Gd, Sygn. No. 49/IV/5, stenographic record of the trial of Albert Forster; K. Ciechanowski, "Hitlerowski obóz w Gdańsku-Nowym Porcie 1 IX 1939–1 IV 1940," *StZeMu*, no. 5 (1984); A. Duzik, *Wspomnienia. Los obrońców po kapitulacji Westerplatte*, (Łódź, 1981) (copy at AMS); M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992); M. Filipowicz, *Ludzie, stocznie, okręty* (Gdańsk, 1985); *Gdańsk 1939*. Brunon Zwarra, *Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan, Wybór i opracowanie* (Gdańsk, 1984); S. Matuszczak, "Westerplatte (fragmenty wspomnień b. więźnia Stutthofu)," (Warsaw, 1982) (typescript, AMS); S. Mikos, "Gdańsk w okresie II wojny światowej (1939–1945)" *Hist Gd*, vol. 4:2 (1998); D. Steyer, *Eksterminacja ludności polskiej na Pomorzu Gdańskim w latach 1939–1945* (Gdynia, 1967); J. Szarkowski, *Wychowawca pokoleń*. W. Drążek, *Wspomnienia zebrał i opracował* (Gdynia, 1996).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 4:98, account of Władysław Konarzewski. On the other hand, Franciszek Szwinke testified at Albert Forster's trial that on September 15, 1939, approximately 2,000 prisoners were sent to work from the Danzig-Neufahrwasser camp, AP Gd, sygn. 49/IV/5, p. 374. According to Franciszek Raclawski, the first cleanup group had been sent to Westerplatte on September 10; see AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 2:33.

2. M. Filipowicz, *Ludzie, stocznie, okręty* (Gdańsk, 1985), pp. 194–195; *Gdańsk. 1939*. Brunon Zwarra, *Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan, Wybór i opracowanie* (Gdańsk, 1984), accounts of

Paweł Gronau, Antoni Leszczyński, Bruno Mach, Alfons Olszewski, Alojzy Swiniarski, Leon Szotyński, Mieczysław Szymański, Stanisław Szymański, and Paweł Wohler; R. Duzik, *Wspomnienia. Los obrońców po kapitulacji Westerplatte* (Łódź, 1981) (copy at AMS); AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 4:98, account of Władysław Konarzewski, 6:267, Cyprian Wosztal, 6:331, Mieczysław Filipowicz, 14:215–223, Józef Szarkowski; AP Gd, Catalog No. 49/IV/5, pp. 361, 374, testimony of Stanisław Garczewski and Franciszek Szwinke at A. Forster's trial.

3. Filipowicz, *Ludzie*, p. 195. One of the Rexin brothers (Otto or Paul) was an equally brutal SS man. See *Gdańsk 1939*, accounts of Jan Gdaniec II and Leon Szotyński. See also J. Matynia, "Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945," Ph.D. diss., Gdańsk Teachers College, 1969, pp. 80–81.

4. See AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:351, account of Mieczysław Filipowicz; *Gdańsk 1939*, accounts of Antoni Leszczyński and Paweł Wohler; Duzik, *Wspomnienia*.

5. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:33–35, account of Mieczysław Filipowicz, 14:223, Józef Szarkowski; Filipowicz, *Ludzie*, p. 195; J. Szarkowski, *Wychowawca pokoleń*. W. Drązek, *Wspomnienia zebrał i opracował* (Gdynia, 1996), pp. 73–80; AP Gd, testimony of Stanisław Garczewski at A. Forster's trial, Catalog No. 49/IV/5, p. 361.

6. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 5:156, account of Anzelm Rudłowski, 31:235–236, Stefan Stachyra; Kazimierz Brzuszkiewicz's letter to the Stutthof Museum, December 5 and 20, 2000; *Gdańsk 1939*, account of Alfons Olszewski.

7. *Gdańsk 1939*, account of Mieczysław Szymański.

8. AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 78, p. 259.

9. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 12:161.

10. See S. Matuszczak, "Westerplatte (fragmenty wspomnień b. więźnia Stutthofu)," (Warsaw, 1982) (typescript, AMS), p. 6; see also M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992): 150.

11. AMS, Lasik, Stutthof ac.

12. Ibid.; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 12:161, account of Stanisław Matuszczak; M. Gliński, "Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945)," *StZeMu* no. 3, Wrocław 1979, p. 167.

## DANZIG-ZIGANKENBERG

From May 15, 1940, to April 30, 1941, a group of prisoners worked at the city brickyard (Städtische Ziegelei Zigankenberg) on what was called Gypsy Hill (Cygańska Góra) in Danzig-Zigankenberg (later Gdańsk Suchanino). The subcamp was listed in camp records as Aussenstelle-Zigankenberg. The prisoners were quartered on the premises of the brickyard. Employment assignment notes in prisoner files confirm the subcamp's existence.<sup>1</sup>

No accurate data are available on the number of people in the detachment or on the working conditions.

**SOURCES** See "Stutthof Main Camp" for sources and other bibliographic information.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTE

1. AMS, sygn. I-III-49930, I-III-50079, personal files of prisoners Aleksander Paradowski and Feliks Zieliński. Based on these records, we can establish that the subcamp operated between May 15, 1940, and April 30, 1941.

## DOMACHAU

From October to November 1939 the Danzig Prison Camp Command and the civilian prisoner camps under it, especially the Stutthof camp, organized many "farm detachments" (Bauernkommandos) to help with the root crop harvest and cultivation. According to the testimony of A. Schwartz, the camp farm manager, in 1939 approximately 3,000 people from all of the civilian prisoner camps were assigned to work on farms located in villages in the Danzig Highlands (Danziger Höhe) and Danzig Lowlands (Danziger Niederung) as well as in Żuławy (Werder).

Among detachments of this type was one at the estate at Domachau (later Domachowo) organized from March 12 to August 29, 1940. The estate was close to Danzig (Gdańsk) near Grenzdorf (Graniczna Wieś).<sup>1</sup> It was owned by the German Rittergut, a subsidiary of the SS. Prisoners who specialized in farmwork were probably sent by the Grenzdorf civilian prisoner camp. There is no other information on the detachment except for labor assignment entries made in prisoner files. Besides prisoners, during the height of fieldwork and harvesting, Rittergut also employed regular paid workers and Russian prisoners of war (POWs). Stutthof prisoners also worked on the estate in the following years.<sup>2</sup>

The campaign to hire out prisoners to German farmers on a mass scale and for a fee began in early October 1939. Approximately 700 prisoners were still doing farmwork in January 1940. Detachments averaged in size from 10 to 20 people; on smaller farms, there were just a few working inmates. The camp provided partial escort and supervision of prisoners while they worked. This job was also done by local SS or SA members. Farm owners were responsible for housing prisoners and guards from the camp and providing them with food for the entire day.

Prisoners worked harvesting potatoes and sugar beets, threshing grain, and doing general farm chores. Their average period of employment was from four to six weeks.<sup>3</sup> After they were done, they went back to the camp at Danzig Neufahrwasser or were sent straight to the Stutthof or Grenzdorf camp.

Prisoners were hired out to work on farms for several reasons: the first was the mass influx of prisoners to the camps, which could not accommodate such large numbers; there was no way to house them. Second, there were also problems with provisions. In his testimony before an officer of the American Military Court (AMC) in Freising in 1945, Albert Schwartz said in English:

In the first days of September the number of internees went up to about fifteen thousand (15,000) men,

of which after an initial screening, about six thousand (6,000) remained to be examined in detail by the Gestapo. Since the Stutthof camp . . . could not house so many people at that time, large groups of prisoners were sent to several large farms in the rural counties of Danzig to help in harvesting. About three thousand (3,000) men were employed this way, and the farms had to house and feed prisoners and guards and also pay a fee of one mark daily for each prisoner.”<sup>4</sup>

Another reason was the new farm structure in Pomerania. All Polish farming estates and smaller farms were requisitioned and confiscated by the Nazi authorities. They were allocated to local Germans, then to the German nationals (Reichsdeutsche) and ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche) brought in from the Baltic countries and Bessarabia. Putting prisoners to work in agriculture made up for the outflow of hired labor caused by the displacement of Polish families and by warfare. In the initial months of the civilian prisoner camps’ operation, prisoner labor on the farms was also a means to obtain funds to maintain the camps, which were just being set up.

Prisoners were assigned to work under a contract between the camp command and local farm directors (Ortsbauernführer), who were the lowest organizational level for farms in the Reich. The procedure for hiring out prisoners for labor was extremely simple. Prisoners were escorted by several SS men to the township offices, where selection for labor at respective farms took place. Many Pomeranian township directors, who were in charge of agriculture for their areas, applied for prisoner labor. Their duties generally included all administrative and occupational farm business involving government agricultural and animal-breeding requirements, especially seeing to it that work was done on time and deliveries were made as agreed. The allocation of farm machinery, tools, fertilizer, sowing and breeding material, and labor was up to them.

Recruitment for the work was generally voluntary and met with no resistance from Poles, who preferred the considerably more peaceful labor in the fields to staying in camp where they were exposed to brutal treatment by SS men. Most prisoners thought the farmers’ attitude toward them was positive, pointing out that the supervision was benign, that the food was good, and that some farmers even attempted to keep them on permanently at their farms.<sup>5</sup> In general, conditions at the farms were better than at the main camps. As Bruno Zwarra stated, at some detachments prisoners were given a bit of freedom outside of work; they could do such things as go outside the farm premises to the inn or even to the movies, but, as he points out, “not all Germans were so tolerant toward Poles. I later learned from friends that there were also Germans who constantly prodded and beat the people working in the field.”<sup>6</sup> There were even extreme instances of their drastic treatment by the Germans, especially if the farm owner was a fanatic Nazi official.

The practice by Pomerania’s German landowners of hiring laborers for seasonal work had already existed for some time. Mainly Poles hired themselves out for that work. There were at least 10,000 of them in the Free City of Danzig. The German aggression against Poland and the resultant warfare had caused delays in the root crop harvest and autumn sowing because the Polish army’s mobilization had drained the land of workers and the combat itself had caused dislocations in the initial weeks of the war. Over the long run these delays could cause food shortages in the Reich, whose domestic agricultural output before the war had not fully supplied the market with farm and livestock products (they made up for that by importing food). German propaganda demanded that Polish workers be assigned to that work and that a food “granary” be created for all of Germany out of the lands annexed to the Reich, thus making it independent of foreign countries.

Many Jewish women were sent to work on the land in the summer and autumn of 1944, probably because there was no work for them at the central camp and its subcamps. Leaving camp meant an improvement in their situation and a greater chance of survival, as hunger and a high sick rate prevailed there. The accounts of Lithuanian Jews Cyla Kajcer-Perla, Maria Rolnikajte, and many others hold dramatic descriptions of selections for work, which only a small group of women could get. Those who were in good physical condition were selected for the work, first and foremost being tall enough and having strong, healthy legs with no traces of ulceration. Because work groups for grain or potato harvests were only organized from time to time, that was the only opportunity to leave camp and get away from the brutal supervisors. Work lasted from 4:30 A.M. until 8:30 P.M., with an hour’s break for breakfast and dinner. Besides fieldwork, they also did all the farmwork and housekeeping chores such as milking the cows, chopping wood, pumping water, sweeping the yard, and so on, including on Sunday. They were issued food irregularly. Rolnikajte stated that once a week they were rationed one loaf of bread and a quarter kilo (approximately nine ounces) of margarine, plus a cup of coffee for breakfast and soup at dinnertime. There were no arduous roll calls, daily persecutions by SS men and foremen prisoners, mindless killings of Jews, or selections in the barracks.<sup>7</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this entry: AK-IPN, PMW-BZW, sygn. 327, testimony of A. Schwartz, Freising, September 12, 1945; SO Gd, Catalog No. 75, records of criminal case against Kurt Dietrich and others; AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports (Anna Makarska, Wrocław); AMS, Catalog No. I-III-, prisoner personal files; Catalog No. I-III-A-9, Catalog No. I-IVB-9, list of camp receivables for prisoner labor; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (vol. 4, Władysław Konarzewski; vol. 5, Feliks Sadłowski; vol. 14, Józef Szarkowski); Brunon Zwarra, *Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan, Wybór i opracowanie* (Gdańsk, 1984); M., Rolnikajte, *Ja dotżna rasskazat* (Moscow, 1965).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

VOLUME I: PART B



## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49842, I-III-49866, personal files of prisoners Johann von Pruhsak and Franciszek Żmudziewski.
2. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Kpp. 39/71, report of examination of witness Anna Makarska (Wrocław).
3. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 75, p. 69, testimony of E. Foth given at Gdańsk District Court in 1947.
4. AK-IPN Gd. Polish Army Mission collection, War Crimes Office-327, pp. 25–26.
5. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 4:100, account of Władysław Konarzewski, vol. 14: 226–237, Józef Szarkowski; “Gdańsk 1939,” p. 379, account of Alfons Olszewski, Paweł Wohlert, p. 539, Bruno Zwarra, pp. 587–588.
6. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, vol. 14, Szarkowski; “Gdańsk 1939,” p. 589.
7. M. Rolnikajte, *Ja dożna rasskazat* (Moscow, 1965), pp. 168–176.

## ELBING [AKA BRÜCKENKOPFBAU, STOBOI BEI ELBING]

A subcamp was formed on November 20, 1944, pursuant to the commandant's order issued that same day. The chief of Amtsgruppe D at the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) had given permission for the camp to be formed on November 10, 1944.<sup>1</sup> SS-Oberscharführer Wilhelm Werner was designated camp commandant (Lagerführer); he was replaced by SS-Oberscharführer Albert Paul Höldtke on December 18, 1944. Some 24 guards sent by Elbing military headquarters (Wehrmachtskommandantur Elbing) were assigned to the detachment's transport and supervision, and SS women Margarete Okon (starting December 19, 1944) and Edith Thews and Johanna Wisotzki (January 1945) were also assigned from the Stutthof camp.<sup>2</sup>

In official correspondence the camp was called Aussenarbeitslager Stoboi bei Elbing. The name Brückenkopfbau was also used.<sup>3</sup> This was the name used for the military fortifications in the outskirts of Elbing (Elbląg). The detachment was headquartered in Stoboi (later Kamiennik Wielki) near Elbing. The prisoners worked under the direction of the Organisation Todt (OT). There were male French prisoners from POW and labor camps also working in the same area, as well as Polish workers and Germans from the German Labor Front (DAF). The OT supervised the construction work.

Upon the commandant's order, 500 female Jewish prisoners were sent to Stoboi in the first transport. The population increased by 500 more Jewish women who were sent in late November or early December 1944. This is confirmed by Werner's letter of December 2, 1944, regarding sending additional clothing, because “the second transport of five hundred women is very inadequately clothed.” The detachment's population has been confirmed by Eugenia Kacówna, a prisoner of the subsidiary, who testified in 1945 that “on November 18 [or] 20, 1944, I was selected and sent to Elbing, where I

worked on anti-tank barriers. A total of one thousand of us women worked there.”<sup>4</sup>

Food supplies for the guard staff and prisoners were provided by the OT administration, which operated its own kitchen. In the camp, whose exact location and prisoner housing conditions are unknown, there was an infirmary, as evidenced by Werner's letter to Stutthof main camp headquarters dated December 2, 1944, in which he asks that three white smocks and 20 towels be sent at once for the camp infirmary. The difficult winter conditions and considerable physical exertion expended on digging antitank trenches were made worse by the already inadequate supply of warm clothing and shoes.

According to a report of January 24, 1945, 341 women were in the camp. However, Kacówna stated in her account that, one day later, about 400 women went to the main camp in Stutthof, and the rest were evacuated three days later. There may have been two transports, the first with 400 women who reached the Stutthof camp before January 25, and the second with the number mentioned in the report—altogether 741 persons. If that is in fact the case, it would indicate a roughly 25 percent drop from the initial camp population of approximately 1,000.

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this entry: AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 81a, materials of preliminary investigation into the Stutthof camp collected by Judge Antoni Zachariasiewicz; AMS, sygn. I-IVH-5, I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; sygn. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; sygn. I-IVB-9, lists of camp receivables for prisoner labor; Lasik, Stutthof ac; D. Drywa, *Podobozzy (Aussenarbeitslager) KL Stutthof dla więźniów narodowości żydowskiej* (in print, typescript at AMS); M. Orski, *Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na terenie miasta Elbląga w latach 1940–1945* (Gdańsk, 1992).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-IVH-5.
2. AMS, Lasik, Stutthof ac.
3. Ibid.; Catalog No. I-IVB-9, payment by companies for prisoner labor (November 1944); Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population.
4. Ibid., Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 171, Anforderung von Kleidungsstücken, Stoboi, den 2.12.1944; AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 81a, p. 88, testimony of Eugenia Kacówna.

## ELBING (OT ELBING COMPLEX) [AKA KOMMANDO BEFEHLSSTELLE STRASBURG]

The Elbing camp complex was formed on August 7, 1944, pursuant to a special order of the Stutthof concentration camp commandant issued the day before.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners' employer was the Organisation Todt (OT); therefore, the name Organisation Todt Elbing (OT Elbing) was also used in official

correspondence about the camp. Kommando Befehlsstelle Strasburg was another name for the camp: that was the location of the subcamp's main office and the headquarters of the guard company that watched the prisoners (the 36th SS-Standarte, SS-Stadtwachtkompanie). Bülow was named camp commandant and staff officer. To help him, he was assigned five junior officers from the 1st SS-Wachbataillon and 95 SS men from the Allgemeine-SS.

The subcamp initially received 5,000 Jewish women from Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Lithuania. Upon arrival in Elbing (later Elbląg), an OT representative divided them into work groups of several hundred and placed them in towns along the Vistula Bay, where they dug ditches and built bunkers and other military fortifications. They changed their places of work and lodging frequently, depending on the status of the work the OT assigned them. The conditions in which the women lived were primitive at first: makeshift lodgings (barns and tents) and meager food. When they left the Stutthof camp, they had been outfitted with just a blanket and a bowl and spoon. The summer clothing in which they left, adequate for that time of year, proved to be totally insufficient for the autumn and winter months.

After the work planned for that region had been completed, the women were moved to the Brodnica (Strasburg) and Toruń (Thorn) area, along the Drwęca (Drewenz) River. In mid-August 1944, a second prisoner transport of 1,500 women arrived. In early October 1944 the camp population was 6,440 women, and on January 24, 1945, it was 5,036.<sup>2</sup> In early September 1944, Brodnica headquarters was put in charge of eight camps located in Brodnica, Lubawa, and Toruń counties.<sup>3</sup>

One of the hardest labor detachments was at Gutowo (Guttau). The first group of 1,000 to 1,200 women there lived in makeshift tents; later they were moved to 13 unheated round barracks housing up to 100 prisoners each. The barracks had no foundations or finished floors; the prisoners slept on straw. Their food consisted of lukewarm water in place of coffee and a slice of bread at noon. When the detachment returned from work, it was issued soup cooked from unpeeled potatoes. An infirmary in one barracks served only as a typhus isolation ward, where the patients usually died, due to the lack of medicine or professional care.<sup>4</sup>

The camp staff was extremely brutal; they tormented the prisoners and meted out harsh punishments for trivial offenses. According to Elżbieta Deutsch's account, a Jewish woman was placed under a running faucet of cold water in bitter cold weather for stealing two potatoes. The prisoner died as a result. Among the most brutal SS men were the local camp director Bier, his assistant Bittner, and Engel (he would kill off sick Jewish women), Zibber, Mokka, Schmidt, and others of the staff.<sup>5</sup>

Work was done from dawn until dusk, under difficult weather conditions, especially in late autumn and in winter; it was extremely strenuous, driving up the prisoners' sick rate and causing numerous deaths. It is estimated that approximately 170 to 200 Jewish women died at Gutowo, including

the four or five infants born there. They were buried in a nearby meadow.<sup>6</sup>

The Gutowo camp was shut down on January 17, 1945. Some of the sick, about 140 persons, were left in the barracks. The staff tried to kill them by injecting them with toxic substances, which proved to be ineffective. According to the testimony of witnesses—village residents and former prisoners—the prisoners were taken out of camp into a field and killed off with gunshots. Few managed to escape. According to the account of witness Leonard Dmochewicz, 104 women perished then, whom he buried not far from the camp. When Russian units entered Gutowo, the sanitary section took care of the Jewish women and recorded a special report on the topic: "We have discovered a female camp. One hundred sixty-three women in a state of ultimate devastation, with frostbitten legs, some of them had wounds, 140 had phlegmon and ulcers on their arms from injections of some sort of toxic fluids intended to kill them. . . . Besides that, we also discovered a mass of female bodies in the camp, in canvas tents or nearby, varying in age from twelve to fifty-five. We managed to count 120 corpses upon a rough count."<sup>7</sup> Working and living conditions at the other detachments were also difficult and did not differ much from each other.

Throughout the Elbing complex, the prisoners' situation was especially dire in late autumn and winter. They still spent nights in tents or barns, without warm clothing, gloves, or any footwear. In a letter to Stutthof concentration camp headquarters dated September 4, 1944, Commandant Bülow reported that almost every camp director was reporting inadequate prisoner clothing and underwear supplies to him, and he indicated that a lack of footwear was reducing work output. In another letter of October 6, 1944, he reported that he only had 1,000 pairs of shoes for 6,440 prisoners; 80 to 90 percent of prisoners urgently needed a change of shoes. His appeals did not lead to any immediate improvement, however.<sup>8</sup>

SS-Hauptsturmführer Paul Ehle from headquarters' staff inspected five camps near Toruń on November 13, 1944. He confirmed the poor state of clothing and shoe supplies, which he thought affected productivity. There were 6,200 women in all the camps at that time. Most of them were in poor condition, 10 had died so far, and approximately 300 were in a state of extreme exhaustion. He recommended that the most ill and emaciated be transported to Stutthof and that the camps be provided with footwear, warm sweaters, pants, and other needed clothing.<sup>9</sup>

The evacuation of the existing labor camps took place in mid to late January 1945 when the prisoner population totaled 5,036 women. The groups working closest to Elbing returned to the main camp and then were evacuated on January 25 and 26. The other ones located over 150 kilometers (approximately 93 miles) from Stutthof were evacuated to Praust (Pruszcz Gdański) (one of the stages in the central camp's evacuation) or directly toward Lauenberg (Łębork), the evacuation's destination. The casualties were very high in

all the detachments. In most camps, selections were performed even before the evacuation columns were formed, and sick prisoners were excluded, killed with injections of lethal fluid, shot, or finished off with blunt instruments (such as gun butts). Only a few managed to survive. Many prisoners perished on the march route and were buried in common graves; some were shot, but in most cases their fates remain unknown.

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this entry: AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports (Stanisław Ruciński, Margita Sztraus, Teresa Tkaczik, Helena Milder, Elżbieta Deutsch, and others); AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; sygn. no. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; sygn. I-IVB-9, lists of camp receivables for prisoner labor; sygn. I-IVH-5, I-IVH-7, correspondence of the branch with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, (Batia Berkowicz, vol. 7, record dated January 30, 1945; report of Sanitary Unit, 48th Army 3rd Belarussian Front, Leonard Dmochewicz, vol. 14); D. Drywa, *Podbozy (Aussenarbeitslager) KL Stutthof dla więźniów narodowości żydowskiej* (in print, typescript at AMS); M. Orski, *The Czechs, Slovaks and Yugoslavs in Stutthof Concentration Camp* (Gdańsk, 1997); J. Grabowska, *Marsz śmierci. Ewakuacja piesza więźniów KL Stutthof i jego podobozów 25 stycznia–3 maja 1945*, (Gdańsk, 1992).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 141–142, Sonderbefehl über Aufstellung des Baukommandos Ostland.

2. No headquarters command is available on the transport of mid-August 1944. Stutthof concentration camp Administration and Management Division records document the transport's arrival: labor assignment figures at OT Elbing for August 1944 (6,500), a letter dated October 6, 1944, from the subcamp's commandant on clothing supplies (6,440), and a report on the camp's population on January 24, 1945. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVB-9, p. 51; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 83; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6. See also Batia Berkowicz's testimony, AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 7:15.

3. Ibid., Catalog No. I-IVH-5, SS-Oberscharführer Lietz of the 36th SS-Standarte, SS-Stadtwachtkompanie, to Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on September 6, 1944, on sending coats for the SS men.

4. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, vol. 14, record dated January 30, 1945, report of Sanitary Unit, 48th Army 3rd Belarussian Front; AK-IPN Gd, reports of examinations of witnesses Margita Sztraus, Teresa Tkaczik, Helena Milder, and Elżbieta Deutsch.

5. According to prisoner testimony included in the report of the Sanitary Unit of the 48th Army, 3rd Belarussian Front, as well as that of witness L. Dmochewicz (AMS, vol. 14).

6. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ds. 1/67, report of examination of witness Stanisław Ruciński (Olsztyn).

7. M. Orski, *The Czechs, Slovaks and Yugoslavs in Stutthof Concentration Camp* (Gdańsk, 1997), pp. 151, 213.

8. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-5.

9. Ibid.

## ELBING (*SCHICHAU-WERFT*)

On September 20, 1944, the Germans transported 100 prisoners to a new camp at the F. Schichau-Werft GmbH in Elbing (Elbląg), pursuant to a special order from the Stutthof commandant and a preliminary contract signed with the shipyard. Three more transports of 500 prisoners each followed on September 25 and 29 and October 3, bringing the number of prisoners to 1,600.<sup>1</sup> Half of the population were Poles; the rest were German, Russian, Lithuanian, Estonian, and Latvian—including a group of 15 to 20 former Latvian policemen who had been put in Stutthof for deserting the SS and for criminal offenses.

The subcamp's commandant was initially SS-Oberscharführer Willy Redder; then from October 27, 1944, SS-Untersturmführer Friedrich Walter was in charge. The guard staff was composed of 9 SS men from the 1st Guard Company. The staff grew as subsequent prisoner transports arrived at Elbing. Another 20 SS men were assigned to the camp on September 25 and 29, 1944. On November 2, there were 12 civilian personnel in camp.<sup>2</sup> In addition, factory guards supervised the prisoners.

The prisoners lived in barracks in back of the Schichau-Werft facilities on Krafoldsdorfweg (later Radomska Ulica in Elbląg) as well as in another camp on the premises of the machine and locomotive factory on Boelkestrasse (in a group of camps for forced laborers of Schichau Werke), in which prisoners of Stutthof's first subcamp had lived, beginning in April 1941.

Most of the prisoners were qualified lathe operators, mechanics, and fitters. The shipyard, where they built and fitted out submarines, was their primary workplace. When there was no work there, some of the prisoners were sent to the Schichau Werke machine and locomotive factory located by the railroad station (called Trettinhof or T'hof), where they manufactured such things as armored locomotives, combat vehicles, tanks, and ships' guns.<sup>3</sup>

The prisoners worked in a 12-hour daily shift system, with a 1-hour break for dinner, and worked until noon on Sundays. In contrast to the 1940–1942 period, prisoners were put to work directly on the production lines, with strict output quotas (for instance, assembling one vehicle body per day). Failure to reach quota was treated as tantamount to sabotage, for which an order from the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) provided harsh punitive sanctions, including the death penalty, when someone was charged with deliberate destruction and holding up production.<sup>4</sup>

The hard and dangerous labor, the poor supply of clothing and shoes, and the low-calorie food increased the rates of sickness and death. A former prisoner of the camp described conditions there as considerably worse than those at the main camp. The food for an entire day provided no more than 1,000 calories. The production line quota system and watchful supervision by SS men, prisoner foremen, and factory guards did not provide much opportunity for getting extra food from other sources. Although the Schichau Werke



administration was in charge of food supplies, the subcamp's management ran the kitchen. Prisoners stole food items frequently, as confirmed by surviving forms recording punishment by whipping for stealing.<sup>5</sup> In addition, fatal accidents often occurred at work; for example, some died of wood alcohol poisoning when painting locomotive bodies.

The supply of clothing and shoes was inadequate, especially in wintertime. Before leaving for Elbing, prisoners handed in the clothes they had been wearing and received replacements to wear until they were supplied with striped uniforms. The commandant made the camp administration agree to supply prisoners with warm clothing and winter footwear. When the cold weather came, thin jackets did not protect prisoners against colds, which also sometimes ended in death.

The promised jackets and warm clothes reached camp late and in a smaller amount than had been demanded. In early November 1944 the commandant again asked for the delivery of camp clothing, including 250 vests and pairs of shoes, as well as 1,593 pairs of stockings.

In the surviving report of November 25, 1944, the subcamp's commandant asked for the immediate delivery of 7,200 items of clothing, footwear, and towels, mainly including warm jackets, pants, long underwear, foot wrappings, gloves, and so on. The order was not filled until December 2, and it contained almost 3,000 items fewer than what was asked for. The order for 1,600 gloves or towels indicates that the target prisoner population had been maintained and that several new prisoners had been sent to the camp.

One more of the commandant's letters, dated late December 1944, has survived. The letter shows the disastrous state of prisoner provisions. There was a shortage of gloves, winter jackets, shirts, long underwear, pants, camp caps, footwear, and belts. The prisoners' shoes were no longer repairable. Of the 10,000 items of clothing or pairs of shoes that the commandant had requested, he only got half.<sup>6</sup>

The camp had an infirmary whose personnel consisted of a prisoner doctor and two orderlies who arrived at Elbing in the first transport. Dr. Bolesław Drobner-Kwiatkowski, a Pole, served as the doctor the entire time. However, patients reporting to the infirmary could not count on getting the proper medical care, because Dr. Drobner-Kwiatkowski had a minimal amount of medicine, bandages, and dressing materials. More seriously ill patients were taken to the Stutthof hospital.<sup>7</sup>

The first deaths of Elbing prisoners were reported in October 1944. In one of the commandant's reports dated October 24, there is a list of 11 deceased prisoners, including prisoner Józef Sieroszewski, who was shot as a fugitive.<sup>8</sup> The subcamp's population on November 2 was 1,593, indicating that 7 prisoners had died or had been sent back to Stutthof in under one and a half months.<sup>9</sup> According to partially surviving camp doctor reports on deaths at Stutthof subcamps, 64 people died from November 3, 1944, to January 10, 1945, the greatest number of them Poles but also Russians, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians.<sup>10</sup> The bodies of deceased prison-

ers were taken away to the camp morgue near the infirmary barrack on Boelkestrasse. They were later buried in the woods outside Elbing.

Based on surviving records, we can establish that chiefly Russians and Poles attempted to escape. They were not all successful. By September 29, 1944, there had already been a successful escape by Pole Czesław Sowiński.<sup>11</sup> Another escape by two Polish prisoners occurred on October 23; one of them was caught.<sup>12</sup> On December 17, another Pole, Stanisław Pędzisz, escaped successfully.<sup>13</sup>

The other escapees were Russian prisoners. In their case, preparing for escape involved overcoming many difficulties, mainly getting civilian clothes and provisions, as well as establishing contacts outside of camp in order to compensate for their poor knowledge of the area; 13 Russians tried to escape, of whom 8 were successful.<sup>14</sup> The camp command had to report every escape to Stutthof headquarters and also pursue the fugitives. When an escapee was caught, the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) in Berlin was informed and subsequently issued sentence. Accounts of former prisoners of the Elbing subcamp show that death sentences were sometimes issued. Jan Pięta recalls such an event; during a special morning roll call, he was an eyewitness to the hanging of 3 persons who had attempted to escape from camp.<sup>15</sup>

The subcamp was disbanded on January 20, 1945. All the prisoners returned to Stutthof. Several days later some of them were in the evacuation on foot heading toward Lauenburg; the others left the camp in April 1945. In the four months of the Elbing subcamp's operation, at least 1,800 prisoners passed through the camp (including the rotation of the sick and the dead), with a death rate reaching approximately 5 to 10 percent of the camp's population.

**SOURCES** The following are sources used for this entry: AAN, Division VI, records of the KG AK; AK-IPN, ATW IV (American Military Court IV), sygn. Pd 5, collected records of American Military Court No. II in Nürnberg, trial 4 against the WVHA and Oswald Pohl; AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports of Eugeniusz Gała, Jan Pięta, and Tomasz Zawadzki; AMS, Catalog No. I-III-, prisoner files; Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IIID-3, I-VB-7, hospital records (Krankenbau); Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the branch with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Jan Koczewicz, Stanisław Pędzisz, and Walfred Wallit); M. Borowski, *Szczęściarz. Wspomnienia z lat wojny* (Gdańsk, 1994); M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, 10 (1992).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, "Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenarbeitslagers Schichau-Werft Elbing."

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 87, commandant Redder to Stutthof camp headquarters dated November 2, 1944.

3. AAN, Division VI, KG AK, Appendix No. 12 to MW (Intelligence Report) 9/44—Lombard, Item 10 dated mid-March 1944; Appendix No. 12 to Intelligence Report 6/44—Lombard, dated February 15, 1944: Schichau Elbing; AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*—account of Jan Koczewicz, n.p.; 15:155, Walfred Wallit; AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports, Catalog No. Kpp 51/72, testimony of Eugeniusz Gała; Catalog No. Ko 99/70, Tomasz Zawadzki; M. Borowski, *Szczęściarz. Wspomnienia z lat wojny* (Gdańsk, 1994), p. 105.

4. See Richard Glücks's order of April 11, 1944, AK-IPN, ATW IV (American Military Court IV), sygn. Pd 5, p. 129, Nuremberg Document No. 1556.

5. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, account of Jan Koczewicz, n.p.; M. Borowski, *Szczęściarz. Wspomnienia z lat wojny*, p. 105.

6. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 89.

7. Ibid., Catalog No. I-IIID-3.

8. M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992): 103, 196.

9. As indicated by the commandant's order for supplies for the entire camp population. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 87.

10. Ibid., Catalog Nos. I-IIID-3, I-VB-7.

11. Ibid., Catalog Nos. I-III-14616, personal files of Czesław Sowiński.

12. Ibid., Catalog No. I-III-4952, personal files of Wacław Grabowski.

13. Ibid., *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 21:224, account of Stanisław Pędzisz.

14. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," pp. 97, 101–104, 109–110, 114, 118, 142.

15. AK-IPN, Catalog No. Ko 99/70, report of examination of witness Jan Pięta.

## ELBING (*SCHICHAU WERKE*)

Stutthof prisoners began working in private businesses in Elbing (Elbląg) as early as September 1939.<sup>1</sup> Prisoner files of the time contain the names of the companies that employed them most often, which were chiefly the Schichau Werke and its associates, as well as city agencies. Prisoners were quartered either in what were called "collection camps" or on company premises. In early January 1940, the Elbing detachment was reinforced by a group of 75 Polish prisoners of war (POWs) who had been at Schichau Werke doing construction and wiring work since October 1939. The POWs had been captured at Modlin and then sent from Königsberg prison in late September 1939 to work in Elbing. They were quartered in an inactive brush factory that had been owned by Jews between the wars and had been taken over by Schichau Werke. In early January 1940, 75 people were arrested, charged with sabotage for cutting electric wires. Their POW status was removed, and they were made civilian prisoners of the Stutthof camp.<sup>2</sup>

The decision to use the existing detachment as the basis for a single subcamp was hastened by the evacuation of the

Neufahrwasser camp in February 1940. In mid-March 1940, prisoners were selected for use at outside workplaces, mainly for the purpose of acquiring funds to maintain the Stutthof camp administration. Approximately 200 prisoners were brought by barge to Elbing via Vistula Bay. Predominantly Poles were selected for the transport, as well as smaller groups of Danzig Germans, Czechs, and Russians.

The camp had six commandants in its six-year history. The position was successively held by SS-Obersturmführer Waldemar Wilhelm, Fritz Meier, and Erich Müller and by SS-Oberscharführer Alfred Dittmann, Willy Redder, and Fritz Weber. Besides them, the staff was made up of 40 to 50 SS men acting as supervisors at camp and escorts to the workplace. The SS men's attitude toward prisoners was different from the inhumane behavior of the Stutthof camp staff, although it was not totally lacking in repressive and violent elements. Commandant Müller and his deputy Max Michelsen were among the most brutal. The former, along with other SS men, were responsible for killing a Polish physician from the infirmary, Dr. Franciszek Gabriel, who dared to try to improve camp sanitary conditions through official channels by drawing attention to the prisoners' poor state of health. Michelsen, along with the camp senior, Stefan Plombom, often carried out whippings personally.

The majority of prisoners were hired out to F. Schichau-Werft GmbH Elbing. They were quartered in the aforementioned brush factory at Tannenberg Allee 75, and when it was shut down in April 1941, the prisoners were moved to a new camp on Boelkestrasse in the back of Schichau Werke. The camp neighbored several other camps for forced laborers who were deported from many German-occupied European countries.

Prisoners worked not only at the shipyard but also at other Schichau company plants in Elbing, such as the machine and locomotive factory and the iron and steel foundry. They were put to work at the shipyard as helpers, doing such things as sorting materials to build the hulls of seagoing vessels and transporting them to the shipyard production facilities. The shipyard assembled warships—torpedo boats and "pocket" submarines.

The Schichau locomotive factory was also an important part of the company's production. In 1942, the factory started building what were called "war locomotives," which had considerably higher engineering specifications designed for military transports, as well as armored vehicles and replacement parts.

The prisoners at Schichau-Werft's direct disposal were also hired out to its numerous associates that did construction and assembly work in the port and shipyard, such as the construction companies Gaidies Fritz und Co. Hoch und Tiefbaugesellschaft, Philipp Holzmann AG, Baustelle Schichau Elbing, the hemp and wire rope factory of Carl Stephun, Mech.- und Drahtseilfabrik Elbing, and others. Some prisoners were lent out to city agencies when there was no work at the shipyard or locomotive factory. They also worked installing city sewers, building a housing project, at a plywood

factory, and at the city sanitation company. From time to time they were also sent to do farmwork and drainage work.

The contract signed by Schichau-Werft Elbing GmbH provided for the employment of a regular group of several hundred employees. That population ranged from 200 people at the very beginning of 1940 to about 500 in the summer of 1941. The average prisoner population in October and November 1941 was 400.<sup>3</sup> In his business and financial performance report of late October 1941, Niemann, the camp business chief, listed 420 persons working at the Schichau company. There were 376 prisoners in camp as of December 11, 1941.<sup>4</sup>

Living conditions in the camp on Tannenberg Allee were decidedly different from those at the Stutthof camp. Although there was crowding in the production hall, where two or three prisoners slept in one bunk, they were not starving. The meals given to prisoners chiefly consisted of porridge issued at lunchtime, and bread with margarine or jam mornings and evenings. The prisoners' ragged, stinking clothes were replaced by World War I Austrian army uniforms: gray jackets made of light material and blue-green pants, as well as round rimless caps.

Living conditions further improved when the prisoners were moved to the site on Boelkestrasse, which Schichau Werke owned. The food quality improved, but the amount was still inadequate for hard labor. Some German civilian employees and forced laborers helped prisoners get extra food, and prisoners' families sent packets illegally if they knew their relatives' whereabouts. Then in November 1940, Commandant Wilhelm began allowing correspondence, including food packages, into the camp.

Working conditions at the shipyard and other companies were very difficult. Safety precautions were not observed; accidents were common and sometimes fatal. The camp infirmary only treated less serious injuries that did not require complicated procedures or absence from work. People who had serious accidents were taken to the city hospital in Elbing and from there to the Stutthof camp hospital. Their chances of survival and returning to health were very slim.<sup>5</sup>

Some prisoners decided to escape from camp, not because their lives there were intolerable but for fear that they would be moved to the main camp, where conditions were worse. Prisoners who decided to escape were in danger of being killed by SS men or the prisoner surveillance staff. The first documented escape attempt by a prisoner named Mironowicz ended in disaster: he was caught and murdered by the search party. Three other escapes were successful.<sup>6</sup>

The first Stutthof subcamp at Elbing operated for about 26 months. Probably 700 prisoners actually passed through the camp in that time, when one counts replacements for those sick, injured, released, or dead. The camp shut down in February 1942. The exact date is unknown; the last surviving record, dated February 28, appears to have been written after the camp closed. The main reason for disbanding the subcamp was probably Stutthof's change in status and its expansion—and therefore an increased demand for labor.<sup>7</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this entry: AK-IPN, PMW-BZW, sygn. 327, testimony of A. Schwartz, Freising, September 12, 1945; AMS, Sygn. No. I-IA-4, records on the Stutthof camp's change in status; Sygn. No. I-III, prisoner personal files; Catalog Nos. I-VA-6, I-VB-4, hospital (Krankenbau) records; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Antoni Ryszczewicz, vol. 3; Antoni Dulski, vol. 6; Mieczysław Filipowicz, Zbigniew Nielepiec, Alfons Pillath, vol. 9; Jan Hładasz, n.p.); IK, electronic recordings of former prisoner accounts, account of Izydor Andrzejewski; M. Filipowicz, "Jak przejmowałem stocznice," *Wzby* 6: 223 (1987); K. Steyer, "Z problematyki ucieczek z KL Stutthof," *StZeMu*, no. 2, (1977).

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trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. See AGK, PMW-BZW, sygn. 327, p. 26.
2. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:43, account of Mieczysław Filipowicz; and n.p., account of Jan Hładasz; M. Filipowicz, "Jak przejmowałem stocznice," *Wzby* 6: 223 (1987).
3. AMS, Catalog No. I-IA-4, SS-Standartenführer Heinrich Willich, Danzig Sipo and SD inspector, to Himmler, dated August 8, 1941, on assigning camp staff positions; former prisoners provide different estimates of the number of prisoners in their accounts, ranging from 400 to 1,200. According to Antoni Ryszczewicz, under its contract with Schichau Werke, Stutthof camp headquarters had to provide the works with 1,200 workers. Surviving records have not confirmed this. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 3:184, account of Antoni Ryszczewicz, 6:86, Antoni Dulski, 9:15, 179, Zbigniew Nielepiec and Alfons Pillath; IK, electronic recordings of former prisoner accounts, account of Izydor Andrzejewski.
4. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 3:191, account of Antoni Ryszczewicz, 9:16, 44, 180, accounts of Antoni Dulski, Mieczysław Filipowicz, and Alfons Pillath.
5. AMS, Catalog No. I-VB-4.
6. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:17, account of Antoni Dulski, 21:224, account of Stanisław Pędzisz.
7. AMS, Catalog No. I-VA-6, p. 15, Lager Elbing-Boelkestrasse to Lazarett—Stutthof, dated February 28, 1942, on the return of drugs.

## GERDAUEN

Gerdauen (later Zheleznodorozhnyy in Russia) was one of five subcamps that the Germans established at Luftwaffe airfields in East Prussia on September 21, 1944 (the others were at Heiligenbeil, Jesau, Schippenbeil, and Seerappen).<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to a special order by the Stutthof commandant, 1,000 prisoners—900 women and 100 men, the maximum prisoner population—were sent to Gerdauen a day later. The subcamp's first commandant was SS-Unterscharführer Friedrich Marzan, succeeded by SS-Hauptscharführer Hans Moser on October 17, then by SS-Hauptscharführer Ernst Thulke from November 10 until the camp's evacuation.<sup>2</sup> The guard staff in each of the five camps consisted of 46 Luftwaffe soldiers from the airfield staff, plus 6 guards for the camp facilities; 2 SS



women were assigned to supervise the women's barracks—Christel Bankewitz and Margarete Okon. They came to the camp on October 11 upon completion of training at the Stutthof camp. All the guards assigned by the airfield command had been thoroughly instructed on their duties; among other things, they were enjoined to keep secret the fact that prisoner labor was being used, and they were forbidden to speak with the prisoners at all.

The prisoners, chiefly from Czechoslovakia and Hungary (including 500 women who were moved to Stutthof from the Łódź ghetto), lived in three large barracks on the airfield compound. Many of the prisoners had been provided with winter clothing and good shoes for the trip, as well as towels and soap. The men wore striped prisoner clothing. They were also issued quilts. The camp had a prisoner kitchen supplied by the camp command. As was the case with the other East Prussian subcamps, a prisoner doctor and orderlies were sent to Gerdauen to provide basic medical care.

Prisoner accounts show that although they did hard work leveling the construction site for a future airfield, when they were done, they had a lot of freedom to move about the camp buildings, and they were not subjected to physical violence. As Rywa Cytryn related, the prisoners from one of the barracks were even regularly late for the morning roll call, which was unthinkable at Stutthof. At Gerdauen, they were punished for that offense by being deprived of morning coffee and then having to kneel until the prisoners left for work. The Luftwaffe guards supervising them did not observe the ban on talking to them. Moreover, there were communications between prisoners and civilians from outside, who would throw them sandwiches specially wrapped in newspapers, from which prisoners would find out about the current situation at the front.<sup>3</sup>

Conditions at camp began deteriorating when late autumn and winter arrived. It turned out that not all prisoners had been furnished with winter footwear and clothing, which the director of the camp administration was supposed to provide. Just two weeks after prisoners had been sent to Gerdauen, Commandant Marzan's request for the urgent delivery of 200 pairs of shoes and materials to repair them reached the Stutthof clothing warehouse. He justified the request by saying that he could not send 105 prisoners out to work because of their inadequate shoes and the muddy ground. A day later, clothing warehouse manager SS-Unterscharführer Willy Knott allocated the camp 200 pairs of shoes, sewing tools to repair them, a roll of hemp yarn, and leather scraps (*Lederabfälle*), among other items.<sup>4</sup>

By October, 28, 1944, the camp population had been reduced by the death of one female prisoner. Commandant Moser requested the urgent delivery of winter clothing for the prisoners, which the camp received on November 8 in a considerably smaller amount, only one-quarter of the items like long woolen underwear or shirts. In November 1944, during a period of torrential rains, the commandant made a special effort to have 200 more pairs of leather shoes and 300 pairs of wooden ones sent. Instead, he received 500 pairs of wooden shoes, due to shortages at the warehouse.<sup>5</sup>

The camp's evacuation began in December 1944.<sup>6</sup> Such an early evacuation was probably due to the fact that the airfield was the closest to the front zone of all those in East Prussia. The winter offensive by Russian forces began on January 12, 1945, and a week later the Stutthof subcamps in East Prussia were immediately behind the front. According to figures on prisoner population at the Stutthof subcamps, there were only 24 prisoners at Gerdauen on January 24, 1945: 1 man and 23 women.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, most prisoners, excepting that small group, avoided the tragic fate of the other camps evacuated to Königsberg and Palmnicken, although their return to Stutthof also took a large toll.

The prisoners were evacuated from Gerdauen to Stutthof on foot. Many lost their strength during the march due to a lack of food and water; the guards killed off the weakest of them by gunshot. For many of them, the return to Stutthof meant more struggles for survival, in camp itself as well as during the next phase in the evacuation of the central camp.<sup>8</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this essay: AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the branch with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; R. Chirurg, *Bridge of Hope*, (Berkeley, 1994).

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trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 189–192, “Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung der Aussenarbeitslager Gerdauen, Schippenbeil, Jesau, Heiligenbeil und Seerappen.”

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, special order (Sonderbefehl) dated September 21, 1944, on forming the camp, and order (Kommandanturbefehle) nos. 70 and 75 dated October 17 and November 8, 1944.

3. R. Chirurg, *Bridge of Hope* (Berkeley, 1994), pp. 143–151.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 93–95, letter dated October 6, 1944.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 96, Aussenlager Gerdauen to Stutthof concentration camp dated November 6, 1944.

6. Chirurg, *Bridge of Hope*, p. 152.

7. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6.

8. Chirurg, *Bridge of Hope*, p. 153.

## GOTENHAFEN

Several prisoner labor groups were formed from 1939 to 1941 in the city of Gotenhafen (Gdynia before and after the war; Gdingen from 1939 to 1940), to be put to work at German institutions and private businesses. The names of those institutions and businesses can be identified based on notes made in prisoner files by the administration of the Danzig Neufahrwasser and Stutthof civilian prisoner camps, as well as from accounts and testimony given after the war.

Between September 14, 1939, and December 3, 1941 (the first and last dates recorded in prisoner files, indicating the

length of time they were in those detachments), the prisoners were put to work by three firms primarily: the private business Thiel u. Co., the Gotenhafen City Offices, and the agency Haupttreuhandstelle Ost (Main Trustee Office East, HTO). From October 1941 to January 1942, prisoners were also hired out to the administration of the Gotenhafen train station, removing rubble and expanding the train station facilities.<sup>1</sup>

From June 27 to October 20, 1941, 50 prisoners were hired out to Thiel u. Co. of Bromberg (Bydgoszcz) to work at Gotenhafen-Kiel. There is no information available on exactly what they did. The testimony of one of the detachment's workers shows that prisoners were put to work digging peat.<sup>2</sup> The prisoners were quartered at the labor camp in Gotenhafen-Kiel.<sup>3</sup>

For one month, from November 3 to December 3, 1941, prisoners worked at the Gotenhafen agency of the HTO.<sup>4</sup> A branch was instituted in the Danzig–West Prussia district in December 1939 as an agency of the HTO formed by Hermann Göring on October 19, 1939. The Gotenhafen branch was a subsidiary of the HTO's Danzig agency. The agency was tasked with the confiscation and management of Polish government property as well as that of Poles and Jews throughout the district, until the property was transferred to German hands. The nature of the prisoners' work and the number of workers are unknown.

Prisoners worked at the Gotenhafen City Offices from April 17, 1940, until December 3, 1941. They were put to work doing cleanup jobs at the Gotenhafen City Offices, as well as at the train station.<sup>5</sup> The city government administration put several prisoners to work on municipal land. There is no detailed information about this detachment.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this essay: AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 215, records of criminal case against Edward Włociański; AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports of Bolesław Przytuła; AMS, Catalog No. I-III, prisoner files; E. Grot and M. Orski, "Aussenarbeitslager Gotenhafen, filia obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w Gdyni," *StZeMu*, no. 7, (1990); B. Hajduk, "Gospodarka Gdańska w okresie drugiej wojny światowej (1939–1945)," *His Gd* 4:2 (1998); Cz. Łuczak, *Polityka ekonomiczna Trzeciej Rzeszy w latach II wojny światowej*, (Poznań, 1982).

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trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. See ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 281.

2. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-44781, I-III-49866, I-III-50025, files of prisoners Franciszek Gromada, Franciszek Żmudziewski, and Jan Zambrzycki; AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 215, pp. 11, 69, report of examination of defendant Edward Włociański, Lębork, June 6, 1945.

3. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-49887, letters from Lagerkommandantur Stutthof to the guard post (Wachtposten)

of the civilian prisoner camp at Gotenhafen Chylonia dated September 13, 1941.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-44781, files of prisoner Franciszek Gromada.

5. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-41175, I-III-42621, files of prisoners Marian Brawata and Andreas Domagała. Witness Bolesław Przytuła testified about work at the Stadtverwaltung, but in Gdynia Orłowo. However, this information probably regarded cleanup work done at the request of the Gdynia City Offices in Gdynia Orłowo. AK-IPN Gd, witness examination report, Wrocław, October 23, 1967.

6. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-50025, I-III-50031, files of prisoners Jan Zambrzycki and Ignac Wójcik.

## GOTENHAFEN (*DEUTSCHE WERKE KIEL*) [AKA DEUTSCHE-WERKE SONDERLAGER]

Gotenhafen (Gdynia before and after the war; Gdingen from 1939 to 1940) was an important military industrial center for the Reich, one of the navy's largest port, shipyard, and operations bases. The Deutsche Werke Kiel was one of the most important shipyards there. By late 1944 it employed approximately 7,000 workers, a considerable number of whom were forced laborers, prisoners of war (POWs), and in the latter half of 1944, prisoners from Stutthof.

The Stutthof subcamp at the Gotenhafen shipyard was formed on October 16, 1944.<sup>1</sup> (Stutthof prisoners had worked there before, but it is not known how many, and apparently no permanent camp was established for them.) It was also called Deutsche-Werke Sonderlager in Gotenhafen (German Works—Special Camp in Gotenhafen). After the camp was established, 310 prisoners were sent to Gotenhafen on October 16 and 28 in the first two transports.<sup>2</sup> According to the commandant's special order, the Germans intended to increase that population to 1,000. In early November 1944, two large prisoner transports arrived: 300 people from Stutthof and 180 directly from Dachau. At that point there were slightly more than 800 people living at the camp. The population remained at that level—its maximum—until the end of the month, fluctuating slightly, depending on the death rate and prisoner traffic between the main camp and Gotenhafen.<sup>3</sup> On January 24, 1945, there were 730 prisoners in the camp; on March 25, the date the evacuation began, there were 719.<sup>4</sup>

The majority of prisoners at Gotenhafen were from Poland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Germany, although a number of other countries were represented as well. Most of them were skilled tradesmen, although some of the Poles who arrived early were exceptions. For them, working in Gotenhafen offered the chance to see relatives, obtain extra food, and perhaps escape, and so members of the Polish underground who worked in Stutthof's employment office faked their comrades' qualifications.

SS-Oberscharführer Hans Kuhlmann was the first commandant; upon his dismissal on December 9, 1944, SS-Oberscharführer Josef Bock replaced him. The camp staff initially consisted of 2 SS men from Stutthof and 34 navy

sailors. On November 9, 1944, they were joined by another 10 SS men from Stutthof. There were 49 sailors serving as supervisors in the camp and shipyard in late November 1944.<sup>5</sup>

Supervisory prisoners supplemented the staff. The highest position in the hierarchy, camp elder, was held by Johann Bank (aka Bańkowski), a German career criminal. He also oversaw prisoners at the work site. The Poles convicted him in 1948 for abusing prisoners under his supervision and sentenced him to three years in prison.<sup>6</sup> The jobs of barrack supervisors and camp office workers were generally held by German criminals and Polish political prisoners, though the former became dominant when Bock took over. Impromptu beatings and official whippings were everyday occurrences in camp. Only when the shipyard and camp were bombed on December 18, 1944, and many of the criminals were hurt, did the prisoners' situation improve. In January 1945, after Bank was wounded, his place was taken by an Austrian, Victor Dorotic, who was more lenient, followed by a German criminal whom Dorotic had recommended for the position.

The prisoners worked at the shipyard, where they assembled submarines. They assembled type "Y300t" submarines in a system of sections at four workstations. The work was supervised by a representative of Deutsche Werke Kiel and civilian foremen from the shipyard. The prisoners worked in two 12-hour shifts, with shift changes at 6:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. The sections, which already had been fitted out, were brought in by rail to the shipyard, where they were assembled on slip carts in the production facilities; the assembled units were transported to the Schichau shipyard in Danzig for final finishing.<sup>7</sup>

Prisoners also worked in other manufacturing companies in Gotenhafen and for the city: transporting ordnance from military shelters to the nearby airfield, building shelters at the shipyard, and removing rubble from bombings. Beginning in mid-January, they were put to work at earthmoving jobs connected with the construction of military fortifications in the region. Work at the shipyard was halted after the shipyard facilities and vessels being repaired were disassembled and evacuated to Kiel starting in January 1945.

The camp was carved out of the southern part of an existing camp for French forced laborers located in the immediate neighborhood of the shipyard. The prisoners' living conditions were generally no different than those prevailing at the parent camp, but they were even worse as far as sanitary conditions or food supplies were concerned. The shipyard provided housing and food, while the camp was responsible for supplying clothing and shoes.

The daily food rations provided no more than 800 to 1,000 calories. Prisoners who worked in the shipyard assembling submarines got additional food. Food packages were substantial help; they were sent by families of prisoners from Gotenhafen or via underground organizations operating in the city, such as the Tajny Hufiec Harcerzy (Secret Scout Regiment), Armia Krajowa (Home Army) or Gryf Pomorski (Pomeranian Griffin). The same channels provided the camp with drugs and dressing materials lacking in the hospital. Food

thefts by prisoners, mainly Russians, Latvians, and Italians, from the kitchen storehouses were evidence of the hunger prevailing in camp. Polish civilian workers employed at the shipyard provided prisoners with some small help.

The supply of clothing and shoes, for which the camp was responsible, was terrible. There was a shortage of warm clothes, underwear, shoes, and tools for shoe repair, as well as shaving and haircutting instruments. The surviving portion of the commandant's correspondence with the Stutthof camp, such as his letter of January 5, 1945, in which he demanded that clothing be sent for the prisoners to replace clothes that had been destroyed during an air raid in December 1944, confirms the shortages.<sup>8</sup> The death rate at camp was high due to the bombings of the shipyard and camp, exhaustion from labor and lack of food, and abuse. Prisoner losses through death and transports of the seriously ill to the hospital in Stutthof were made up with new prisoners. It can be assumed that there were about 200 such replacements. All deaths were registered at Gotenhafen's Bureau of Vital Statistics, which recorded 52 deaths in November and December 1944 and 17 between January and March 1945.

The camp's location and the kind of work the prisoners did were conducive to escapes, which mostly Poles and Russians attempted. The first escapes were organized as early as October 1944, and there had been three attempts by December, all failures. The most famous escape attempt was that of two Latvians, the Gajewski brothers, who were captured and hanged in public at Stutthof. Several escapes occurred from early January until the camp was evacuated on March 25, 1945. According to official camp population reports, six prisoners were involved in them, and all were successful. The greatest number of prisoners escaped during two failed evacuation attempts on March 8 and 14, 1945.

The camp numbered approximately 700 prisoners on the day evacuation began. Several dozen people escaped en route to the port; just 618 prisoners were loaded onto small passenger ships. Their evacuation route led through Hel and Świnoujście, then to camps in Hamburg, Kiel, and Sandbostel, where some prisoners were liberated, then to Neuengamme. Tragically, they next joined the evacuation from Neuengamme to Lübeck, where they boarded ships that were bombed and sunk on May 3. About 200 prisoners survived the evacuation, as well as the several dozen who had escaped from the evacuation transport en route to the port in Gotenhafen.

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this essay: AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 50, records of criminal case against Johannes Bank (aka Bańkowski); AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Catalog No. Z-VI-4/11, transport list of prisoners brought from Dachau concentration camp to Gdynia; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, vol. 24 (Victor Dorotic); ITS, Catalog No. Da. 294–297 I.C.1,4, transport list of prisoners brought from Dachau concentration camp to Gdynia; FGNS-H, account of Victor Dorotic; M. Filipowicz, *Ludzie*,



*stocznie, okręty* (Gdańsk, 1985); E. Grot, *Rejs śmierci. Ewakuacja morska więźniów KL Stutthof 1945* (Gdańsk, 1993); E. Grot, and M. Orski, "Aussenarbeitslager Gotenhafen, filia obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w Gdyni," *StZeMu*, no. 7 (1990); Cz. Jeryś, *Budownictwo okrętowe w Gdyni 1920–1945* (Gdańsk, 1980); M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992); A. Kaźmierczak, "Port gdyniński w latach wojny," *Rocz Gd*," no. 1 (1977); J. Michałowska, "Gospodarka Gdyni w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej," in *Dzieje Gdyni*, ed. R. Wapiński (Wrocław, 1980).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 211–214, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenarbeitslagers "Deutsche Werke Gotenhafen," October 15, 1944.

2. Ibid., p. 213; Kommandanturbefehle, no. 72, dated October 27, 1944.

3. Ibid., p. 242, Kommandanturbefehle, no. 75, dated November 8, 1944; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 99, Kuhlmann's correspondence with the clothing warehouse on sending warm clothes for 796 prisoners (no date except for the clothing warehouse initials dated December 5, 1944); FSNS-H, copy at AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, vol. 24, account of Victor Dorotic, camp senior.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle.

6. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 50.

7. FGNS-H, account of Victor Dorotic; M. Filipowicz, *Ludzie, stocznie, okręty* (Gdańsk, 1985), pp. 207–210.

8. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 99–103.

## GRENZDORF

The first transport of approximately 70 prisoners arrived at Grenzdorf (later Graniczna Wieś) between September 10 and 13, 1939.<sup>1</sup> They were sent from a temporary camp for Poles arrested at the start of the war at Viktoria Schule in Danzig (later Gdańsk), after a brief stay at the delousing station in Danzig-Neufahrwasser, where their hair was cut off and they were disinfected. Until March 31, 1940, the camp was under the Danzig Prison camp command as a separate civilian prisoner camp; thereafter, it became a subcamp of Stutthof.<sup>2</sup> Previously, the site had housed a penal camp formed by the government of the Free City of Danzig in October 1938 for "notorious idlers," criminal prisoners serving sentences at the Schiesstange Strasse prison.

SS-Sturmführer Hertzner became the camp's first commandant; his deputy was SS-Oberscharführer Paul Anker. They had a positive attitude toward the prisoners, making conditions at the camp bearable for them. Hertzner greeted prisoners with "Kameraden" (comrades); Anker permitted them to purchase and bring to camp tobacco and cigarettes. Prisoners were able to mail news to their families, who visited

them on Sundays, bringing them fresh underwear and food.<sup>3</sup> Hertzner was dismissed shortly after the camp's opening, and in December 1939, SS-Obersturmführer Richard Reddig was appointed to replace him as commandant. Except for a break from February 1 to April 1, 1941, when SS-Obersturmführer Fritz Meier acted as commandant, Reddig served until the camp was dissolved. Unlike Hertzner and Anker, Reddig was a cold and emotionless camp official. Roman Bellwon and others remember that when a prisoner escaped from Grenzdorf, Reddig selected two others whom he ordered to be shot.<sup>4</sup> Reverend Henryk Malak quoted Reddig's greeting of a group of priests who arrived at the camp in April 1940: "Actually, if it was up to me, I'd rather shoot you all today right away! . . . But since I'm short of people to work—" He gave a broad wave of his hand, not finishing the sentence, pointing at a heavy machine gun ready to fire. "This is always waiting for you! This is a labor camp! Here you either work and earn your food, or you croak! Understood?!"<sup>5</sup>

Due to the hard working conditions, the Grenzdorf camp was treated as a penal detachment for the priests, political activists, and Jews from the Polish community of Danzig. Also sent to the camp in late June 1941 were 38 Soviet sailors from the ship *Magnitogorsk*, including 2 women.<sup>6</sup>

The prisoners worked in quarries or in the nearby gravel pit for the Danzig Senate Roads Administration.<sup>7</sup> Their work consisted of breaking up great stones and processing the rock into basalt cubes. With smaller rock pieces, they made gravel for use in construction or as road building material. The work was not mechanized; all operations were done by hand. Gravel and sand were transported in carts pushed by prisoners; large stones were moved on what were called "stretchers." The work, lasting about 12 hours a day, was done under the watchful and harsh supervision of guards and foreman prisoners (Kapos). Besides working in quarries, prisoners were hired out to work at farms and local companies, such as Wilhelm Thiessen's farm at Grenzdorf B.<sup>8</sup>

Depending on the number of prisoners, the guard staff was composed of about 30 SS men. Among the most brutal SS men were SS-Oberscharführer Brunon Krummreich, SS-Unterscharführer Otto Knott, SS-Rottenführer Johann Plicht, and SS-Rottenführer Willi Witt, who was sentenced by the Gdańsk District Court to 10 years in prison in 1947.<sup>9</sup> Prisoners were also supervised during work and in camp by Polish Kapos, some of the most degenerate of whom were Józef Reiter, Waław Kozłowski, Franciszek Szopiński, and Tadeusz Kopczyński. In 1946, they were tried by the Gdańsk Special Criminal Court, which gave them the death penalty.<sup>10</sup>

The death rate at camp was very high, as accounts of former prisoners show. Many prisoners died through abuse or outright murder. Waław Mitura recalls that there were frequent instances of suicide provoked by the SS. Some prisoners, in a state of hopelessness, crossed the white string that marked forbidden areas and were shot; others were provoked to do so by the SS men, who would take the caps from the prisoners' heads and throw them outside the line.<sup>11</sup> On March 20, 1940, at Grenzdorf, they buried Scoutmaster Alf

Liczmański, the commander of the Danzig Regiment of the Grey Ranks, who had been tortured at Stutthof. Liczmański had been brought from Stutthof to Grenzdorf that day by truck and was probably already dead. He was buried on the spot. His remains were exhumed and moved to the Cemetery of Merit at Zaspa on November 14, 1948.<sup>12</sup> The death rate among Jewish prisoners was considerably high. Almost the entire group of approximately 40 people had been slaughtered by the end of 1940.<sup>13</sup> Seriously ill prisoners were taken to the Stutthof hospital, and the bodies of deceased prisoners were taken to the Zaspa cemetery in Danzig.

Few prisoners tried to escape. Three such attempts are known, which all ended tragically. Max Schindler, a Jewish prisoner, tried to escape in late December 1940; he was shot to death, probably during the manhunt. In February 1940, a Pole, Kozłowski, unsuccessfully tried to escape under the pretext that he was going to the toilet just outside the fence. He was caught by local people and returned to the camp, punished with 50 lashes with a cane, then shot three days later with three other prisoners at a public execution in camp. Another prisoner, a Yugoslavian, met the same fate in 1941.<sup>14</sup>

The camp population stood at 350 persons in late 1939 or early 1940, then increased to 500 in late January.<sup>15</sup> In 1941, it sank to between 100 and 200. The quarry probably ceased operating in late October 1941, when all the prisoners were sent back to Stutthof. E. Niemann's report of October 28, 1941, confirms this, stating that Grenzdorf had been made into an educational camp. A listing of subcamps appended to a letter dated November 28, 1941, no longer includes Grenzdorf. A group of prisoners, probably the last one, left Grenzdorf on November 5, 1941.<sup>16</sup> Jan Starzyński contends that the branch was shut down on November 6, 1941; others say the closing date was November 10, 1941. Dr. Julian Węgrzynowicz stayed at Grenzdorf to the very end in a group of the last 20 prisoners; he confirms the camp was disbanded in November 1941.<sup>17</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted for this essay: AK-IPN, SO Gd sygn. Nos. 84, 86, records of criminal case against Nikolaus Dirnberger and others, sentence of judgment; SSK Gd Sygn. No. 417, records of criminal case against Józef Reiter and others; Catalog No. 418, records of criminal case against John Paul and others in 1946; AK-IPN Gd Sygn. No. Ds. 76/64, witness examination reports of Stanisław Dalecki and Antoni Janiewicz; AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IA-1, I-IA-2, I-IA-4, records on the Stutthof camp's change in status; Catalog No. I-III, prisoner personal files; Catalog No. I-IVB-4, records of Stutthof concentration camp's Administration and Management Division; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Jan Starzyński, vol. 4; Julian Węgrzynowicz, vol. 6; Alfons Pillath, vol. 9); Cmentarz-Zaspa (Zaspa Cemetery), compiled by A. Chudy; *Dan Vorp*, July 26, 1939; *Gdańsk 1939*. Brunon Zwarra *Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, Wybór i opracowanie (Gdańsk, 1984); M. E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992); H.M. Malak, *Klechy w obozach śmierci* (Londyn, 1961); W. Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu. Wspomnienia więźnia obozu*, 2nd ed. (Bydgo-

szcz, 1984); M. Orski, "Struktura państwowa i skład narodowościowy obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945," *Stutthof. Zeszyty Muzeum*, no. 10 (1992).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. *Gdańsk 1939. Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, Wybór i opracowanie Brunon Zwarra (Gdańsk, 1984), account of Zygfryd Kurowski; see also the account of Roman Bellwon, Bruno Kobiella, Maksymilian Kempniński, and Jan Samulski; according to Alfons Pillath this happened on September 10, 1939; he provides the transport's approximate size: from 50 to 70 people; also see AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 9:171. For other dates, see ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 282 (September 27, 1939).

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVB-4.

3. *Gdańsk 1939*, accounts of Roman Chrzanowski and Eryk Falów.

4. *Ibid.*, and account of Maksymilian Kempniński.

5. H.M. Malak, *Klechy w obozach śmierci* (Londyn, 1961), 1:58.

6. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 12:240–241, account of Captain Dalek (Dalko, Polish spelling) of the ship *Magnitogorsk*; M. Orski, "Struktura państwowa i skład narodowościowy obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945," *StZeMu*, no. 10, (1992): 14.

7. AMS, Catalog No. I-IA-2, letter of R. Glücks to H. Himmler dated January 30, 1940.

8. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49866, I-III-50004, files of prisoners Franciszek Żmudziewski and Jan Stodokiewicz; AK-IPN Gd (Commission Archives—National Memorial Institute at Gdańsk), Catalog No. Ds. 76/64, report of examination of witness Antoni Janiewicz (Wrocław); W. Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu. Wspomnienia więźnia obozu*, 2nd ed. (Bydgoszcz, 1984), pp. 78–80; AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 4:218–221, account of Jan Starzyński; 9:171–173, Alfons Pillath.

9. AK-IPN, SO Gd (Commission Archives—National Memorial Institute, Gdańsk District Court), Catalog Nos. 84, 86.

10. AK-IPN, SSK Gd (Commission Archives, Gdańsk Special Criminal Court), Catalog No. 417, records of criminal case against Józef Reiter and others.

11. Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu. Wspomnienia więźnia obozu*, p. 79; see also AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. II Ds. 76/64, report of examination of witness Antoni Janiewicz (Wrocław).

12. AMS, Cmentarz-Zaspa (Zaspa Cemetery), compiled by A. Chudy; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 12:287–291, account of A.J. Pilarczyk; *Gdańsk 1939*, pp. 213, 219–220, account of Maksymilian Kempniński and B. Zwarra's explanation, fn. 49.

13. AK-IPN, SO, Catalog No. S.3/72, report of examination of witness Stanisław Dalecki; J. Matynia, *Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof, w latach 1939–1945*, Ph.D. diss., Gdańsk Teachers College, 1969, p. 76.

14. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. II Ds. 76/64, report of examination of witness Antoni Janiewicz (Wrocław); AMS,

Zaspa Cemetery, compiled by A. Chudy; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 4: 222, account of Jan Starzyński.

15. AMS, Catalog No. I-IA-1, Dok. Nor. (Nuremberg Document) NO-2275, Hildebrandt's report on the SS-Wachsturmbann operations to H. Himmler dated January 9, 1940; Catalog No. I-IA-2, letter of R. Glücks to H. Himmler dated January 30, 1940, on prisoner camp operations in the Vistula district.

16. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49886, I-III-50004, I-III-50075, files of prisoners Franciszek Żmudziwski, Jan Stodokiewicz, and Stanisław Kaliszewski.

17. AMS, Catalog No. I-IA-4, report of E. Niemann; Catalog No. I-IE-999, files of SS-man Erdmann Schendel; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 6: 237–238, account of Julian Węgrzynowicz; AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. 418, p. 30, testimony of Jan Starzyński.

## GROSS LESEWITZ

A camp at Gross Lesewitz (Lasowice Wielkie) was first mentioned in early 1940. In his account, Reverend Alfons Muzałewski recalled that a group of prisoners sent from the Gestapo prison on Schiesstange in Danzig, including Reverend Władysław Szymański, were sent to work on a farm. They were treated with hostility and abused. Reverend Szymański's back was covered with bruises from beatings, and his foot was pierced by a pitchfork. When the work was completed, the prisoners were sent to the camp in Danzig-Neufahrwasser.<sup>1</sup>

According to another account, in October 1939, a large number of Poles from the Danzig-Neufahrwasser camp were sent in narrow-gauge railway cars to work at farms in Żuławy. One of the groups, composed of approximately 40 Poles, worked at a farm in Gross Lesewitz. The author of the account stated that they worked under "rather decent conditions" until March 19, 1940. The detachment was reduced to 20 people after January 1, 1940.<sup>2</sup> There were probably two detachments working at different times and at different farms.

In the autumn of 1944, a group of Stutthof camp prisoners, the number of whom is hard to determine, were sent to Gross Lesewitz again, where they were put to work in the local sugar mill—a branch of the sugar mill in Marienburg (Malbork). The testimony of former Stutthof prisoners confirms the detachment's existence.<sup>3</sup>

The prisoners were housed on the farms in Gross Lesewitz and Klein Lesewitz (Lasowice Małe), where they also did farmwork. No additional information is available on this detachment. The subcamp's commandant and staff remain unidentified. The prisoners returned to the Stutthof camp in late November 1944.

**SOURCES** The following source, in addition to those mentioned in "Stutthof Main Camp," was consulted in writing this entry: *Gdańsk 1939. Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, Wybór i opracowanie Brunon Zwarra (Gdańsk, 1984).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. *Gdańsk 1939. Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, Wybór i opracowanie Brunon Zwarra (Gdańsk, 1984), p. 372.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 520, 522, account of Józef Tusk.

3. ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 282.

## HEILIGENBEIL

The Heiligenbeil camp was created by special order of the Stutthof commandant on September 21, 1944, as one of five identically organized subcamps at Luftwaffe airfields (the others being Gerdauen, Jesau, Schippenbeil, and Seerappen).

The first transport of 1,000 Jewish prisoners (900 women and 100 men, mainly from Hungary and Poland but also from Latvia and Germany) was sent on September 21, 1944. Another transport of 200 Jewish women arrived on October 9. SS-Unterscharführer Hermann Kleiss was the first commandant, followed by SS-Oberscharführer Johann Mayer on October 18, by SS-Hauptscharführer Ernst Karl Thulke on November 20, and then by SS-Sturmscharführer Wolföfer on January 3, 1945. Besides the 46 Luftwaffe soldiers who guarded the airfield, 2 SS women served as supervisors: Erna Beilhardt and Erna Neumann. The entire camp premises were also guarded by 6 guards at permanent posts around the camp.<sup>1</sup> According to Beilhardt's testimony given at trial in Gdańsk in 1946, she completed six weeks of training at Stutthof, then left for Heiligenbeil as a German Red Cross nurse.<sup>2</sup>

The prisoners lived in 20 barracks, where they had double-decker bunks lined with straw. There were also French prisoner-of-war (POW) camps and a Reich Labor Service (RAD) camp for Russian forced laborers nearby. The prisoners were put to work building a road to the airfield; the Organisation Todt (OT) supervised the engineering. Work began at 6:00 A.M. and ended at 7:00 P.M., with an hour's break when prisoners received some unsweetened black coffee. The RAD kitchen made food for the prisoners using regulation ration amounts, which were actually half of that recommended by the SS authorities. The sole small assistance the Jews got in the way of extra food was from the French POWs and the Russians—mostly potato peels or coffee.<sup>3</sup>

Thulke testified at a group trial of Stutthof staff in 1947 that while he commanded the camp from November 20, 1944, to January 2, 1945, the prisoners' food was good; he checked it himself. He was also present when bread was distributed. On the other hand, he confirmed the fact that only half of the prisoners (600 people) went out to work and that there were 4 or 5 deaths during his tenure. This testimony is questionable, because the highest mortality at camp was in November and December 1944, when an epidemic of typhoid fever had broken out.<sup>4</sup>

A lack of suitable clothing made the prisoners' situation worse. On October 1, 1944, the subcamp's commandant sent



an urgent letter to Stutthof's administration, requesting warm clothes and the tools and materials to mend them. In its report dated October 27, the camp command requested the urgent delivery of gloves, underwear, women's dresses and skirts, stockings, and foot wrappings, as well as thread, nails, and so on, to mend clothes and shoes. The camp barber also needed haircutting instruments. The subcamp received the items five days later.<sup>5</sup>

When winter arrived, the prisoners' situation got even worse. Upon taking up command of the subcamp in early January 1945, Commandant Wolföfer said the state of prisoner provisioning was "disastrous." In his report of January 4, 1945, he said that 260 Jewish women could not work, as there was no footwear for them. Another 262 people were in the infirmary; their shoes had been assigned to healthy prisoners. The commandant requested machinery to set up a clothing and shoe repair workshop, but it is not known if the order was filled, since the camp evacuation date was approaching.

The records are incomplete, but considering the bad living conditions, hard labor, and epidemics of typhoid fever, the camp's death rate does not appear to have been high. The sick rate was appreciably higher. More seriously ill people were moved to the hospital at Stutthof, where some prisoners died; the numbers are difficult to establish. A female prisoner/doctor from the camp and the airfield doctor cared for sick prisoners;<sup>6</sup> 10 such prisoners can be identified based on fragmentary camp doctor reports on deaths at the subcamps, as well as studies of prisoner records. The records cover the period from late October 1944 to early January 1945.<sup>7</sup>

The records also mention women wounded or killed during alleged escape attempts. A report of October 29, 1944, stated that Basia Littmann, a Jewish woman, was shot while trying to escape; another Jewish woman received a gunshot wound in the chest and died as a result. It is difficult to ascertain whether these were really escape attempts. The women may have simply left their workplace briefly, which was regarded as an escape attempt. Planning an escape under those conditions and at that time held little promise of success.<sup>8</sup> The Russian front was still quite distant at this stage, for one thing.

There were 1,157 inmates in camp, including 1,064 women and 93 men, when the prisoners were evacuated toward Königsberg on January 20–21, 1945, together with prisoners from the other subcamps in East Prussia.<sup>9</sup> Since there was no communication with Stutthof, the decision to evacuate the camp was probably made by East Prussian Gauleiter Erich Koch's staff. Apparently, the intent was to send the prisoners toward the port of Pilau and then on to Hamburg, a concentration point for prisoners from Stutthof and Neuengamme. Sick prisoners were left in Heiligenbeil. Many prisoners became weak during the march; the weakest were driven the rest of the way to Königsberg in vehicles.<sup>10</sup>

The second stage of the evacuation probably began at dawn on January 26, or perhaps a day earlier, before Russian forces surrounded Königsberg. Koch's staff had already decided what to do with the prisoners. At the suggestion of Gerhard Rasch, the director of the amber manufacturing

works in Königsberg, they intended to slaughter all the prisoners in tunnels in nearby Palmnicken. They were either going to gas the prisoners, blow them up with dynamite, or suffocate them inside the tunnels after sealing up the openings. The commandants of the camps were supposed to escort the prisoners to Palmnicken.

According to various sources, from 3,000 up to as many as 10,000 prisoners of Stutthof subcamps left Königsberg, but the high figure is probably exaggerated, considering that there were approximately 5,000 prisoners in all the East Prussian subcamps in late January 1945. However, if POWs and prisoners from the labor camps operating near Luftwaffe airfields are included in this estimate, the number could be on the higher side.<sup>11</sup>

Even before the march out of Königsberg, the guards shot some of the prisoners in the Steinfurt works, where the prisoners had been accommodated; later they shot emaciated and sick prisoners during the march, pulling them out of the ranks and murdering them. A few were successful in escaping from the march column. On the night of January 26–27, 1945, approximately 4,000 prisoners reached Palmnicken.<sup>12</sup> Due to the objection of amber works director Landmann and Major Feyerabend, steward of the Dorbnicken, Gross-Hubnicken, and Palmnicken estates, where the works were located, the prisoners were not annihilated in the tunnels. They were sent toward the sea in columns of 50 prisoners under heavy escort by the SS, Lithuanian and Estonian SS-Osttruppen (Hiwis), and the OT. The massacre of the prisoners began when they reached the shore. Approximately 200 prisoners managed to escape during the shooting; 13 additional people survived the massacre by feigning death.<sup>13</sup>

Out of the Heiligenbeil staff members, Thulke and Beilhardt were held criminally responsible. In 1946–1947, Polish courts sentenced each of them to five years' imprisonment.<sup>14</sup>

**SOURCES** Key resources included: AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog Nos. 84, 85, records of criminal case against Nikolaus Dirnberger and others, sentence of judgement; SSK Gd, Catalog No. 422, records of criminal case against John Pauls and others in 1946; AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-III, prisoner personal files; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Catalog No. I-VB-7, hospital (Krankenbau) records; Microfilm No. 215, accounts of former Jewish prisoners from the collections of the AŻIH in Warsaw and YV in Jerusalem; YVA, testimony of former Jewish prisoners from the Stutthof concentration camp; D. Drywa, *Podobozy (Aussenarbeitslager) KL Stutthof dla więźniów narodowości żydowskiej* (in print, typescript at AMS); S. Krakowski, *Marsze śmierci z podobozów KL Stutthof w rejonie nadbałtyckim 1939–1945* (Sztutowo, 1994); S. Krakowski, "Massacre of Jewish Prisoners on the Samland Peninsula—Documents," *YVS* 24 (1994); S. Popiołek, "Obozowe święta w Jesau," *Tyg Pł*, January 17, 2001.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 84, p. 118; Catalog No. 85, p. 131, records of criminal case against Nikolaus Dirnberger and others, testimony of Ernst Karl Thulke; AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 189–192, 207–208, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung der Aussenarbeitslager Gerdauen, Schippenbeil, Jesau, Heiligenbeil und Seerappen, September 21, 1944; Kommandanturbefehle, No. 68 of October 9, 1944; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 113, Wolföfer to Kommandantur KL Stutthof, dated January 4, 1945.
2. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 422, records of criminal case against John Pauls and others, report of examination of Erna Beilhardt.
3. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 84, p. 118; Catalog No. 85, p. 131, records of criminal case against Nikolaus Dirnberger and others, testimony of Ernst Karl Thulke at 1947 trial; AMS, Microfilm No. 215, Jewish accounts from the collections of the AŻIH in Warsaw and YV in Jerusalem.
4. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 84, p. 118.
5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 107–108.
6. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 84, p. 118, testimony of Ernst Karl Thulke at 1947 trial.
7. AMS, Catalog No. I-VB-7, hospital (Krankenbau) records.
8. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49618, I-III-48376, personal files of Basia Littmann and Jenka Schuster.
9. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, report on the camp's population.
10. AMS, Microfilm No. 215, testimony of Irena Redner.
11. See S. Krakowski, *Marsze śmierci z podobozów KL Stutthof w rejonie Królewca. Materiały sesji naukowej nt. Losy Żydów w regionie nadbałtyckim 1939–1945* (Sztutowo, 1994); See S. Popiołek, “Obozowe święta w Jesau,” *Tyg Pł*, January 17, 2001.
12. AMS, Microfilm No. 215, account of Fryda Gabrylewicz; YVA, Catalog No. 03/5690, testimony of Róża Krajowska-Ajzenberg.
13. AMS, Microfilm No. 215, accounts of witnesses of the massacre; see S. Krakowski, “Massacre of Jewish Prisoners on the Samland Peninsula—Documents,” *YVS* 24 (1994): 379–381; see Popiołek, “Obozowe święta w Jesau.”
14. AK-IPN, SSK Gd., Catalog No. 422; SO Gd, Catalog No. 86.

## HOPEHILL [ALSO REIMANNSSFELDE]

The administrative order that specifically created the Hopehill subcamp does not exist in the Stutthof records. However, there is an order from the commandant dated May 29, 1942, that names SS men for administrative positions. SS-Oberscharführer Johannes Kuhlmann was the first camp commandant, followed by SS-Oberscharführer Karl Böhm and SS-Unterscharführer Herbert Korsch.<sup>1</sup>

Over 50 SS men served at Hopehill (Witowo), over half of whom were ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche) from Croatia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Hungary; the rest were German nationals.<sup>2</sup> Among them, the Germans—such as Kurt Janzen, Paul Wellnitz, Heinz Löwen, Alfred Tissler,

and Waldemar Henke—were unusually brutal toward prisoners. On the other hand, former prisoners have emphasized their good treatment from Polish and especially from Croatian SS men.

Prisoner-functionaries supplemented the staff. Among the most cruel—just as brutal as the German SS men—were German prisoners in the positions of senior prisoner foreman and prisoner foreman (Oberkapo and Kapo), mainly Willy Narcius, Tony Köhl, Hans Senger, Peter Flink, and August Sauter.

The prisoners were hired out to the SS company Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke GmbH (German Earth and Stone Works, DESt). The first detachment consisted of 40 prisoners. The next group came in two transports from Flossenbürg and Mauthausen. The inmates were chiefly Germans (including numerous criminals) and Polish political prisoners. They held key administrative and supervisory positions in the barracks and work groups.

In July 1943, DESt took over the management of the Reimannsfelde (Nadbrezie, later Nadbrzeże) brickyard, which was considerably more modern and efficient. At that point, the camp was expanded, and the quarters were moved to nearby Reimannsfelde.

The prisoners were initially housed in a single-level brick building. The average prisoner population at that time was approximately 60 to 70 people. A few hundred yards from the building, the prisoners could see the high smokestacks and factory buildings of the brickyard. There was a makeshift storehouse in the attic for the bodies of dead prisoners, which were carted away every 10 days to the crematorium at Stutthof. Until October 1942, living and sanitary conditions were not the worst they would become, although overcrowding and the primitive sanitary facilities precluded ordinary hygiene. The situation degenerated with the arrival of autumn weather. The sick rate rose because of upper respiratory infections, and there was an outbreak of lice due to inadequate living and sanitary conditions; an epidemic was averted only because the entire camp was disinfected, and prisoner hygiene was enforced to some extent.<sup>3</sup>

Until mid-1944, prisoner doctor Dr. Aleksander Witkowski provided only emergency outpatient treatment. As a result, the death rate in the subcamp remained high, but a separate infirmary was set up in mid-1944, when the number of deaths reached a peak. By the spring of 1944, there was an SS medical orderly on the camp staff. According to (incomplete) records, an average of three prisoners died per week, and the camp lost at least the same number of sick to the Stutthof camp hospital.<sup>4</sup>

In early November 1942, the prisoners' striped summer uniforms were replaced with winter ones, without winter coats. Their inadequate clothes provided little protection; prisoners used various materials such as newspapers or empty cement sacks to supplement their uniforms.<sup>5</sup> Only in late 1944 or early 1945 were they issued winter clothing. In correspondence dated from November 1944 to January 1945, Commandant Korsch reported difficulties supplying prisoners with

warm clothes and footwear. In his report of January 3, 1945, he stated that the prisoners had not received a fresh change of underwear since October 4; he requested the express delivery of 300 pairs of long underwear and shirts, foot wrappings, and sewing materials to mend the winter uniforms.<sup>6</sup>

The prisoners' food, which the Stutthof camp administration provided, consisted of starvation rations. In the initial period of the subcamp's operation, working conditions in the kitchen were very hard due to lack of space, poor sanitary conditions, and meager food rations. The average daily intake throughout the entire period from 1942 to 1945 was approximately 1,500 to 1,800 calories; in 1942, it was less than 1,000 calories, especially because prisoners could only receive food packages beginning in late 1942.<sup>7</sup>

Approximately 300 prisoners occupied the camp as of mid-1943. That represented the peak population, although the constant replacement of dead or ill prisoners meant that the number of prisoners who lived there at one time or another was much higher—about 500. Poles constituted the largest group at the camp (approximately 50 percent), followed by Germans and Russians. There were also groups from Estonia, France, Lithuania, and Latvia.

The workday in the brickyards was 11 to 12 hours long. The group that operated the kiln worked the longest, divided into two shifts. Although the Hopehill brickyard was a partially mechanized facility, most work was done by hand. The Reimannsfelde brickyard, on the other hand, was a modern and fully mechanized plant; its output was twice that of the Hopehill brickyard.

Conditions in the detachment improved in late 1943 when a French Alsatian, Anton Köhl, became Oberkapo, and Poles took over most functionary positions from German criminals. Living conditions in camp also improved when the infirmary was set up after Dr. Lech Duszyński became doctor in January 1944, followed in June 1944 by Dr. Stanisław Kruszwski and Dr. Roman Łoziński. Camp life had become appreciably more liberal in comparison to the 1942–1943 period, when the German Narius was camp Oberkapo and there was an atmosphere of terror and incessant persecution. Prisoner cultural activities developed semiofficially on a previously unprecedented scale, such as carving amber extracted from the clay hill, cultural evenings held in the Polish barracks (literary and musical events and political discussions based on Nazi publications to which the camp subscribed), and even wrestling and boxing competitions held on January 1, 1945.

There was not even one escape attempt in 1942, because the supervisory regimen was so strict. In 1943, three attempts were recorded. One was really a suicide (the prisoner consciously crossed the line of guard posts), and another ended when an SS man caught and shot the prisoner. Narius attempted to escape in late August, as a direct result of the rivalry between German and Polish prisoners. He was caught and met the same fate as the previous fugitive.<sup>8</sup> There were several more escapes in 1944, five of which were successful. Three other escape attempts ended in failure, with the fugitives being captured and punished, usually by whipping.<sup>9</sup>

The subcamp's history included an event that was extremely famous throughout Stutthof, involving the murder of an Estonian prisoner by Oberkapo Köhl and his accomplices, which interrupted a time of relative peace and security after the initial harsh phase. Rumors circulated that a prisoner had been burned alive in the brick kiln, which was untrue. However, the rumor prompted a thorough investigation by officials from Stutthof headquarters and the removal from office of commandant Kuhlmann, labor director Janzen, and Oberkapo Köhl (sentenced to death by the Reich Security Main Office [RSHA]), who were found to be jointly conducting prohibited communications with the outside.

The subcamp was disbanded pursuant to an order from the Stutthof commandant dated January 26, 1945 (although former prisoners maintain that it occurred on January 19). When the prisoners returned from the brickyard at noon, there was a final roll call; they were each issued 500 grams (approximately 18 ounces) of bread and about 127 grams (4.5 ounces) of margarine. A cleanup crew of about 50 inmates stayed at Nadbrzeże; they returned to Stutthof the next day.<sup>10</sup>

Eight staff members and prisoner-functionaries were tried by Polish courts after the war. Wellnitz received the death penalty; Martin Stagl got eight years in prison. SS men Löwen, Tissler, and Henke were sentenced to five years in prison, and Jan Alfred Wróbel received a seven-month prison sentence. Of the two prisoner foremen, Jan Breit received the death penalty, while Paul Wiechern was acquitted.<sup>11</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted in writing this essay: AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 78, 79, 86, records of criminal case against T. Meyer and others, sentences of judgment; Catalog No. 81a, materials of preliminary investigation into the Stutthof camp collected by Judge Antoni Zachariasiewicz; SSK Gd, Catalog No. 422, records of criminal case against John Pauls, sentence of judgment and justification; SWGd. Catalog No. 37, judgment and justification in the trial of 26 accused criminals from the Stutthof concentration camp of November 29, 1947; the "Ob." Collection, Catalog No. 105 ob. (surveys, Stanisław Wojcieszek); AMS, Catalog No. I-III, prisoner personal files; Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-ID-11, Stutthof concentration camp staff personnel matters; Catalog No. I-IIIA-10, Arbeits-einteilung für den 29, 31 März 1943; Catalog No. I-IIIB-2-5, Veränderungsbücher; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Lasik, Stutthof; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Lech Duszyński, vol. 9; Tadeusz Cieplik, vol. 18); BA-BL, NS 3, Catalog No. 138, correspondence of DESt with Amtsgruppe W at the WVHA; Rijksinsitut Voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam (account of Paul Wiechern); J. Maitre, *Konzentrationslager Stutthof 1943–1945*, (Lyon, 1973) (typescript at AMS); W. Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu. Wspomnienia więźnia obozu*, 2nd ed. (Bydgoszcz, 1984); T. Nieśpiałowski, *Wspomnienia nauczyciela z lat wojny, okupacji i niewoli. Czas grozy i poniżenia* (Zakopane, 1984). See also M. E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów,"



StZeMu, no. 10 (1992); M. Orski, *Hopehill. Filia obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w Nadbrzeżu* (Gdańsk, 1994); Orski, *The Czechs, Slovaks and Yugoslavs in Stutthof Concentration Camp* (Gdańsk, 1997).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-ID-11, Stutthof concentration camp staff personnel matters.

2. See AMS, Lasik, Stutthof ac.

3. T. Nieśpiałowski, *Wspomnienia nauczyciela z lat wojny, okupacji i niewoli. Czas grozy i poniżenia* (A teacher's memoirs of the years of war, occupation, and captivity. A time of terror and humiliation) (Zakopane, 1984) (typescript at AMS), pp. 670, 774–778.

4. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 81a, p. 69, witness examination report, testimony of Dr. Lech Duszyński of 1945; AMS, Catalog No. I-III-10, Arbeitseinteilung für den 29, 31 März 1943; Catalog No. I-III-2-5, Veränderungsbücher.

5. Nieśpiałowski, *Wspomnienia nauczyciela*, p. 693.

6. W. Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu. Wspomnienia więźnia obozu*, 2nd ed. (Bydgoszcz, 1984), p. 140; AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7.

7. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 78, p. 289, testimony of Dr. Lech Duszyński at Stutthof concentration camp staff trial in 1947; Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu. Wspomnienia więźnia obozu*, p. 123; Nieśpiałowski, *Wspomnienia nauczyciela*, pp. 670–671.

8. AMS, Einlieferungsbuch, Catalog No. I-II-5, p. 248; Standesamt, Catalog No. Z-V-15.

9. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog Nos. I-III-17787, I-III-17787, I-III-16862, prisoner personal files; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 11: 152–153, account of Lech Duszyński; Nieśpiałowski, *Wspomnienia nauczyciela*, p. 8; Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam, account of Paul Wiechern; AK-IPN, the “Ob.” Collection, surveys, Catalog No. 105 ob., report of testimony given by Stanisław Wojcieszek at the Elbląg Office of the Polish Red Cross.

10. BA-BL, NS 3, SS-Wirtschaftsundverwaltungshauptamt, Catalog No. 138, Mummmenthey (DESt) to Baier (Amtsgruppe W, SS-WVHA) dated March 8, 1945 (Abwicklung der Aussendienststelle Stutthof-Reimannsfelde); AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 27: 74, account of Tadeusz Cieplik; see also Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, p. 152—he shifts the date that the prisoners returned to the parent camp by two days.

11. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog Nos. 79, 86; SSK Gd, Catalog No. 422; SW Gd, Catalog No. 37, sentences of judgment and justification.

## JESAU

The Jesau (later Yuzhnyy in Russia) subcamp was located on the premises of a Luftwaffe airfield in East Prussia (there were four other similar subcamps established on the same day, September 21, 1944, at Gerdauen, Heiligenbeil, Schippenbeil, and Seerappen). The first prisoner transport sent to

the camp on September 23, 1944, consisted of 1,000 Jews: 900 women and 100 men. On October 9, 1944, a convoy of 250 Jewish women and 100 Jewish men arrived in Jesau.<sup>1</sup>

A fighter-bomber division of the Wehrmacht was stationed at the airfield. In February 1944, they began testing a fighter aircraft there, a rocket-powered Messerschmitt (Me) 163B interceptor designed by Willy Messerschmitt. A Russian prisoner-of-war (POW) camp was also set up in airfield buildings, followed by a camp for 100 prisoners brought from the penitentiary labor camp at Działdowo (Soldau) in December 1944.<sup>2</sup>

SS-Unterscharführer Ernst Stock was named camp commandant on September 21, 1944. He served in that post as long as the subcamp existed. On October 11, 1944, he was assigned the help of two SS women, Erna Böttcher and Anneliese Glaw;<sup>3</sup> 46 Luftwaffe soldiers served guard duty while the prisoners worked, and 6 other guards kept watch over the camp premises.

Women prisoners were outfitted for the trip with a coat, a sweater, a dress, underwear, a bandana used to cover the head, fresh stockings, socks, and wooden shoes.<sup>4</sup> Women prisoners from the first transport to Jesau confirm that conditions at camp were good at first. Jesau had its own prisoner kitchen, which was supplied by Stutthof, and so no one went hungry. The food was adequate: for instance, for breakfast they would receive a half a liter (half a quart) of oatmeal cooked in milk with some sugar. Every three weeks they were issued extra food, such as canned meat.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, as Dina Hercberg confirms in her account, selections were conducted at the camp every few weeks—not just among the sick but among healthy people who were avoiding work.

The prisoners were housed in barracks, and each had his or her own bunk and blanket. They began work at 6:00 A.M. They were put to work clearing woods, building roads, digging antitank trenches, and laying train rails. Sewing and shoemaker shops, where clothing and shoes were mended, were set up in camp in late autumn, where older and sick people worked.<sup>6</sup>

Although the prisoners had been outfitted well for the trip, their summer clothing proved to be inadequate when the autumn rainy season and chilly winds came, and their shoes also deteriorated quickly due to the muddy ground. According to Stock's report of October 27, 1944, there were 1,249 female prisoners and only 200 male prisoners living in camp at that time; thus, only 1 person had died or was shipped off. The problem of the lack of winter supplies applied to all Stutthof subcamps at the time. When Commandant Stock asked if the warehouse at the Stutthof main camp had winter clothing and footwear, the warehouse manager, SS-Unterscharführer Otto Knott, said that he had nothing but civilian coats and no shoes. Two weeks later the subcamp got some underwear, shirts, dresses, underclothing, gloves, foot wrappings, and leather shoes, as well as materials to mend clothing and shoes. The allotments did not fill all the shortages. A shipment of 500 pairs of women's shoes and 100 pairs of men's shoes arrived at Jesau on November 24, 1944.<sup>7</sup>

In late November 1944 the prisoners' situation got even worse. A report dated November 28, 1944, signed on behalf of the commandant by Anneliese Glaw, says that the clothing received in the last shipment (November 10, 1944) had only made up for the greatest shortages and was extremely inadequate in quantity. The biggest problem was the supply of wooden shoes. The shipment of 600 pairs of shoes in late November had not relieved the footwear shortage. The shoes had been delivered in poor condition, so that shortly thereafter the prisoners were unable to go out to work. The workers in the shoemaker shop labored day and night but could not keep up with the need for shoe repair, for which there was still a shortage of materials.

A Polish Jewish woman, Dora Hauptman, recalled that despite their hunger and the cold they were forced to do hard labor in light shoes and summer clothes. The guards often beat prisoners during work. They were issued rutabaga soup and a piece of bread for dinner. Under these conditions, many Jewish women died every day.<sup>8</sup>

The camp's evacuation began on January 21, 1945. The prisoner count report dated January 24, 1945, listed 1,086 prisoners, including 888 women and 198 men.<sup>9</sup> That was 264 people less than the early camp population, many of whom died in camp or had been hospitalized at the Stutthof hospital. Surviving hospital records do not contain any figures on the death rate at the Jesau subcamp. Additional prisoner transports probably were not sent to Jesau to replace the dead or the sick who had been moved to the Stutthof camp. The number of items of prisoner clothing ordered in late November 1944 corresponded with the number of prisoners then living in the camp, which suggests that no replacement prisoners were sent.

The columns of evacuated prisoners were herded on foot toward Königsberg (see Stutthof/Königsberg), escorted by Luftwaffe soldiers under Commandant Stock and the two SS women. In Königsberg, the prisoners were put in a factory bunker on the premises of the Steinfurt railroad car factory, together with prisoners from the Heiligenbeil and Seerappen subcamps as well as those who were put to work in Königsberg itself.<sup>10</sup> Their subsequent fates were similar to those of the Heiligenbeil prisoners (see Stutthof/Heiligenbeil).

**SOURCES** The following sources were used in writing this essay, in addition to those listed in "Stutthof Subcamp System:" AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Sonderbefehle, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Microfilm No. 215, copies of accounts from the collections of the AŽIH and YV in Jerusalem; Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Aerospace Engineering (The Netherlands), Me 163B airfields and maps, <http://dutlbcz.1r.tudelft.nl>; YVA, testimony of former Jewish prisoners from Stutthof concentration camp; S. Krakowski, "Massacre of Jewish Prisoners on the Samland Peninsula—Documents," *YVS* 24 (1994); S. Popiołek, "Obozowe święta w Jesau," *Tyg*

*Pł*, January 17, 2001; D. Vat Van Der, *Albert Speer. Życie i kłamstwa* (Warsaw: Philip Wilson, 1997).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 189–192, 207–208; Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung der Aussenarbeitslager Gerdaun, Schippenbeil, Jesau, Heiligenbeil und Seerappen, September 21, 1944; Kommandanturbefehle, No. 68 of October 9, 1944.
2. Delft University of Technology, Faculty of Aerospace Engineering (The Netherlands), Me 163B airfields and maps, from <http://dutlbcz.1r.tudelft.nl>.
3. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, p. 207, Kommandanturbefehle, No. 68 of October 9, 1944.
4. AMS, Microfilm No. 215, account of Bronisława Krakauer.
5. YVA, Catalog No. 03/2279, testimony of Dina Herberg.
6. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, Stock to Knott dated November 28, 1944.
7. Ibid.
8. S. Krakowski, "Massacre of Jewish Prisoners on the Samland Peninsula—Documents," *YVS* 24 (1994): 364–365.
9. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6.
10. AMS, Microfilm No. 215, testimony of Frida Gabrylewicz, Bronisława Krakauer, and Irena Redner.

## KÄSEMARK

The subcamp at Käsemark (Kiezmark), a town located 26 kilometers (16 miles) from Danzig, operated between October 21, 1939, and October 25, 1941.<sup>1</sup> The dates that prisoners began and ended their work on the Wagner farm are listed in prisoner files.<sup>2</sup> The detachment was probably initiated during a period of intense farmwork from 1939 to 1941. It was initially under the command of the civilian detention camp at Neufahrwasser, and after that subcamp was shut down, it fell under the Stutthof camp.

In Käsemark, near the pontoon bridge over the Vistula River, there was a place where prisoners were collected in early October 1939. German farmers, seeking to put them to work on their farms, gathered there to collect the prisoners. A former prisoner, Bruno Zwarra, recounts the following about this: "I was put in a group of prisoners who wanted to work on farms, and we were loaded up and taken to Gdańsk [Danzig]. In about fifteen minutes, we stopped in a long line on Burgstrasse [later Grodzka Ulica in Gdańsk], where we waited to be loaded onto a coastal steamer. . . . We approached the pontoon bridge outside of Käsemark, but that's not what interested us; rather, it was the long line of carts along the embankment on the Żuławy [West Prussia] side. The local farmers were waiting for us in a meadow by the river."<sup>3</sup> Besides the entries in prisoner records, no other information has been established as to how the detachment was organized, its size, period of operation, and casualties.

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted in writing this entry: AMS, Catalog No. I-III, prisoner personal files; *Gdańsk 1939. Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, Wybór i opracowanie Brunon Zwarra (Gdańsk, 1984).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49878, I-III-50013, files of prisoners Józef Wiorek and Ludwik Polak.

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-50244, files of prisoner Marian Kamiński; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 284.

3. *Gdańsk 1939. Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, Wybór i opracowanie Brunon Zwarra, (Gdańsk, 1984), pp. 42–43; explanations of B. Zwarra, pp. 585–586; see also the accounts of Wiesław Arleta, Antoni Leszczyński, and Mieczysław Leszczyński.

## KÖNIGSBERG

The subcamp at Königsberg (later Kaliningrad in Russia) was formed on August 19, 1944, pursuant to a special order that the Stutthof commandant issued a day earlier.<sup>1</sup> Some 500 Jewish prisoners were selected for the subcamp from transports that had come to Stutthof in early August from Kauen (Kaunas, Kovno) and Riga. The prisoners were transported from the landing at Stutthof by boat to the Schichau Werke in Königsberg. SS-Oberscharführer Alfred Tänzer was named camp commandant; upon his dismissal on September 6, 1944, he was replaced by SS-Oberscharführer Karl Böhm. The position changed hands again on October 4, 1944, when SS-Oberscharführer Fritz Weber took over from Böhm. He served in that post until the camp was disbanded and the prisoners were evacuated in late January 1945.<sup>2</sup>

Initially, 15 SS men from the 2nd SS-Guard Battalion were assigned to supervise the detachment. Later, the guard staff was increased to 18 SS men. Two prisoner doctors were picked for the transport. The order stated that proper medical care was to be provided by the local SS doctor and company doctor who were assigned the help of an orderly, SS-Oberschütze Rudolf Achs. The company kitchen was responsible for providing food for the prisoners.

The prisoners were hired out to Waggonfabrik Steinfurt Königsberg GmbH (the Steinfurt railroad car factory), which specialized in such things as constructing dual-axle second-class cars for the Prussian narrow-gauge railway lines. The company also manufactured locomotives. Narrow-gauge railways, such as the one in Treuburg, were equipped with these cars and locomotives. Prisoners were put to work at the Steinfurt railroad car factory building and repairing cars.<sup>3</sup> In addition to the factory, prisoners were also hired out to work at the Schichau-Werft (shipyard) in Königsberg.<sup>4</sup>

From the moment the subcamp started operating, the hard and dangerous labor and the shortages in the prisoners' supplies of basic gear, clothing, and shoes tended to use up their strength quickly. Although the order from headquarters had promised enough cleaning supplies, blankets, and other amenities, the subcamp's commandant struggled with great difficulty to maintain efficiency from the very start. Most prisoners were put to work as assistants, although professional qualifications for working in the factory were considered when prisoners were selected for the camp. Many of the prisoners concealed their true occupations; hoping to get out of camp, they counted on an improvement in their situations and the help of civilians. In his report of September 3, 1944, Commandant Tänzer stated that the majority of prisoners had no skills to work in specialist positions. The camp administration also abandoned the training of 28 prisoners who had initially been selected from the entire group. Since they were unaccustomed to the hard and dangerous jobs of operating machines, those prisoners would most likely suffer serious injuries on the job. For example, on August 25, 1944, a sheet-metal-cutting machine tore off three finger pads from a prisoner's right hand, which prevented him from working for six weeks.<sup>5</sup>

Letters to the clothing warehouse from October to December 1944 requested the urgent delivery of not only clothes and shoes but also hair clippers (which were requested twice to no avail) and tools to mend clothes and shoes (a shoemaker's last, thread, nails, wire brushes, thimbles, sewing yarn, and shoe tar, for instance). On November 9, 1944, the commandant reported the pressing need for delivery of 300 new pairs of shoes to replace irreparably worn footwear. The order was filled a week later, as confirmed by warehouse clothing manager SS-Unterscharführer Knott's initials. Subsequent correspondence shows that the camp made many more requests for additional supplies, to which it received in response mainly offers of materials and tools to mend clothing and footwear and, to a lesser extent, clothes. Among the exceptions was a delivery of gloves for the 470 prisoners living in the camp on December 18, 1944.<sup>6</sup>

Prisoners who were ill or extremely emaciated from labor were removed to the Stutthof main camp, the first transport of which left within one month of the subcamp's opening;<sup>7</sup> 50 men returned to the subcamp, and former Italian prisoner Aldo Coradello says that they did not even look like animals, let alone humans. He was left with the impression of randomly moving skeletons with unseeing eyes and legs dragging about the ground.<sup>8</sup>

The highest death rate in camp was recorded in November and December 1944. The incomplete records of the camp doctor's department and the camp administration confirm the deaths of over a dozen people by January 4, 1945. The most frequent causes of death were what was termed "an overall debilitation of the organism" and heart diseases.<sup>9</sup>

There were 462 prisoners living in camp on January 24, 1945.<sup>10</sup> The evacuation of all prisoners from Königsberg took place two days later, on January 26. Prior to evacuation, the



prisoners were concentrated in a factory bunker, which also held transports from the remaining five subcamps in East Prussia. In addition to the Steinfurt plant, they were also put in a twine factory and in barracks in the Kalthof section.<sup>11</sup> They were escorted toward Palmnicken (later Yantarny). Commandant Weber and the group of SS men from the subcamp at the Steinfurt factory were also in the columns' escort. The subsequent plight of the subcamp's prisoners was the same as that of the prisoners from the Heiligenbeil and Jesau camps (for details, see Stutthof/Heiligenbeil and Stutthof/Jesau).

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted in writing this essay: AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 417, records of criminal case against Józef Reiter and others; AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog Nos. I-IVH-5, I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Catalog No. I-VB-7, hospital (Krankenbau) records; ZdL-L, records of the investigation on Kurt Friedrichs of Palmnicken; YVA, testimony of former Jewish prisoners of the Stutthof concentration camp; D. Drywa, *Podbozy (Aussenarbeitslager) KL Stutthof dla więźniów narodowości żydowskiej* (in print; typescript at AMS).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 153–154, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenarbeitslagers Königsberg Pr.
2. AMS, Kommandanturbefehle, Nos. 60 and 67 of September 6 and October 5, 1944.
3. Archives of the Olecko Narrow-Gauge Railway, at [www.koleje.wm.olecko.pl](http://www.koleje.wm.olecko.pl).
4. Aldo Coradello's 1946 testimony indicates this (AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 417, p. 31), as does the fact that the transport docked at the Schichau shipyard landing.
5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-5, Arbeitsbericht v. 19.8.–2.9.1944 an die Kommandantur des KL Stutthof.
6. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 137–141.
7. Former Italian prisoner Aldo Coradello noted that fact in his camp recollections, which were used in the 1946 trial of the Stutthof camp murderers.
8. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 417, p. 31.
9. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IVH-5, I-VB-7.
10. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population.
11. ZdL-L, records of the investigation on Kurt Friedrichs of Palmnicken; copies at YVA, Catalog No. TR-10/1327.

## LAUENBURG [AKA SS- UNTERFÜHRERSCHULE LAUENBURG]

The Lauenburg (later Łębork) subcamp was formed on April 1, 1942. It was located on the premises of an SS noncommissioned officers' (NCOs) school and thus was also called SS-

Unterführerschule Lauenburg. Its formation was directly connected to a labor detachment of Buchenwald concentration camp prisoners that had existed in the same place since November 11, 1941. The detachment was probably disbanded around March 20, 1942, and the prisoners went back to Buchenwald. On March 23, 1942, another transport of 114 prisoners was sent from Buchenwald to Lauenburg. An order from the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) dated March 28, 1942, confirmed that effective April 1 the Buchenwald detachment was being disbanded and regrouped as a Stutthof subcamp with the same prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

Only in mid-April 1942, as Stutthof's administration was taking over from the Buchenwald camp, were the 114 prisoners, mostly Russians and Poles, listed in the Stutthof camp personnel files under the numbers 13161–13274. The entire transport had been registered under the date of April 14, 1942. (Researchers provide different dates for the subcamp's formation. Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz says it was established in the summer or autumn of 1944, while J. Matynia says autumn 1941. The others, such as M. Gliški, think that the Stutthof subcamp was formed when a group of prisoners came to Lauenburg [or rather their registration was transferred over to the Stutthof camp's records] and provide the wrong size and numeration for the transport.) Two dates should be distinguished in the detachment's operation: April 1, 1942, refers to the formal creation of a camp under the command of Stutthof concentration camp, while April 14, 1942, is the date that the same group of prisoners was registered in the camp's records.<sup>2</sup>

The position of camp or detachment leader changed hands often over the nearly three years of the subcamp's operation. When the position was unoccupied, a Blockführer appointed by the commandant fulfilled this role. The position of camp leader was filled in succession by SS-Rottenführer Herbert Korsch from an unspecified date in April to October 25, 1942; SS-Oberscharführer Gottfried Heering from October 25 through December 9, 1942; SS-Scharführer Kurt Zemke from December 10 to December 28, 1942; SS-Unterscharführer Leopold Wanninger from December 28, 1942, to March 10, 1943; SS-Unterscharführer Ewald Foth to March 20, 1943; then SS-Scharführer Johannes Meyer until July 31, 1943. SS-Unterscharführer Fritz Peters was director of the camp from August 1, 1943, to October 30, 1944. The last camp leader, SS-Oberscharführer Emil Dreher, was appointed to the position on November 30, 1944.

The detachment's population probably did not require additional guard forces. The number of prisoners, of whom there were 114 at the start, kept decreasing due to deaths or transports of the sick to the Stutthof hospital. The dead were removed to the crematorium at Stutthof or buried in common graves in the woods. There is a common grave of 28 deceased prisoners at the Łębork cemetery.

The constantly fluctuating prisoner population provides evidence of regular replacement transports, usually once or twice a year. One such transport arrived at Lauenburg in 1942.<sup>3</sup> On April 27, 1942, there were 72 people in the detachment; on

March 29, 1943, there were 24; on September 15, 1944, there were 55; and just before evacuation in late January 1945, there were 53 prisoners.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps young SS men from the NCO school were assigned to supervise them. Officials from the command staff also served as supervisors in the posts of work group supervisors and block leaders. For instance, up until December 9, 1942, SS-Scharführer Sebastian Schmidt was assigned as second Kommandoführer (G. Heering was the first Kommandoführer) to provide additional supervision.

The detachment was quartered in the basement of the SS NCO school; it was wet and cold because there were no windows. The prisoners were put to work expanding the school, doing building and renovating there, as well as building a shooting range nearby in the woods. They worked from dawn until night. Prisoners carried the bricks and wooden beams to build the shooting range five kilometers (three miles) on their backs. They pulled carts with sand along rails, hurried on by SS men stationed every 50 feet and by prisoner foremen. Among the most brutal SS men were Fritz Peters and Ewald Foth. The Gdańsk District Court sentenced both to death in 1947. The position of construction detachment leader was held by the German criminal prisoner Karl Kliefoth, later the camp elder and first overseer at Stutthof. He was tried by a federal court in Hamburg in 1950 but acquitted of all charges. German criminal prisoners served in supervisory jobs.<sup>5</sup>

Besides the brutal supervision and starvation food rations, there were also clothing and shoe shortages. The surviving portion of the subcamp leader's correspondence with the clothing warehouse is from the final months of 1944. The correspondence reported that the summer clothing had been worn out in mid-September 1944 and that there was also a shortage of winter clothes, underwear, and shoes. The commandant requested the urgent delivery of tools and materials to repair shoes, as they wore out quickly in the work in the woods and construction.<sup>6</sup>

On July 8, 1942, Zygmunt Pencherzewski, a Polish prisoner who had been put in Stutthof on June 27, 1942, successfully escaped the subcamp, to which he had been sent six days earlier.<sup>7</sup>

There were 53 persons living in the camp on January 24, 1945. Their later fate involved the plan to evacuate the prisoners from the central camp at Stutthof beginning on January 25 and 26, 1945. Approximately 11,000 prisoners were slated to be moved by foot march to Lauenburg, 140 kilometers (87 miles) from Stutthof.<sup>8</sup> Upon reaching Lauenburg, they were to be housed at the NCO school. That plan was never carried out because the school had already been occupied by the Wehrmacht (for soldiers' quarters and a field hospital). Several Reich Labor Service (RAD) camps were prepared for the prisoners, which they reached in early February 1945.<sup>9</sup>

J. Matynia states that the subcamp existed until Lauenburg was liberated on March 10, 1945, and the prisoners lived at the school until the end, getting the furnishings ready for evacuation. Other source materials indicate that the detachment was disbanded earlier.<sup>10</sup> Former prisoners who were living at evacuation camps near Lauenburg in February 1945 say

that a food distribution point for prisoners evacuated from Stutthof was set up at the school.<sup>11</sup>

**SOURCES** The secondary sources concerning Lauenburg start with its listing in the ITS catalogs *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 647; and ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 48, 286. Useful is J. Schodzińska and G. Przykucka, “Losy ewakuowanych więźniów KL Stutthof na terenie ziemi łęborskiej,” *BLHBH* 13 (September 2000): 18. On Lauenburg's foundation and place in the organization of the Stutthof camps, see Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Obóz koncentracyjny Stutthof* (Gdynia, 1970); M. Gliński, “Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945),” *StZeMu* 3 (1979); J. Grabowska, *Marsz śmierci. Ewakuacja pieszka więźniów KL Stutthof i jego podobozów 25 stycznia–3 maja 1945* (Gdańsk, 1992); J. Matynia, “Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof” (Ph.D. diss., Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna w Gdańsku, 1969); and M. Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999), esp. pp. 181, 252–253.

Primary sources for this subcamp begin with AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 75, records of criminal case against Kurt Dietrich and others; Catalog No. 76, records of criminal case against Theodor Meyer and others; Catalog No. 79, sentences of judgment; AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports (Bronisław Nogajski, Bolesław Przytuła); AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IB-1, I-IB-2, I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IB-5, Einsatzbefehl no. 3; Catalog No. I-IIIE-5, Einlieferungsbuch; Catalog No. I-IIIA-10, Arbeitseinsatz, Arbeitseinteilung für den 29 März 1943; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, camp population reports dated January 1945; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Catalog No. Z-V-20, recollections of T. Meyer; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Antoni Ryszkie-wicz, vol. 3). At BA-L, ZdL, there are reports of the examination of Stutthof concentration camp commandant P.W. Hoppe. ITS Arolsen holds a transport list of prisoners moved from Buchenwald concentration camp to Kommando Lauenburg dated March 23, 1942 (copy available at AMS). The West German investigation of this camp may be found in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: University Press Amsterdam, 1979), 8: 435–450.

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trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. ITS Arolsen, Namentliche Liste des Kommandos Lauenburg, 23.03.1942 (copy at AMS, Catalog No. Z-VI-2/13).

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIE-5, pp. 103–113, Einlieferungsbuch; Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Obóz koncentracyjny Stutthof* (Gdynia, 1970), p. 130; J. Matynia, “Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof” (Ph.D. diss., Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna w Gdańsku, 1969), p. 94; M. Gliński, “Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945),” *StZeMu* 3 (1979): 169.

3. AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports, testimony of Bolesław Przytuła (Wrocław, October 23, 1967).

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-A-10, Arbeitseinsatz, Arbeits-einteilung für den 29 März 1943; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, camp population report dated January 24, 1945; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 145, commandant Peters to Knott, G-Bekleidungskammer, KL Stutthof, dated September 15, 1944, on prisoner supplies.

5. AK-IPN, SO Gd, Catalog No. 75, records of criminal case against Kurt Dietrich and others; Catalog No. 76, records of criminal case against Theodor Meyer and others; Catalog No. 79, sentences of judgment; AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports, testimony of Bolesław Przytuła (Wrocław, October 23, 1967) and Bronisław Nogajski (Gdańsk, February 13, 1968); AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 3:184, account of Antoni Rzyżkiewicz; *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen* (Amsterdam: University Press Amsterdam, 1979), 8:435–450.

6. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7.

7. AMS, Catalog No. I-II-E-5, Einlieferungsbuch.

8. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-5, Einsatzbefehl no. 3; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population.

9. BA-L, ZdL, Dokumenten nr 14, 17, Vernehmungsprotokoll des Kommandanten Paul Werner Hoppe vor der Polish War Crimes Mission vom 22.08.1946; Bericht des Kommandanten P.W. Hoppe über die Evakuierung des Lagers Stutthof zu seiner Verteidigung vom 24.08.1946 (copies at AMS, Catalog No. Z-VIII-4); AMS, Catalog No. Z-V-20, recollections of T. Meyer, 1st Schutzhaftlagerführer of Stutthof concentration camp and evacuation director.

10. AK-IPD Gd, report of examination of witness Bolesław Przytuła (Wrocław, October 23, 1967).

11. AMS, affidavit of Michał Peczeluna, n.p.

## LIBAU (*HEERESGRUPPE NORD*)

The Libau subcamp for Jewish prisoners was formed in East Prussia in November 1944. The camp was set up for 330 Jews, men and women, in the town of Liepāja (German: Libau), attached to the Wehrmacht's Army Group North. The prisoners were put to work building fortifications. The first mention of the detachment's operation was in a hospital record of prisoners who had been inoculated for typhus on December 2, 1944. Next to the prisoners' names and numbers, the list provides such information as the work group names and the institutions and companies to which the prisoners were hired out.<sup>1</sup>

The December 2, 1944, record established that the subcamp began operating in November 1944. It lists prisoner Oskar Zirkmann as being prisoner foreman (Kapo) of the detachment. There are other references to the subcamp in camp population reports from late January 1945. There were 227 prisoners in camp on January 24, 1945, including 140 men and 87 women. The next report dated January 30, 1945, lists an increase to 327 female prisoners.

The last record confirmed by sources dated February 17, 1945, regarding sending the prisoners to the Stutthof camp, lists 307 Jewish women out of the detachment's population of

315. It is not known what happened to the Jewish men, who were still at the subcamp on January 24. Based on the surviving records, it cannot be determined if the difference of 100 persons was due to an error in the report (twice) or whether some prisoners had already returned to Stutthof, replaced by another group of Jewish women.<sup>2</sup>

The subcamp operated until February 17, 1945. On that day, 307 Jewish women were sent back to Stutthof; 8 women were left behind, having been excluded from the transport. It is assumed that they died in their final weeks at camp.

**SOURCES** The primary sources of information included AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog No. I-VB-15, list of prisoners inoculated against typhus dated December 2, 1944; D. Drywa, *Podobozy (Aus-senarbeitslager) KL Stutthof dla więźniów narodowości żydowskiej* (in print; typescript at AMS); M. Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-VB-15, list of prisoners inoculated against typhus, dated December 2, 1944.

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6.

## MÜGGENHAHL

A subcamp of Stutthof was created in the town of Müggenhahl (later Rokitnica in Gdańsk County) near Praust (later Pruszcz Gdański). Based on labor assignment entries in prisoner files, we can establish that it operated from October 21, 1939, to August 19, 1940.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners were hired out to several employers who owned farms in the area: Claassen, Dirksen,<sup>2</sup> and Voss. Notes made in the records do not provide any information on the type of work the prisoners did.

Another work detachment was instituted in the same place in July 1942. According to the testimony of a prisoner who was assigned to Müggenhahl, a group of approximately 20 people were sent from the Stutthof camp to do work for local farmers. Paul Schulz was one of them; and we know that a group of prisoners worked at that farm until the end of the war.<sup>3</sup> They were lodged in a barracks under the supervision of SS men from Stutthof. The prisoners were divided up among several farms, to which they went unescorted every day, returning to the camp in the evening. The detachment was supervised by one elderly SS man named Günter Paul (who is not listed in the partially surviving Stutthof concentration camp staff index). The employers provided the food for the prisoners.

**SOURCES** In addition to those sources mentioned in "Stutthof Subcamp System," the following were consulted in writing this entry: AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports of Antoni Janiewicz, Wrocław; AMS, Catalog No. I-III, prisoner files; *Einwohnerbuch der Danziger Landkreise 1927–1928*.



*Danziger Höhe. Danziger Niederung. Grosses Werder* (Danzig, 1927).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-41412, I-III-49961, I-III-50239, I-III-50241, files of prisoners Andrzej Budzisz, Józef Karczewski, Franciszek Malottka (or Malottko), and August Strongowski; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 288.

2. Actually Johannes Dircks. An estate owner by this name was listed in the Danzig Niederung County address book in 1927–1928. *Einwohnerbuch der Danziger Landkreise 1927–1928. Danziger Höhe. Danziger Niederung. Grosses Werder* (Danzig, 1927), 2:193.

3. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. II Ds. 76/64, report of examination of witness Antoni Janiewicz (Wrocław).

## NEUTEICH

From January to April 1942, 21 prisoners were put to work in Neuteich (later Nowy Staw), compressing hay and straw as well as loading and unloading compressed bales. The prisoners were taken to Neuteich by narrow-gauge railway, escorted by four SS men. Dinners for the detachment were brought in from Stutthof. When the detachment's work was completed and the subcamp was disbanded in late April 1942, the prisoners returned to Stutthof. No references have survived in camp records, except for the information on the detachment from the account of a prisoner who was sent there.<sup>1</sup>

**SOURCES** The following was consulted in writing this entry: AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, vol. 6, account of Józef Richert.

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trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTE

1. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 6:195, account of Józef Richert.

## PELPLIN

From May 15 to June 30, 1940, 24 prisoners were put to work in Pelplin, building a road on the premises of the closed Pelplin Theological Seminary near Tczew (Aussenkommando Pelplin).<sup>1</sup> The buildings had been adapted to become an Auxiliary Police School (Hilfspolizeischule der Ordnungspolizei). SS-Unterscharführer Leo Skierka was camp commandant until July 3. He changed his name to Schierer on June 3, 1941.<sup>2</sup>

The prisoners were quartered in one of the seminary buildings. They received their food, which was relatively

good in comparison to that of the main camp at Stutthof, from the police school kitchen. The prisoners' basic job was to build a macadamized road on the seminary premises. They packed a layer of small broken stones with a roller pulled by six—later two—prisoners.<sup>3</sup>

Three prisoners escaped from the detachment on the night of May 9, 1940. The search party sent out the next day produced no results. Four other prisoners whose beds were next to those of the escapees were arrested and interrogated by the police. They were accused of not having done anything to prevent the escape, of which they really knew nothing. They were given the death sentence, which was to be carried out that same evening. The fugitives were then caught, and one of them was shot to death. The fate of the two surviving prisoners is unknown.<sup>4</sup>

Besides Commandant Skierka, the prisoners were supervised by students at the police school. The Pelplin detachment was disbanded on June 30, 1940.<sup>5</sup>

**SOURCES** The following were consulted in writing this entry: AMS, Catalog No. I-III, prisoner files; Catalog No. I-IE, Stutthof concentration camp staff personnel files; Lasik, Stutthof ac; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Jan Gulczyński, vol. 14); M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-44292, files of prisoner Jan Gulczyński; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 14:108, account of Jan Gulczyński; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 289.

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-IE-1005, personnel files of SS man Leo Schierer-Skierka.

3. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 14:108, account of Jan Gulczyński.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-16264, files of prisoner Karol Viola; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 14:109; M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992): 123, 126.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-44292, files of prisoner Jan Gulczyński; Catalog No. I-IE-10005, personnel files of Leo Schierer-Skierka, letter of the commander of Hilfspolizeischule Pelplin to the Stutthof camp civilian prisoner camp headquarters dated July 3, 1940, in which he expresses his thanks for the prisoner labor done under the supervision of SS-Rottenführer Schierer-Skierka.

## PÖLITZ [AKA STETTIN]

The subcamp in Pölitz (later Police), near Stettin (later Szczecin), began operating on June 25, 1944.<sup>1</sup> It was one of several camps that housed labor for the city's two largest industrial plants: Hydrierwerke AG (of which IG Farbenindustrie AG

had a large share) and Norddeutsche Mineralölwerke GmbH, producers of synthetic gasoline and other products. A maximum of from 25,000 to 28,000 workers lived in all the surrounding camps, including concentration camp prisoners, prisoners of war (POWs), and forced laborers.<sup>2</sup>

According to the fragmentary source materials, the Hydrierwerke plant requested that the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) grant permission to put prisoners to work at the factory and house them in a labor camp it would build at its own expense.<sup>3</sup> The prisoners were initially housed in tents next to the Hagerwelle penal camp. Work was begun at the same time on the construction of a permanent camp in the woods near the train station at Messenthin (Mścicino). The prisoners arrived there in the autumn of 1944.

The number of people at the subcamp ranged from 800 in June 1944 to 2,800 in late August.<sup>4</sup> That number dropped to 2,364 between August and mid-December, and to 2,065 in April 1945. Besides Poles, Russians, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Germans, there were also Frenchmen, Yugoslavians, and Greeks at Pölitz.

SS-Oberscharführer Hans Kuhlmann was camp commandant from June 25 to August 5, 1944, followed for the short time until August 18, 1944, by SS-Hauptsturmführer Ernst Sette, who was followed by SS-Untersturmführer Kurt Volkmann.<sup>5</sup> Initially, the camp staff was made up of 30 SS men from Stutthof and a medical orderly. The number of SS men increased to 43 in August 1944 because the camp population had gone up. Wehrmacht soldiers and Ukrainians from auxiliary formations also served as supervisors, replacing Germans called into the army. There were 50 people on the camp staff on November 11, 1944.<sup>6</sup> There was also a system of supervisory prisoners including work group overseers (Vorarbeiters) and prisoner foremen (Kapos), mainly German criminals. The post of camp elder was held by Waclaw Kozłowski, a Pole who had been a barrack chief at Stutthof, where he proved to be one of the most brutal prisoner-functionaries. After the war, he was tried by the Gdańsk Special Criminal Court and sentenced to death.<sup>7</sup> Besides him, there were over 12 German criminal prisoners serving as prisoner foremen, 4 of whom stood out due to their brutality: Richard Friedrich, Bruno Neumann, Alfred Hölzel, and Gustaw Lüge. They died in the camp on December 18, 1944, after drinking ethyl alcohol.<sup>8</sup>

The permanent camp was made up of about 30 barracks. The sanitary conditions, housing, and supplies of food, blankets, clothing, and shoes in the camp were satisfactory only for a few weeks at the beginning. Later, 8 people shared one loaf of bread, and the prisoners were issued a watery soup made from weeds for dinner. The factory management would sporadically provide the camp with raw carrots and soup from the factory cafeteria. The exhausting labor, hunger, and abuse weakened the prisoners and contributed to the camp's high death rate.<sup>9</sup> The hospital records show 106 prisoner deaths at Pölitz from October to November 1944, but given the regular transfers of prisoners in and out, the true total must have been much higher.<sup>10</sup> Prisoners who were too weak to work

were often selected for transport to Stutthof, where many of them were killed with phenol injections, their death certificates falsified.

Dr. Bolesław Kaczyński served as camp doctor; he managed to save over a dozen prisoners despite the primitive conditions in the infirmary. Dr. Heidecke, nominally designated by the factory as doctor, was not interested in the prisoners and only signed death certificates.<sup>11</sup> The bodies were transported to the crematorium at a Stettin cemetery; later, when it was closed, they were buried in common graves in Messenthin.

Conditions deteriorated with the colder weather, as indicated by the commandant's reminders to the Stutthof supply warehouse to send warm clothing (jackets, ear protectors, gloves, etc.) and shoes for the prisoners and SS staff, as well as materials to mend them.<sup>12</sup> The prisoners experienced some improvement after the visit of Stutthof assistant commandant SS-Hauptsturmführer Theodor Meyer.

The prisoners were put to work expanding the synthetic gasoline factory in Pölitz for Hydrierwerke AG. Hydrierwerke AG worked with local construction companies to build the camp and factory, prepare the site, and so on. These companies included Grün & Bilfinger, Dyckerhoff & Widmann AG, Betonwerke Gossebaude, and Westermann & Co.<sup>13</sup>

The prisoners worked at construction work for 12 hours a day in groups of up to 100. They were also hired out for various jobs in Pölitz or subcontracted out to other city firms or businesses, which was common practice for IG Farbenindustrie and other big companies. Some of the most dangerous work was the construction of giant bunkers on factory premises or disarming unexploded bombs from the raids that had begun in July 1944. Prisoners in the bomb disposal detail left the factory premises mostly in groups of 6 to 8, escorted by one SS man and a German civilian bomb disposal expert. For disarming one bomb, a prisoner would get 10 Juno-brand cigarettes or a liter (four cups) of soup from the company kitchen. However, the work killed an estimated 80 percent of the prisoners who had to perform it.<sup>14</sup>

The records indicate the attempted escape of approximately 40 prisoners, mainly Russians, between July 1944 and February 1945, of whom fewer than half were successful; there were probably many more undocumented attempts as well.<sup>15</sup> Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz says that the greatest number of escapes from the entire camp was in Pölitz; he estimates that number at 20.<sup>16</sup>

The most spectacular event at Pölitz was an attempt to kill Kozłowski, the camp elder, in October 1944. The attempt failed because Kozłowski defended himself with a bayonet that he kept in his boot. Six of the attackers escaped through a hole in the wire, another was wounded in the attempt, and several others had to stay behind. When the accused did not come forward, the commandant selected nine prisoners at random from a transport from Warsaw and hanged them, along with the wounded man.<sup>17</sup>

The evacuation of prisoners westward began on April 17; there was no communication with the Stutthof camp, so Sachsenhausen assumed command over the prisoners when

they left Pölit; 184 prisoners were sent to Barth and Bergen-Belsen in two transports. Those who were the most ill and unable to march, approximately 300 people, were shot on April 25, 1945; the rest, approximately 400 prisoners, were sent toward Rostock.<sup>18</sup>

**SOURCES** Information on the Pölit subcamp can be found in the AK-IPN, SSK Gd, 422, akta sprawy karnej przeciwko Józefowi Reiterowi i innym, sentencje wyroków; and Konzentrationslager Stutthof, 74, pp. 1–2, lists of prisoner population at Pölit. Information on this subcamp can also be found in the AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Catalog No. I-VB-7, hospital (*Krankenbau*) records; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (vol. 4, Jan Nowicki). See APMO, Proces G. Maurera; and the APSz, Bauabteilung nr. 1488a: Entwässerung des KL Lagers in Messenthin zum Krieklands-Bach. Bau nr. 903. Additional information on the Pölit subcamp can be found in the following sources: ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979); Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Ruch oporu w hitlerowskich obozach koncentracyjnych 1933–1945* (Warsaw, 1979); Bogdan Frankiewicz, *Praca przymusowa na Pomorzu Zachodnim w latach drugiej wojny światowej* (Poznań, 1969); J. Grabowska, *Marsz śmierci: Ewakuacja piesza więźniów KL Stutthof i jego podobozów 25 stycznia–3 maja 1945* (Gdańsk, 1992); M.E. Jezierska, "Obozy w Policach," *BGKBZHwP* 15 (1965); Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992); J.L. Jurkiewicz, *Police: Filia KL Stutthof* (Szczecin, 1998) (typescript at AMS); J. Nowicki, "Od Stutthofu do Sandbostel," *PL*, no. 1 (1968); Marek Orski, *Italiani nel KL Stutthof: Włosi w KL Stutthof* (Gdańsk, 1996), and Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Police* (Warsaw, 1974). See also Hydrierwerke Pölit Aktiengesellschaft, [www.Politz.republika.pl](http://www.Politz.republika.pl).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenlagers Pölit b. Stettin.

2. See also M.E. Jezierska, "Obozy w Policach," *BGKBZHwP* 15 (1965): 66–84; Bogdan Frankiewicz, *Praca przymusowa na Pomorzu Zachodnim w latach drugiej wojny światowej* (Poznań, 1969), pp. 95–106; Hydrierwerke Pölit Aktiengesellschaft, [www.politz.republika.pl](http://www.politz.republika.pl).

3. APSz, Bauabteilung nr. 1488a: Entwässerung des KL Lagers in Messenthin zum Krieklands-Bach. Bau nr. 903.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 151–152, monthly reports of the subcamp's commandant for Verwaltung/KL Stutthof, dated July 31 and September 1, 1944, on the status of prisoner provisioning, numerical lists (*Verpflegungstärken*); AK-IPN, Konzentrationslager Stutthof, 74, pp. 1–2, lists of prisoner population at Pölit; APMO, Proces G. Maurera, 6:21, Dok. Nor. NI-1065, K. Sommer's testimony on prisoner labor at Police.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle, nr. 56 of August 24, 1944.

6. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 153, commandant K. Volkmann to Stutthof Verwaltung manager E. von. Bonin, dated November 11, 1944, on supplies for the subcamp.

7. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, 422, akta sprawy karnej przeciwko Józefowi Reiterowi i innym, sentencje wyroków.

8. Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Police* (Warsaw, 1974), pp. 59–60.

9. J. Nowicki, "Od Stutthofu do Sandbostel," *PL*, no. 1 (1968): 158–161; account of Czesław Gołowacz, in Bogdan Frankiewicz, *Praca przymusowa na Pomorzu Zachodnim w latach drugiej wojny światowej* (Poznań, 1969), pp. 105–106; M.E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu* no. 10 (1992): 88–90.

10. AMS, Catalog No. I-VB-7.

11. Account of Czesław Gołowacz, in Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof," p. 90.

12. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 151–155.

13. ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 289; Jezierska, "Obozy w Policach," p. 85.

14. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 4:131, account of Jan Nowicki; account of Czesław Gołowacz, in Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof," pp. 92–93; Nowicki, "Od Stutthofu do Sandbostel," p. 162.

15. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle, 1944; Catalog No. I-III, prisoner personal files; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof"; Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Police*, pp. 89–93.

16. Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Ruch oporu w hitlerowskich obozach koncentracyjnych 1933–1945* (Warsaw, 1979), p. 207.

17. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Police*, pp. 91–93.

18. Frankiewicz, *Praca przymusowa na Pomorzu Zachodnim*, pp. 105–107; J. Grabowska, *Marsz śmierci: Ewakuacja piesza więźniów KL Stutthof i jego podobozów 25 stycznia–3 maja* (Gdańsk, 1992), p. 48; Jezierska, "Obozy w Policach," p. 99.

## PRAUST (FLUGPLATZ)

The Praust subcamp began operating on July 7, 1944.<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to a special order issued on July 3, 1944, by camp headquarters, 500 Jewish women were sent to a military airfield (*Flugplatz*) located along the road to the village of Kochstedt (later Roszkowo) near Praust (Pruszcz Gdański) to do building and cleanup work; the camp's population grew by another 300 women on August 6, 1944. (There were four other Stutthof subcamps at Luftwaffe airfields, at Gerdauen, Heiligenbeil, Jesau, and Seerappen.)

SS-Hauptscharführer Otto Berger of headquarters staff was named camp commandant. The staff included seven SS men from an SS-Guard Battalion and seven from a Wehrmacht Training Battalion composed of soldiers unfit for duty at the front (on July 6, 1944, they were joined with the newly formed Stutthof concentration camp II SS-Guard Battalion,

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then moved to Guard Companies I–III on September 6, 1944, when the battalion was disbanded). In addition to these men, an SS man in charge of feeding the prisoners and a medical orderly were assigned to Praust. When the prisoner population increased, six more SS men and several SS women were assigned to the staff. Some of them had come with prisoner transports from other concentration camps; the others were recruited in an operation conducted by the Danzig employment agency. They underwent special training at the Stutthof camp, then were assigned to guard duty at the main camp or subcamps. One such recruitment operation in late October 1944 included 60 women, 7 of whom were later assigned to Praust.<sup>2</sup>

The Hungarian Jewish women selected for the original transport arrived at Stutthof from Auschwitz concentration camp on June 29, 1944; 40 of the weakest women were replaced just three weeks after the subcamp had been formed.<sup>3</sup> Another transport of 300 women was assigned to the subcamp on July 25, 1944. Two SS women, moved from the Kauen concentration camp, Emilie Macha and Anni Scharbert, arrived with them.<sup>4</sup> Jewish women from Czechoslovakia, Germany, and Austria were selected for the transport. They had previously been at the Terezin and Auschwitz II-Birkenau concentration camps.

The prisoners were quartered on airfield premises in three wooden barracks. Reveille was at 5:00 A.M. Every day started with roll call, which sometimes lasted 15 minutes and sometimes went as long as 60 minutes. All they were issued for breakfast was hot coffee-colored water. Some women ate a piece of bread they had saved from the day before. Then they left camp, going to work on leveling the terrain of sandy hills. They were watched at work by guards; several construction companies (e.g., Kieferling, Metzger & Co.) supervised the project. There were extreme differences in the way the SS men treated the women so that in a short time the prisoners could tell good days apart from bad. Some SS men gave them some freedom of movement during the day, even allowing them to pull turnips from the fields. Some of the SS men were work fanatics who did not let the women have the slightest moment's rest, while some were sadists who were not interested in work but in inflicting extra torture on the prisoners. Their favorite form of persecution was to drive the women into a ditch and aim their guns at them, ready to fire.<sup>5</sup>

The kitchen set up by the subcamp's management was in charge of food supplies for the staff and prisoners, assisted by the junior officer from Stutthof camp headquarters in charge of food supplies. The food consisted of starvation rations: some hot coffee, which was coffee in name only, for breakfast and supper; a piece of bread in the evening; and some soup with low-caloric content for lunch. When autumn came, problems began with supplying prisoners with warmer clothing and shoes, which deteriorated quickly. In mid-October 1944 the camp received such things as 800 pairs of wooden shoes and the same number of foot wrappings, 168 dresses, 500 pairs of long underwear, and 400 shirts. In late December 1944, Praust again received wooden shoes and foot wrappings,

which indicates the camp's great demand for those items and the rate at which they wore out.<sup>6</sup>

The subcamp numbered 800 women on January 24; thus, it reached its level of mid-August 1944. There is no surviving information on the death rate, so it cannot be determined what the size of the prisoner replacement transports were that arrived from the main camp.<sup>7</sup> Presumably the death rate was not too high, but there were considerably more sick people who later could not cope with the hardships of the evacuation march and were shot by the guards.

The camp was evacuated together with the subcamp at Russoschin beginning around February 11, 1945. Upon reaching the vicinity of Lauenburg (Łębork), pursuant to the Stutthof general evacuation plan, the prisoners were placed in two Reich Labor Service (RAD) camps at Gnewin (later Gniewino, Poland) and Burgsdorf (later Berezovka, Russia) as well as at a newly established camp in Kolkau (Kolkow). Upon liberating the Kolkau camp, the Russians found 600 exhausted women. According to the accounts of Norwegian prisoners liberated on March 11, 1945, at the nearby Jenzow estate, the owner of the Kolkau estate was shot when the Russians entered. The common grave of 143 people who had been shot in the back of the head was found in the camp after the war. The remains of the slaughtered victims were moved to the cemetery at Rybno.<sup>8</sup>

Transports of women prisoners evacuated from the Organisation Todt (OT) Elbing camp were put in the abandoned Praust airfield camp between late February and early March 1945. Several hundred starving and sick women were imprisoned here, many of them severely frostbitten. Every so often the sickest of them were taken away from the camp, presumably to be put to death. The camp was liberated on March 23, 1945.<sup>9</sup>

Only one of the SS women from the Praust camp staff stood trial in a Polish court after the war. Emilie Macha (née Wawoczny), who came from Silesia, was sentenced by the Kraków Criminal Court to 12 years in prison on November 16, 1948 (she died in prison on February 4, 1949). She had served as a camp guard at the Auschwitz, Lublin, Kauen, and Ravensbrück concentration camps before coming to Stutthof.<sup>10</sup>

**SOURCES** Primary documentation on the Praust subcamp include AK-IPN w Warszawie, SO Kr, 433, akta sprawy karnej przeciwko Emilie Macha; SSK Gd, 418, akta sprawy karnej przeciwko Wandzie Klaff. See also AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Sonderbefehle, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-III A-2, Arbeitseinsatz; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; and *Relacje i wspomnienia* (vol. 7, Miriam Ejszyszk, Sonia Szogan-Etkin; originals in YV). Additional information on this subcamp can be found in the following publications: ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979); H.

Lewis, *Time to Speak* (Belfast, 1998); Olaf R. Walle, *Norsk politi bak piggtråd* (Oslo, 1946); J. Matynia, *Na szlakach walki i męczeństwa województwa gdańskiego 1939–1945* (Gdynia, 1967); and Marek Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 117–120, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenarbeitslagers Praust.
2. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, 418, pp. 18–21, protokół przesłuchania oskarżonej Wandy Klaff; SO Kr, 433, p. 12, akta sprawy karnej przeciwko Emilie Macha, protokół przesłuchania Emilie Macha.
3. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIA-2.
4. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle, nr. 49, dated July 25, 1944.
5. AK-IPN, SO Kr, 433, p. 12, protokół przesłuchania Emilie Macha; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 290; H. Lewis, *Time to Speak* (Belfast, 1998), pp. 74, 77.
6. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 139–140.
7. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6.
8. Olaf R. Walle, *Norsk politi bak piggtråd* (Oslo, 1946), p. 309.
9. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 7:50, 100–101, testimonies of Miriam Ejszyszk and Sonia Szogan-Etkin (copies from YV).
10. AK-IPN, SO Kr, 433, pp. 175–176, 192–193, sentencja wyroku.

## PREUSSISCH STARGARD

The subcamp in Preussisch Stargard (prewar: Stargard; postwar: Starogard Gdański, both in Poland) was formed in March 1942. No archival materials on the camp's establishment have survived, and there is no accurate information about its organization and operation.<sup>1</sup>

The only source providing information on the detachment's operation is the testimony given during trial at Gdańsk District Court in 1947 by two SS men of the same rank, SS-Unterscharführer Gustav Eberle and Erich Jassen, who supervised the prisoners' work. Based on their testimony, we can establish the period in which the detachment operated, from March to at least October 1942. SS-Unterscharführer Gustav Eberle was sent to Preussisch Stargard in March 1942 with a group of 150 prisoners. The prisoners were hired out to a construction company (name unknown) to build a road between Preussisch Stargard and Gutowiec (possibly Schwarzwasser). The company provided housing and food for the subcamp's staff and prisoners. The camp was located in Preussisch Stargard. When they had completed their job in the Preussisch Stargard region, the prisoners were moved on

toward Czersk, where until October 1942 they continued building the road in the vicinity of Łąg (German: Königsried) and Gutowiec (German: Gutenwirt).<sup>2</sup>

SS-Unterscharführer Erich Jassen and six other SS men were assigned to the detachment in Preussisch Stargard in August 1942.<sup>3</sup> Both Eberle and Jassen were tried as defendants at the Gdańsk District Court in November 1947 and were sentenced to 10 years in prison.<sup>4</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Preussisch Stargard subcamp: AK-IPN, SO Gd, 85, akta sprawy karnej przeciwko N. Dirnbergerowi i innym; 86, sentencje wyroków; AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIE, SS staff personnel files; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979); M. Gliński, "Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945)," *StZeMu*, no. 3 (1979); and Marek Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTES

1. ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 290.
2. AMS, Catalog No. I-IE-165, personnel files of SS man Gustav Eberle; AK-IPN, SO Gd, 85, p. 119, testimony of SS-Unterscharführer Gustav Eberle at 1947 trial in Gdańsk.
3. AK-IPN, SO Gd, 85, p. 117, testimony of SS-Unterscharführer Erich Jassen at 1947 trial in Gdańsk.
4. AK-IPN, SO Gd, 86.

## PRÖBBERNAU

The subcamp at Pröbbernaue (later Przerbno) was formed near Stutthof for the construction of a dike on the Vistula Bay side of the peninsula. The first documented references to the detachment are from October 31, 1939. The camp commandant's report for the Danzig Gestapo on Polish prisoner Jan Hryniewicz contained information on his labor assignment at the Pröbbernaue subcamp from October 31 to December 15, 1939.

The camp's first commandant was named Lenau. No information on him has survived in the Stutthof camp staff personnel records. He was probably removed from his position for alcohol abuse and illegal dealings with the company building the dikes. He was less brutal toward the prisoners than the second commandant, SS-Unterscharführer Franz Mielenz, a man with sadistic tendencies. Mielenz served as commandant from September 24, 1940, to April 1941. The prisoners were supervised by SS men. The commandant and guard staff were quartered in a farm owner's building.

The prisoners who arrived in the first transport to Pröbbernau were initially housed in a township shed. The group was taken to its destination in trucks and probably numbered from one to several dozen prisoners. Their first job was to build the camp, to quickly put up a living-quarters barrack, farm buildings, and sanitary facilities, and to fence in the entire site with barbed wire. The camp was designed for a maximum of 200 to 300 prisoners. Approximately 200 people lived there on average. It was located on the leased part of a farm near the Evangelical cemetery. The first work erecting new levees was begun only upon the arrival of a group of approximately 200 or 300 prisoners from the Neufahrwasser camp in early November 1939; they were Poles arrested in Gdingen (later Gotenhafen, then Gdynia) in mid-September 1939.<sup>1</sup>

The prisoners were hired out to Deichverband des Kreises Elbing (the Elbląg company Dike Unit of Elbing District). Four engineering foremen from the company were in charge of the work. The work consisted of raising levees—carting in wheelbarrows of sand, building an embankment, and reinforcing it with sod. The prisoners who worked building the embankment stood waist deep in cold water. They were hurried on and beaten during work by the guards and especially by a foreman named Aleksy, who, according to a witness account, “always tried to outdo the guards in cruelty, with a bat, and a gnarly one at that, whether it be at morning roll call, or at work, beating prisoners himself and inciting the guards to beat them.”<sup>2</sup>

The living conditions in the camp, especially the food, were as poor as at the main camp. The prisoners slept directly on the floor, strewn with a fresh, clean layer of straw, which was covered by canvas. Each prisoner had one blanket. The company to which the prisoners were hired out provided food, but the daily food rations were inadequate, and moreover the kitchen's chief cheated the prisoners in their rations, selling scraps of food such as potato and rutabaga peels to the local farmer as feed. There was no infirmary in the camp. More serious illnesses were treated at the hospital in Stutthof.

Hungry prisoners searched on their own for other sources of sustenance, availing themselves of nearby farms. At first the local population tried to supplement the prisoners' diet by bringing food such as bread into the camp, but the commandant quickly prohibited that. For a while, the families of the Pröbbernau prisoners also provided them with food. In extreme instances, determined prisoners decided to escape. One attempt, in which two persons were involved, ended with the fugitives being caught. During a special roll call, those prisoners were shot before the eyes of the entire detachment.<sup>3</sup>

The work at Pröbbernau was halted with the coming of winter 1939, when the cold weather made the work impossible. Most of the prisoners were sent back to Stutthof on December 15, 1939.<sup>4</sup>

A group of approximately 50 prisoners was kept at Pröbbernau; they probably did additional work to protect the levee during the winter, under the supervision of company engineers. The detachment was reactivated on April 18, 1940, according to assignments to Pröbbernau noted in the prisoners'

files. Recruitment for the labor was done at the Stutthof camp. The 203 prisoners were sent on foot to Pröbbernau, about 18 kilometers (11 miles) from Stutthof. The group included many prisoners who were emaciated and unfit to do the hard physical labor of raising the levees. Many of them died at Pröbbernau. When the construction foreman complained, 50 of the weakest prisoners were sent back to Stutthof a day later. The population was replenished by additional prisoner transports sent to Pröbbernau from Stutthof as needed.<sup>5</sup>

The housing, sanitary, and food conditions were basically unchanged in this second season. The prisoners occupied the same barrack as in 1939. Sanitary conditions were better than those at the Stutthof camp. Although the toilets were still outside, on Sunday afternoons the prisoners were escorted to bathe in the sea about 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) from camp. The food most often consisted of unpeeled potatoes and codfish heads. Sometimes pea soup was issued. Because of the prevailing hunger, after a while the prisoners were allowed to receive food packages. By September 29, 1940, the camp population had dropped to 129 prisoners due to the high death rate. There was no infirmary at the camp, even though special space had been designated for a doctor's office, and there was a doctor, Julian Węgrzynowicz, in the detachment. The doctor had no other medical supplies at his disposal than aspirin and paper bandages. His job was just to determine what condition a patient was in, while the commandant made the treatment decisions. From time to time, the sickest people were sent to the hospital at Stutthof, and new prisoners were brought in.<sup>6</sup>

Several prisoners attempted to escape from the camp. The first attempt was in June 1940 by a prisoner named Moško. He was caught a few hours later because he had taken a bad escape route toward Kahlberg (later Łysica, then Krynica Morska), where he was beaten by SS men and escorted back to the camp. If the escape had been successful, 10 other prisoners were to be put to death. After another unsuccessful attempt by the same prisoner, the SS men tortured him to death. His body was buried outside the camp fence. In vain, 3 other prisoners attempted to get out of the camp; all the escapes ended badly for the fugitives. They were caught and sent back to Stutthof, where they were put to death publicly. The only escape that was successful was by camp carpenter Czesław Majewski on September 26, 1940, partly because he had taken a long time to plan his escape route carefully.<sup>7</sup>

The work at Pröbbernau ended on December 19, 1940, due to severe frost, just as the year before, and the basic group of prisoners was sent back to Stutthof, except for 50 persons moved directly to do similar labor at the Zeyerniederkampen subcamp.<sup>8</sup>

There is no archival information on whether the detachment was reactivated in subsequent years. However, the accounts and testimony of former prisoners show that groups of prisoners were sent to Pröbbernau, as well as to Zeyerniederkampen, Terranova (later Nowakowo) on the Nogat River to do the same work in 1944 and perhaps even earlier.<sup>9</sup> The work erecting the levee was continued by a youth camp



(*Jugendlager*), of which nothing else is known, located next to the Pröbbernau subcamp site.

**SOURCES** Primary sources on the Pröbbernau subcamp include AK-IPN Gd, protokoły przesłuchania świadków (Franciszek Adamczyk); and AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III, prisoner personal files; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (vol. 5, Jan Strycharczyk; vol. 6, Julian Węgrzynowicz; vol. 10, C. Majewski; vol. 12, Antoni Dulski).

Additional information on the Pröbbernau subcamp can be found in the following: ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979); *Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, selected and comp. Bruno Zwarra (Gdańsk, 1984); Czesław Majewski, *Ucieczka z piekła* (Kraków, 1983); Wacław Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, 2nd ed. (Bydgoszcz, 1984); M.E. Jezierska, “Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów,” *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992); M. Gliniński, “Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945),” *StZeMu*, no. 3 (1979); and Marek Orski, review of *Ucieczka z piekła*, by Czesław Majewski, *StZeMu*, no. 7 (1987).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTES

1. *Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, selected and comp. Brunon Zwarra (Gdańsk, 1984), account of Franciszek Mokwiński; AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 12: 242, account of Antoni Dulski; Wacław Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, 2nd ed. (Bydgoszcz, 1984), pp. 52–53.

2. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 12: 242, account of Antoni Dulski; see also Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, pp. 54–55.

3. Zwarra, *Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, accounts of Franciszek Mokwiński and Jadwiga Burau.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-49996, personal files of prisoner Jan Hryncewicz; Zwarra, *Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, account of Franciszek Mokwiński.

5. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-43070, I-III-49965, I-III-49971, personal files of prisoners Stanisław Dziuba, Piotr Hudim, and Kazimierz Pieniazkiewicz, notes on sending additional prisoner transports to Pröbbernau; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 5: 243, account of Jan Strycharczyk, and 10: 201–203, account of Czesław Majewski; Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, p. 52; Czesław Majewski, *Ucieczka z piekła* (Kraków, 1983), p. 103.

6. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49884, I-III-49887, I-III-49889, personal files of prisoners Leon Wiśniewski, Andrzej Szymczak, and Jan Jonczyk; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 5: 243–247, account of Jan Strycharczyk, 6: 230–232, account of Julian Węgrzynowicz, 10: 200, account of Czesław Majewski; Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, pp. 51–58; Majewski, *Ucieczka z piekła*, pp. 17, 103.

7. Majewski, *Ucieczka z piekła*, pp. 8–100; Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, pp. 58–62; M. E. Jezierska, “Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów,” *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992): 129.

8. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-43070, I-III-49889, personal files of prisoners Stanisław Dziuba and Jan Jonczyk; Lasik, Stutthof, ac., personnel files of SS-Unterscharführer Franz

Mielenz; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 12: 252, account of Antoni Dulski; Mitura, *Za drutami Stutthofu*, p. 62.

9. AK-IPN Gd, Kppp 43/72/M, report of examination of witness Franciszek Adamczyk; Majewski, *Ucieczka z piekła*, p. 103.

## ROSENBERG

The small detachment making up the Rosenberg subcamp, numbering a maximum of 10 prisoners, was formed in August 1944. Initially it numbered 9 persons, including 8 Danish prisoners.<sup>1</sup> A group of 20 English prisoners of war (POWs) also worked there.<sup>2</sup>

The prisoners were hired out to the owner of a sawmill in the town of Rosenberg (later Susz). SS-Unterscharführer Herbert Zills was director of the detachment and also supervised the work group of several people.<sup>3</sup> The detachment's population was 10 in early October 1944. The Stutthof camp administration provided food as well as clothing and shoes. The only document confirming that the detachment operated is a letter sent by Commandant Zills to the Stutthof main camp clothing warehouse, dated October 6, 1944, in which he reported that he was sending 10 jackets and 10 pairs of pants back to the warehouse because they were too small. Warehouse manager SS-Unterscharführer Willy Knott initialed the letter only a week later and sent the request to be filled on October 16, 1944, ordering that just 1 jacket and 1 pair of pants be delivered to the detachment.<sup>4</sup>

According to the accounts of the Danish prisoners, the camp was disbanded and the prisoners sent back to Stutthof on January 19, 1945. A list of prisoner populations in the subcamps, dated January 24, 1945, states that there were 10 prisoners in the detachment when it was evacuated.<sup>5</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources contain information on the Rosenberg subcamp: AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979); R. Andersen and H. Larsen, *Vi blev reddet denne gang* (Copenhagen, 1945); and J. Matynia, “Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof” (Ph. D. diss., Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna w Gdańsku, 1969).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerald Majka

## NOTES

1. R. Andersen and H. Larsen, *Vi blev reddet denne gang* (Copenhagen, 1945), p. 49.

2. Affidavit of Helge Kierulff, a prisoner of the subcamp, filed on December 9, 1965, at the Congress of the FIR in Budapest, in J. Matynia, “Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof” (Ph.D. diss., Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna w Gdańsku, 1969), pp. 118, 275.

3. AMS, Catalog No. I-IE-1366, Stutthof concentration camp staff personnel files; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 291.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 143, Zills to Knott, October 6, 1944.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6.

## RUSSOSCHIN [AKA REICHSBAHN RUSSOSCHIN]

The subcamp at Russoschin bei Praust (later Rusocin near Pruszcz Gdański) was formed on September 13, 1944.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners were hired out to work for the German National Railways (Deutsche Reichsbahn, DR)—thus, the camp was also called Reichsbahn Russoschin. Some 300 Jewish women were sent to Russoschin. They were mainly from Hungary and Germany. SS-Unterscharführer Willi Engler was the first camp commandant, followed by SS-Oberscharführer Konrad Döring on October 22, 1944.<sup>2</sup>

Seven SS women supervised the prisoners, as did an unknown number of railroad security guards (*Bahnschützen*). SS women candidates were employed at the German Railroad Administration in Danzig until October 1944, after which they were delegated from the Railroad Administration via the Danzig employment agency to the Stutthof concentration camp to train for guard duty at the parent camp or the subcamps for women. As railroad employees, they were subject to conscription into military duty.<sup>3</sup>

Training began at the beginning of August and lasted more or less until mid-November 1944. Most candidates were German. According to the 1945 testimony of prisoner Zofia Jackowska, 150 SS women candidates were trained over three months; 60 of them remained at the central camp, and the rest were sent to its subcamps.<sup>4</sup>

The training program involving the 7 SS women who were posted to Russoschin began on October 27, 1944, and lasted three weeks. A total of 60 women attended that course. According to the testimony of Elisabeth Becker and Wanda Klaff, who attended the training program, the first Schutzhaftlagerführer T. Meyer's main focus in the instruction was on the SS women's communications with the prisoners and on punishing the prisoners for any transgressions. They were strictly forbidden from talking at all with the prisoners outside of the line of duty, especially about the war. The SS women were also responsible for making sure the prisoners did not communicate with the civilian workers. Meyer ordered the SS women to force the prisoners to work using a system of punishments: taking away their food for any minor transgression and whipping them for more serious ones, with the whipping done in camp rather than at the workplace. Meyer reminded them several times of the formal ban on hitting prisoners, advising them to assign any women reluctant to work to cleanup jobs as punishment or send them to jail.<sup>5</sup>

The seven women assigned to Russoschin upon completing the training course were Anni Jack, Gertruda Schönhof, Marta Gryszewska, Maria Szerańska, Klara Reichert, Elfried Hansen, and Wanda Klaff. Out of that group, Klaff was tried by the Gdańsk Special Criminal Court in 1946 (sentenced to death; the sentence was carried out on July 4, 1946, at Stolzenberg hill in Gdańsk), while the Gdańsk District Court sentenced Hansen to 15 years in prison in 1947. Klaff came from a Polish family and was named Kalacińska, changing her name to Kalden when the second German National List (*Deutsche Volksliste*) group was admitted, then to Klaff, the name of her husband, a German.<sup>6</sup>

Approximately 50 women were put under the “care” of each SS woman. They were quartered in three wooden barracks located in the village (Gemeinschaftslager Russoschin bei Praust). The prisoners were escorted daily from the barracks to work at a railway junction or to replace sections of track. The women were hired out to work at the Reich Railways Repair Works (Reichsbahnausbesserungswerk, RAW) in Praust. They were also put to work building air-raid shelters.<sup>7</sup> The work required great physical fitness and strength. Pursuant to the commandant's order, before leaving for Russoschin, the women were supposed to be equipped with adequate clothing, shoes, a towel, and soap. Reichsbahn Direktion Danzig also promised to provide additional protective clothing and agreed to mend the clothes and shoes in its own workshops. As Klaff testified at her trial, in spite of that the women worked in light clothing that put them at the mercy of the weather and endured beatings by the SS women. The commandant's correspondence with the clothing warehouse at Stutthof also confirms the inadequate state of provisions, especially supplies of warm clothing (foot wrappings, gloves, and coats).<sup>8</sup>

The commandant and the Stutthof staff were in charge of food supplies for the prisoners. They set up a separate kitchen for prisoners, while the commandant and SS women were assigned food pursuant to military rationing. According to Klaff's testimony, reveille was at 4:00 A.M., followed by a long roll call and a march out to work at around 6:30 A.M. The women got their first meal only at noon: a plate of potato or rutabaga soup, sometimes cooked with horsemeat. After they got back from work at about 5:30 P.M. and went through roll call, they were issued supper, consisting of 1 liter (4.2 cups) of watery potato soup and a slice of bread of about 50 grams (1.8 ounces) with a bit of jam or margarine.<sup>9</sup>

The hunger, the cold, the lack of medical care, and the beatings during work were the main reasons for prisoner sicknesses and deaths. There were 289 women in camp on January 24, 1945.<sup>10</sup> Klaff's testimony at her 1946 trial shows that sick and weak Jewish women were sent to the hospital at Stutthof regularly. Selections were held every three weeks. An average of 12 persons were taken away to Stutthof after each selection. But the figures recorded during an examination conducted on June 18, 1945, by an investigative officer of the Gdańsk Province Public Security Agency were significantly higher: selections were held every two weeks, and from

15 to 20 Jewish women were sent to Stutthof following that selection.<sup>11</sup> There are no figures on the death rate in the camp, so it is not possible to establish how many deaths occurred on the camp premises and how many at the Stutthof hospital, where the sick women were sent. The commandant's correspondence with the Stutthof camp administration shows that the maximum working population of 300 prisoners was maintained through early January. This is evidenced by such things as the commandant's ordering the delivery of double sets of strips of material for prisoner numbers for prisoners to wear, a total of 600 items.<sup>12</sup>

The subcamp was disbanded around February 12, 1945. The evacuation of the subcamp at Praust had begun a day earlier. That camp's prisoners, 800 women, joined the group of 289 women evacuated from Russoschin. Together they began their march toward Lauenburg that same day. The camp population report dated February 13, 1945, removed the prisoner counts of the Praust and Russoschin camps from the Stutthof camp records, a total of 1,089 persons, who had been registered as evacuees the day before. Both camps' inmates shared the same fate. Klaff, who escorted the Jewish women to Lauenburg, testified that all 300 women [*sic*] reached their destination, but 60 percent of them died in evacuation camps due to disease, starvation, or lack of medical aid.<sup>13</sup>

**SOURCES** Secondary sources that mention this camp include "SS-Frauen-megery ze Stutthofu," *DB*, April 28, 1946; M. Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999). This subcamp is also mentioned in *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 265; and ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 291.

Primary sources for this camp may be found in AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 53, records of the criminal case against Elfriede Hansen; sygn. 81a, materials of preliminary investigation into the Stutthof camp collected by Judge Antoni Zachariasiewicz; SSK Gd, sygn. 418, records of criminal case against Wanda Klaff; AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, Sonderbefehle, Kommandanturbefehle; sygn. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; sygn. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, pp. 177–180, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung der Aussenarbeitslager Russoschin bei Praust und Bromberg-Ost, September 12, 1944.

2. AMS, sygn. I-IB-3, Sinderbefehle, Kommandanturbefehle, no. 71, October 22, 1944.

3. AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 53, records of criminal case against Elfriede Hansen; SSK Gd, sygn. 418, records of criminal case against Wanda Klaff; M. Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999), pp. 279–281.

4. AK-IPN, SO Gd, sygn. 81a, p. 68, records collected by Gdańsk District Court Judge Antoni Zachariasiewicz.

5. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, sygn. 418, pp. 19–21, 65, reports of examinations of defendants, 1946 testimony of Wanda Klaff and Elizabeth Becker, as well as that included in the stenographic record of the main trial (sygn. 423); and "SS-Frauen-megery ze Stutthofu," *DB*, April 28, 1946.

6. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, sygn. 418, pp. 16–18, report of examination of Wanda Klaff.

7. *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 265; and ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 291.

8. AMS, sygn. I-IVH-7, pp. 147, 149.

9. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, sygn. 418, pp. 21–22, W. Klaff's testimony; "SS-Frauen-megery ze Stutthofu."

10. AMS, sygn. I-IIIB-6.

11. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, sygn. 418, p. 23.

12. AMS, sygn. I-IVH-7, p. 118, Döring to Knott at the Bekleidungskammer, January 2, 1945.

13. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, sygn. 418, pp. 25–26, Wanda Klaff's 1945 testimony.

## SCHIPPENBEIL

The Schippenbeil subcamp was formed on September 21, 1944, along with four other identically organized camps at nearby Luftwaffe airfields (Gerdauen, Heiligenbeil, Jesau, and Seerappen). A day later the first transport of 1,000 Jewish prisoners, including 900 women and 100 men, was sent to Schippenbeil (later Sepopol).<sup>1</sup> That population increased when 250 more Jewish women were sent to Schippenbeil on October 9, 1944.<sup>2</sup> A maximum total of 1,250 people lived at the camp.

SS-Unterscharführer Kurt Weinert held the post of camp commander until October 17, followed on October 18 by SS-Hauptscharführer Erich Meissel.<sup>3</sup> Some 46 Luftwaffe soldiers (including some from General Andrei Vlasov's Ukrainian formations) made up the guard unit at the airfield, while 6 guards at fixed posts in the camp watched over the camp buildings; 2 SS women, Gertrud Reinhold and Anny-Lotte Schmidt, assigned to Schippenbeil on October 11, 1944, supervised the Jewish women.<sup>4</sup>

Most of the Jewish women were young and came from Hungary, Poland (the Łódź ghetto), and Austria. Housing, sanitary conditions, and food were no different from those at the other subcamps located at Luftwaffe airfields. The German Labor Front (DAF) kitchen on the airfield's premises provided all the prisoners' daily food. The Stutthof concentration camp administration supplied clothing and shoes. In early November 1944, the commander sent a request to Stutthof, saying the subcamp needed footwear and materials for mending clothes, as well as paint to stamp numbers and 1,100 strips of material to number prisoners. The order was filled a month later. Subsequent surviving reports from December



1944 concerned the urgent delivery of winter clothing to Schippenbeil (jackets, coats, pullovers, vests, woolen trousers, stockings). The deliveries were not made on time and did not contain everything that had been ordered, such as a package sent on December 22, 1944, that only contained mending materials but not ready-to-use clothing and shoes.<sup>5</sup>

These conditions have been confirmed by the local population, which sometimes happened to encounter the Jewish women from Stutthof concentration camp. Anna Krause of Stopki (Schtolzenfeld), approximately 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Schippenbeil, testified that she saw a group of about 200 Jewish women from Schippenbeil. The women were ragged and barefoot.<sup>6</sup> Another witness, a prisoner of war (POW) put to work in Schippenbeil, said that Jews (men—but could refer to women as well) were put to work at the station unloading cement: “the sight of them was terrible: they were more like corpses than living people; that’s how wasted and ragged they were.” He also confirmed the brutal attitude of the guards toward the women. One day he witnessed a Jewish woman being forcefully struck in the back by a gun butt for picking up some pomace from the ground; she fell down and could not get back up on her own.<sup>7</sup>

The prisoners worked at a large Luftwaffe military airfield. It had been built during the war as a base for Hitler’s quarters at Görlitz near Rastenburg. Intensive expansion work was begun on it in 1944. The project was supervised by the Organisation Todt (OT), which with the help of the DAF had set up numerous labor camps for the forced laborers and POWs in the region, including Polish and Russian POWs.<sup>8</sup>

The poor housing conditions, starvation food rations, and lack of adequate clothing contributed to the subcamp’s exceptionally high prisoner death rate (especially in January 1945, with over 50 percent of all the recorded deaths), which is confirmed by the surviving source materials. The death figures based on the death reports that the commander sent to Abteilung III, Arbeitseinsatz, refer to the period between November 4, 1944, and January 7, 1945, and list 62 people, all women.<sup>9</sup> There are additional death rate figures in the hospital death records in prisoner files; 7 other deaths were established based upon those records.<sup>10</sup>

In late October and early November 1944, the camp population dropped by 150 and totaled 1,100 (figures from a report by the subcamp’s commander) due to prisoners dying or being sent to the hospital at Stutthof. By January 24, 1945, the camp numbered only 947 prisoners, including 96 men and 851 women.<sup>11</sup> The difference between the population of September 1944 and that of late January 1945 was 303, the majority of which constituted prisoner deaths.

The dead were buried in the town or nearby in the woods, in such places as a common grave holding a dozen or so bodies exhumed after the war at what became Mostowa Ulica, where the SS command was located during the war.<sup>12</sup> Other accounts say that the SS shot Jewish women in the woods near the town in January just prior to evacuation. Their bodies were carted to a pile, doused with gasoline, and burned.<sup>13</sup> They were probably the victims of a selection associated with

the camp’s evacuation, in which the sick and weakest prisoners were put to death.

The camp evacuation began on the night of January 21–22, 1945, as the prisoners were sent toward Königsberg, and its history was analogous to that of the other Luftwaffe subcamps in East Prussia.<sup>14</sup>

**SOURCES** Information on this camp may be found in the following sources: AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports (Czesław Bartoszek, Anna Krause, Sępólno [*sic*—Sępopol]); AMS, sygn. [Catalog No.] I-IB-3, Sonderbefehle, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-III, prisoner files; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp’s population; Catalog No. I-IIID-8, reports on prisoner deaths at the subcamp; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Catalog No. I-VB-7, hospital (*Krankenbau*) records; *Ze znakiem «P»*. *Relacje i wspomnienia z robót przymusowych w Prusach Wschodnich w latach II wojny światowej*; G. Borowski, *Z kart historii Sępólna*, quoted from [www.sepopol.wim.pl](http://www.sepopol.wim.pl), the official Web site of the city and township of Sępopol.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 189–192, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung der Aussenarbeitslager Gerdauen, Schippenbeil, Jesau, Heiligenbeil, und Seerappen.

2. Ibid., p. 208, Kommandanturbefehle, no. 68, dated October 9, 1944.

3. Ibid., p. 219, no. 70, dated October 17, 1944.

4. Ibid., no. 68, dated October 11, 1944.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, pp. 154a–158.

6. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ds. 3/66, witness examination report (Sępólno [*sic*—Sępopol]).

7. Ibid., report of examination of witness Czesław Bartoszek (Sępólno [*sic*—Sępopol]).

8. Ibid.; G. Borowski, *Z kart historii Sępólna*, quoted from [www.sepopol.wim.pl](http://www.sepopol.wim.pl).

9. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IIID-8, I-VB-7.

10. These figures concern deaths registered between November 2 and January 6, 1944. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-23537, I-III-24663, I-III-24751, I-III-30884, I-III-53991, I-III-55452, I-III-55539, I-III-84860.

11. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6.

12. Borowski, *Z kart historii Sępólna*.

13. Account of forced laborer Łucja Krukowska, in *Ze znakiem «P»*. *Relacje i wspomnienia z robót przymusowych w Prusach Wschodnich w latach II wojny światowej*, Olsztyn 1985, pp. 160–161.

14. See Heiligenbeil, no. 33.

## SCHÖNWARLING

Two prisoner labor detachments were set up in the town of Schönwarling (later Skowarcz) in 1940–1941 and 1944. In both instances, the prisoners were hired out to the construction company of Aloysius Dehlert, Tief-, u. Strassenbau of Danzig, which operated one or more gravel pits in Schönwarling.

A detachment was established for the first time in 1940. According to the account of Jan Gdaniec, a Polish prisoner from Danzig, approximately 50 Poles were sent to Schönwarling from the Stutthof camp and probably the Danzig-Matzkau camp in May 1940. They were put to work in two gravel pits. The prisoners were quartered with a local farmer. Two SS men supervised them. Gdaniec was moved to Danzig-Matzkau in January 1941, then to the Stutthof camp, and from there to Sachsenhausen concentration camp (see Stutthof/Danzig-Matzkau and Sachsenhausen).<sup>1</sup> The detachment probably continued to operate on a smaller scale. Another group of prisoners was sent to Schönwarling from the Grenzdorf and Stutthof camps between February 2 and June 11, 1941.<sup>2</sup> The subsidiary was still operating in the summer of 1941, as confirmed by staff member Otto Arnold at his 1947 trial in Toruń.<sup>3</sup>

Another subsidiary with 15 prisoners (Aussenkommando der Bauleitung in Schönwarling) was formed in Schönwarling on November 7, 1943, at the Dehlert company gravel pit. There is no accurate information available on how the camp was organized, the members of the guard staff, or the prisoners' living conditions. The company was in charge of providing housing and food. The detachment existed until late August 1944 and mined the gravel the company needed in its business. The first prisoner to escape from the detachment was Aleksander Skrzypczyk on November 28, 1943. After an investigation held two days later, the fugitive was captured in Gdynia and reincarcerated at the camp on August 9, 1944. No information is available on Skrzypczyk's punishment or eventual fate.<sup>4</sup>

An order by headquarters dated October 17, 1944, states that five more prisoners escaped from Schönwarling on August 24, 1944. They were not caught after two days of searching. The commander punished SS-Rottenführer Paul Wolff with three weeks of close arrest "because he allowed five prisoners to escape from the external construction detachment facilities at Schönwarling the night of August 24, 1944, and they ran away [from camp]."<sup>5</sup>

The detachment was disbanded as a consequence of the escape and the other prisoners were returned to the Stutthof camp. According to the organizers of the escape, it occurred the night of August 21–22 and was only reported to the camp two days later as occurring on the later date.<sup>6</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted in writing this entry, in addition to those used in "Stutthof Subcamp System": AK-IPN, SOT, Catalog No. 88, records of criminal case against Otto Arnold; AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IB2, I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-III-, prisoner personal files; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Jerzy Piotrowski, vol. 24; Bolesław Sugier, vol. 26); *Gdańsk 1939. Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, selected and comp. Bruno Zwarra, (Gdańsk, 1984); M. E. Jezierska, "Ucieczki z obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof na tle dokumentów," *StZeMu*, no. 10 (1992).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. *Gdańsk 1939. Wspomnienia Polaków-Gdańszczan*, selected and comp. Bruno Zwarra (Gdańsk, 1984), p. 162.

2. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49884, I-III-50042, I-III-50116, I-III-50244, personal files of prisoners Leon Wiśniewski, Eugeniusz Nowicki, Stanisław Lenard, and Marian Kamiński; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 293.

3. AK-IPN, SOT, Catalog No. 88, pp. 18–19, report of examination of O. Arnold.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-13960, personal files of prisoner Aleksander Skrzypczyk.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-2, p. 10, Kommandanturbefehle, no. 79, dated November 6, 1943; Catalog No. I-IB-3, p. 312, Kommandanturbefehle, no. 70, dated October 17, 1944.

6. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 24: 100–111, account of Jerzy Piotrowski; 26: 232–260, account of Bolesław Sugier.

## SEERAPPEN

One of the five subcamps formed at the Luftwaffe airfields in East Prussia was set up in the town of Seerappen (later Lyub-lino in Russia). The four other Stutthof subcamps at Luftwaffe airfields were Gerdauen, Heiligenbeil, Jesau, and Schippenbeil. The Seerappen airfield was the Luftwaffe's main operational base for air attacks against the USSR's northern regions. The subcamp began operating upon the arrival of the first transport of 1,000 prisoners, composed of 900 women and 100 men, on September 21, 1944. Another transport of 200 Jewish women was sent on October 9, 1944.<sup>1</sup> These prisoners, who were Jews from the Łódź and Wilna (Vilnius) ghettos, Hungary, and Slovakia, came to Stutthof from the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp.<sup>2</sup>

SS-Unterscharführer Kurt Dietrich was the camp's commandant initially, followed by SS-Oberscharführer Hans Kauffeldt on October 17, 1944. Some 46 Luftwaffe soldiers supervised the prisoners as they worked at the airfield, while 6 guards from the airfield staff watched over them in camp, joined by 2 SS women from the Stutthof camp, Charlotte Fregin and Gerda Kunath, on October 11, 1944.<sup>3</sup>

The prisoners were put to work on construction projects supervised by the Organisation Todt (OT), building roads and digging antiaircraft trenches, in the airfield area. Work lasted between 10 and 12 hours a day regardless of the weather.<sup>4</sup> The conditions in the camp can be described, based on the partially surviving correspondence on prisoner provisioning between the commandant and the Stutthof camp administration. The correspondence confirms the disastrously low supply of work clothes and winter attire for the prisoners and that the detachment was generally unprepared to go to Seerappen.<sup>5</sup>

The first reports came to Stutthof as early as October 9, 1944. Seerappen's commandant requested the urgent delivery of primarily materials to mend clothes and shoes—hemp

twine, thread, and cobbler's wax. In his report of October 26, 1944, he requested the delivery of warm winter clothing, underwear, and more tools and materials for mending clothes. The number of female prisoners stayed the same until mid-November 1944, as confirmed by the number of clothing articles ordered (1,100 pairs of gloves and stockings).<sup>6</sup>

Subsequent reports dating from December 1944 and January 1945 requested mending materials, since the central warehouses could not provide new or used clothing or footwear. Orders of clothing and shoes were filled in smaller amounts, and some items such as men's socks and women's stockings were not filled at all. Out of the 1,950 items or pairs of clothing and shoes the commandant had ordered in his letter of January 11, 1945, not quite 1,100 were sent, including just 50 pairs of shoes instead of 500.

Under these conditions, the camp's population gradually dropped, reaching 1,009 prisoners (925 women and 84 men) just before the evacuation, which began on January 20, 1945.<sup>7</sup> The difference of 91 prisoners since late October 1944 was accounted for by fatalities or sick prisoners sent to the hospital at Stutthof. No figures on deaths at the subcamp and no information on transports sent to Stutthof are available. The food in camp was prepared by a kitchen set up by the subcamp's management; medical care was provided by a prisoner doctor.

The camp's evacuation to Königsberg (see Stutthof/Königsberg) and then to Palmnicken resulted in numerous casualties. It is not known how large a group from Seerappen survived the massacre on the beach in Palmnicken (see Stutthof/Heiligenbeil).

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted in writing this entry, in addition to those sources that are mentioned in the "Stutthof Subcamp System" entry: AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Sonderbefehl, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population, January 1945; Catalog Nos. I-IVH-5, I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; AŽIH, witness examination reports of Fryda Gabrylewicz.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 189–192, 208, Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung der Aussenarbeitslager Gerdauen, Schippenbeil, Jesau, Heiligenbeil und Seerappen, September 21, 1944; Kommandanturbefehle, no. 68, dated October 9, 1944.

2. AŽIH, Catalog No. 1150, report of examination of witness Fryda Gabrylewicz (AMS, microfilm 215).

3. AMS, Kommandanturbefehle, no. 68, dated October 9, 1944.

4. AŽIH, Catalog No. 1150, report of examination of witness Fryda Gabrylewicz (AMS, microfilm 215).

5. AŽIH, Catalog No. I-IVH-7.

6. Ibid., p. 153, Kauffeldt to Verwaltung KL Stutthof, dated October 26, 1944; Catalog No. I-IVH-5, p. 140, Kauffeldt to Verwaltung KL Stutthof, dated November 11, 1944.

7. AŽIH, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6.

## STEEGEN

Female and male prisoners, ranging in number from a handful to 30, were hired out for woodcutting to the Oberforstamt Steegen or Oberförsterei Steegen (Steegen Forest Management Agency) in October 1942. On average, there were approximately 14 people in each detachment. The camp administration earned 1,530 Reichsmark (RM) for their labor.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners were probably quartered in Steegen (later Stegna) in barracks belonging to the agency.

Prisoners continued to be hired out for woodcutting on Oberforstamt Steegen lands in 1943. A work allocation (*Arbeitseinsatz*) report dated May 16, 1943, lists a female woodcutting detachment scheduled for the next day.<sup>2</sup> There are no other records on the subject except for notes in the registers of changes in the barracks.

In the autumn of 1944, 30 Norwegian policemen were put to work in a group called Forsterei I, logging trees in the Steegen forest. A Forsterei II group was put to work hauling tree trunks into the Vistula River. The wood was to be used to build bunkers and trenches on the Eastern Front, but it never reached its destination due to shipping problems and military developments—that is, the swift progress of the Russian offensive.<sup>3</sup>

A much smaller subcamp began operating in Steegen for the first time in September and October 1942. The prisoners were hired out to Unterdeichverband (Dike Subunit) Steegen, which did such work as raising and reinforcing levees in the Steegen area. The company was a division of Deichverband des Kreises Elbing (Dike Unit of Elbing District) and had previously put prisoners to work raising and maintaining levees along the Vistula Bay and Nogat River. The Unterdeichverband detachment in Steegen was composed of about eight prisoners.<sup>4</sup>

A group of four to six prisoners were put to work again in June and July of 1943, then again in September. The levee reinforcement was seasonal work, and it resumed every year under a special contract with the Stutthof camp headquarters. Prisoners were put to work as helpers, for which the camp administration was paid 4 RM per day for each prisoner's work. The camp administration received 1,024 RM in 1943 for 256 man-hours of labor.<sup>5</sup>

The detachment was reactivated in August 1944.

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted: AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IIIB-1-2-3-4-5, Veränderungsbücher; Catalog No. I-IVB-9, list of camp receivables for prisoner labor; O.R. Walle, *Norsk politi bak piggrat* (Oslo, 1946).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-2, Veränderungsbücher, Veränderungen im Block II; Catalog No. I-IVB-9, list of camp receivables for prisoner labor; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945). Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie andere Haftstätten unter*



*dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und deutsch besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1979), p. 294.

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-III A-7, pp. 197–198.

3. O.R. Walle, *Norsk politi bak piggetrad* (Oslo, 1946), pp. 177–178.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-VB-2, *Veränderungsbücher, Veränderungen im Block II*.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVB-9, list of camp receivables for prisoner labor; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten*, p. 294.

## STOLP

The subcamp at Stolp (later Słupsk) was formed pursuant to a special order by the commandant of Stutthof concentration camp dated August 26, 1944.<sup>1</sup> Prisoners were hired out to the Reich Railway Repair Works in Stolp in Pomerania province. The Stolp repair shops were a division of the works in the German town of Eberswalde. The Germans sent 621 Jewish prisoners to Stolp, 239 women and 382 men. They were mainly from Estonia and Lithuania, but some were from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Germany. One Polish doctor, Lech Duszyński, was also included in the transport.

Another prisoner transport was sent on October 28, 1944, with 20 Jewish boys from the Łódź ghetto who were supposed to learn metalworking in Stolp. They were put in the Stolp subcamp under an order of Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) Chief Richard Glücks, dated October 17, 1944.<sup>2</sup>

SS-Hauptscharführer Julius Sakowski became camp commandant. Railroad security personnel served guard duty during work and in the prisoner housing camp. SS woman Margarete Ritscher was assigned to supervise the women. Pursuant to the commandant's order, the prisoners were to be equipped for the trip with new clothing and shoes, as well as towels, soap, table utensils, and spoons. The railroad administration agreed to issue protective clothing with a red cross for dirty work.

The men and boys were put to work in the railroad shops, and the women worked at modernizing and repairing the railroad tracks, as well as digging antitank ditches outside town. The group of men sent to Stolp consisted predominantly of tradesmen who were specially brought in on August 9, 1944, in a transport of 400 people from the Kaiserwald concentration camp near Riga, where they had worked at rolling stock repairs. Some of them were put to work at the subcamp in Königsberg (see Stutthof/Königsberg).<sup>3</sup> In Stolp, they labored chiefly in the car shop and repairing rolling stock.

The labor that the women did was considerably harder; they cleaned the shops, repaired the tracks, and dug fortification trenches. They were often forced to carry large, heavy pieces. The Jewish women were abused while doing this work; they were beaten for no reason. Forced to stand in the open during hours-long roll calls, arbitrary beatings, and hunger also tormented them. The men in skilled-worker positions at the railroad shops were better protected from persecution by SS men, but their work exposed them to the risk of physical injuries because work safety rules were not observed.<sup>4</sup>

The prisoners were housed in railroad buildings: the men in the car shop, where they slept on quadruple-decker bunks; the women, in the gymnasium. The railroad provided food; a special group of prisoners prepared meals. The food was extremely inadequate; the only food that prisoners ate, besides a daily bowl of soup, was a loaf of bread shared among several people. Dr. Duszyński provided medical care until he left to fill the same position at a Gotenhafen (Gdynia) subcamp on October 14, 1944; he was replaced by a German-Jewish surgeon, Dr. Gaspari.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the orders by Stutthof's commandant to supply prisoners with adequate clothing and shoes before they left for Stolp, their situation was not good at all. Only a small group of prisoners received a change of underwear in August 1944; 100 people needed their wooden shoes replaced immediately; the rest had shoes that were urgently in need of repair. In his report for August 26 to September 18, 1944, Commandant Sakowski requested the delivery of clothing and footwear, plus materials to mend them, as well as towels.<sup>6</sup> Notes made on the forms show that the orders were only partially filled.

On September 4, 1944, the camp was visited by SS-Hauptsturmführer Paul Ehle from headquarters staff, commander of two guard companies, the 2nd and the 3rd. No report of the inspection has survived, however. The reason for the inspection was the inadequate state of prisoner clothing and shoe supplies. Footwear was a serious problem, especially for those prisoners who worked at earthmoving, because of the moisture and clay. Many prisoners' shoes were worn out after just a few weeks of work. Without waiting for a late shipment from the Stutthof camp, the company's headquarters in Eberswalde bought 100 pairs of shoes for 600 Reichsmark (RM), charging the amount to the Stutthof camp administration.<sup>7</sup>

In his next report dated October 14, 1944, Commandant Sakowski ordered the delivery of winter clothing and towels for a third of the prisoners, as well as one set of underwear for each, as underwear wore out quickly due to the hard labor. Sakowski's statistics on the subcamp show that the population dropped by two at that time: one Jewish woman died, and Dr. Duszyński was assigned to a subcamp in Gotenhafen.<sup>8</sup>

Following October 27, 1944, when 40 boys aged 10 and 11 were sent to Stolp from the Łódź ghetto, the camp population rose to 659, including 238 women and 381 men. The older prisoners took the boys under their care; for instance, each prisoner foreman took care of a boy, providing him with extra food if possible. Those among the boys who already knew a bit about metalworking made usable metal items, such as penknives, rings, necklaces, and pendants. They then sold them for pieces of bread to the camp's prisoners to supplement the regular camp rations.<sup>9</sup>

One public execution took place in the camp in late 1944. According to Chaim Kozieniecki, the prisoners had been accused of stealing tobacco products from railway cars. An all-day roll call was held in the falling snow, and traces of tobacco were found on 5 prisoners, who were hanged the next day.

with the entire camp present.<sup>10</sup> Other sources state that between 8 and 10 prisoners were hanged, while the real perpetrators (who stole food packages and tobacco) were actually German railroad employees who crashed railway cars in order to rob them.

There were 640 prisoners living in camp on January 24, 1945, including 402 men and 238 women.<sup>11</sup> That figure does not allow for the prisoners who had been hanged; presumably the report on the matter did not reach the Stutthof camp in time. There were a total of 642 prisoners who had been sent to the Stolp subcamp throughout its operation, including 1 replacement for a Jewish woman who had died in camp.

In January and February 1945, prisoners from the camp were put to work in jobs associated with the construction of antitank ditches in the town. The camp's evacuation began in late February 1945. The columns of prisoners were sent to the empty camp in Danzig-Burggraben (in the town of Koko-szki), then to the camp in Stutthof. Their evacuation continued by sea in April 1945.<sup>12</sup>

**SOURCES** The following sources were consulted in writing this essay, including those sources mentioned in the entry for "Stutthof Subcamp System." AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, *Sonderbefehle, Kommandanturbefehle*; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; Catalog Nos. I-IVH-5, I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Chaim Kozenicki [*sic* Kozenicki]); O.M. Pickholz-Barnitsch, "Więźniowie żydowscy w KL Stutthof," *RaHasb* 3 (1964); AI, record of the account of Lech Duszyński, (subcamp at Stolp); D. Drywa, *Podbozy (Aussenarbeitslager) KL Stutthof dla więźniów narodowości żydowskiej* (in print; typescript at AMS); J. Matynia, "Filie obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof" (Ph.D. diss., Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna w Gdańsku, 1969); M. Orski, *Eksterminacja Żydów przez pracę w KL Stutthof, w obozie macierzystym i w podobozach*. International Session Materials: *Losy Żydów w regionie nadbałtyckim 1939–1945*, (Sztutowo, 1994); Z. Szultka, "Jeszcze o podobozie KL Stutthof w Słupsku," *ZapKos* 3 (1968); T. Wolski, "Podobóz «Aussenkommando Stolp» w Słupsku," in *Zbrodnie hitlerowskie na ziemi koszalińskiej w latach 1939–1945* (Koszalin, 1968); official Web site of the city of Słupsk, at [www.slupsk.pl/Historia](http://www.slupsk.pl/Historia).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 163–164, *Sonderbefehl über die Einrichtung des Aussenarbeitslager Stolp*, August 25, 1944.

2. Ibid., p. 230, *Kommandanturbefehle*, no. 72, dated October 27, 1944; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (recollections of Chaim Kozenicki, typescript, no catalog no.).

3. O.M. Pickholz-Barnitsch, "Więźniowie żydowscy w KL Stutthof," *RaHasb* (1964) (in AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 3: 150).

4. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, recollections of Chaim Kozenicki.

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-VB-1, *Namensverzeichnis der im Häftlingskrankenbau beschäftigten Aerzte und Pfleger*, Stutthof, October 15, 1944; AI, record of the account of Lech Duszyński (subcamp at Słupsk).

6. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 179.

7. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-5, pp. 87, 111, 113, *Reichsbahn Ausbesserungswerk Eberswalde, Werkabt. Stolp do Kommandantur des Konzentrationslagers Stutthof*, dated October 5 and 23, 1944.

8. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 180; and Catalog No. I-IVH-5, p. 119, *I Schutzhaftlagerführer to Verwaltung KL Stutthof*, dated October 27, 1944, collective report on supplies of clothing and shoes for the subcamp; AI, record of the account of Lech Duszyński (subcamp at Słupsk).

9. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, recollections of Chaim Kozenicki.

10. Ibid.

11. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population.

12. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, recollections of Chaim Kozenicki; letter, Ahron Zavadsky to the Stutthof Museum, January 17, 1994.

## THORN (OT) (WITH SUBCOMMANDS)

### [AKA BAUKOMMANDO "WEICHSEL"]

Construction detachment Baukommando "Weichsel" was a complex of camps under the overall supervision of the Organisation Todt (OT) office in Thorn (Toruń). The commandant of Stutthof formed the new subcamp on August 24, 1944, in reaction to a request from the OT, which needed workers for a series of construction projects—mostly military—along the Vistula River.<sup>1</sup> The subcamp's management was located at the Botten (Bocien) estate on the outskirts of Kulmsee (Chełmża).

SS-Hauptsturmführer Paul Tschesny held the post of overall camp commandant from August 24 to November 24, 1944, followed by SS-Hauptscharführer Wilhelm Totzke. SS men from the SS-Wacheinheit Lebrechtsdorf (Potulice) unit—140 in all—made up the guard staff. In addition, several officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) were assigned from the command staff at Stutthof to direct the subordinate detachments. It is known that SS-Hauptsturmführer Hans Jacobi and his successor SS-Sturmscharführer Wilhelm Anton headed the camps at Argenau (Gniewkowo) and then at Korben (Chorobie) between September 6 and October 5, 1944. SS-Oberscharführer Willi Tysarzik and SS-Oberscharführer Alfred Meyer assisted Tschesny in setting up the complex.<sup>2</sup>

The initial influx of prisoners consisted of 5,000 Jewish women from many European countries—mainly Hungary, Bohemia, Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, Romania, Slovakia, and Poland—who had arrived in Stutthof from Kauen (July 1944), Auschwitz (August 14 and 16, 1944), and Riga (August 9 and 23, 1944). They joined approximately 40,000 forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) who also worked on the project.<sup>3</sup>

The women were transported by train from Stutthof in three groups between August 24 and 26, 1944. The first group of 1,700 went to Botten; the second group, numbering 1,600,

went via Botten to Schirkenprass (Szerokopas); and the third group, numbering 1,700, went to Toruń and on to Argenau.

Before leaving Stutthof, the women received one blanket, table utensils, a towel, and soap. The camp administration was also to provide clothing and housing. Stutthof provided army tents for some prisoners, others stayed in barns, and some prisoners were later kept in cabins of thin plywood that held 35 to 40 people. The greatest problem was the lack of footwear and warm clothes. Stutthof's administration was unable or unwilling to provide better uniforms, despite many letters and reminders from the detachment directors and the supervisory office in Botten. In order to cope, women cut out woolen jackets, coats, and underwear from their blankets.<sup>4</sup>

The women worked the same as the other forced laborers, five days a week and on Saturdays until noon. The work—digging antitank ditches and bunkers—was exhausting. Wake-up was as early as 3:00 A.M., and work lasted until dusk. The prisoners had to march many hours to their workplaces, which were located far from the camps.<sup>5</sup>

When they completed their job, the extremely emaciated women from both Botten and Nagelstal were moved in late December 1944 to Groden (Grodno), about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Nagelstal. They were housed on the shore of Grodno Lake in plywood cabins. The Jewish women cut reeds on the lake, worked at the nearby Mirakowo (Merch) estate, or dug common graves for deceased prisoners on a peninsula in the southeast part of Grodno Lake, out of sight of the town of Grodno. The women at Argenau, meanwhile, had moved on to Korben in mid-September; their task was to dig trenches along a line from the town of Cegielnik (Ziegelwiese) to Górsk (Gurske). They lived in tents during their time there.

Conditions were extraordinarily harsh at all these camps. The exhausting work, the inadequate clothing, shelter, and food, and poor hygienic conditions killed the prisoners off directly and contributed to the spread of disease, especially spotted typhus and dysentery. Abuse by the guards made the situation still worse. According to Lajosne Fleischer of Hungary, many women died from beatings by SS men, who crushed their heads with gun butts, broke their spines, walked on their stomachs, and killed them while they worked.<sup>6</sup> At Nagelstal, the guard staff—made up of approximately 60 Ukrainian and Belorussian SS men—and the commandant (whose name has not been established) displayed an exceptionally brutal attitude toward the women. Several witnesses, including one of the camp's guards, Ukrainian Władysław Kulman, testified at trial in Toruń in 1945 that five to six women died every day, in part from torment by guards; they were beaten with gun butts, locked in a water-filled basement, or forced to stand in the cold with no outerwear. One of the cruelest guards was Filipowicz from Białystok, who murdered his victims in the camp courtyard, as well as Kulman's appointees: a Russian, Klimienko (commander of the guards), and some privates named Rudenia, Biełonożko, Szwap, and Wacek. The dead were buried in the Catholic cemetery.<sup>7</sup> At Argenau and Korben, the guard force consisted of 60 Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian SS men.<sup>8</sup> They were no kinder.

As a result of all these factors, the death rates in the OT complex were high. Of the 3,300 women who arrived in Botten and Nagelstal in late August 1944, only 2,947 remained by October 9.<sup>9</sup> The number of deaths increased in November and December; at Botten alone, 31 prisoners died between October 4 and November 30, and as many as 133 died in December. Because of the high percentage of deaths, an additional 1,000 women were sent to Botten on November 19.<sup>10</sup> The Argenau-Korben group had dwindled from 1,700 to 1,475 by October; that number rose to slightly over 1,600 in the latter half of December after an additional transport arrived from Stutthof, but more died in the next month.<sup>11</sup> The actual number of deaths in the whole complex is impossible to calculate with any precision, however, since the records of replacement drafts from Stutthof are incomplete.

A report dated January 24, 1945, indicates a total of 3,225 prisoners in the detachments that made up Baukommando "Weichsel" before evacuation.<sup>12</sup> At Groden the staff conducted a selection to test the prisoners' physical condition before the evacuation began; 200 of the weakest women were excluded and later savagely put to death. The remaining women were escorted toward Lauenburg. Several selections were conducted in the course of the march, and several hundred women died as a result. Approximately 300 prisoners reached Dirschau (Tczew); another 400 got as far as Goddentow (later Godętowo) near Lauenburg (later Lębork); thus around 1,000 women died out of the approximately 1,700 from Groden.

Also on January 24, approximately 1,500 female prisoners were marched out of the Korben camp. The staff excluded 180 women from the evacuation; they were later shot; 28 of them survived the massacre. The other 1,300 or so prisoners were sent toward Bromberg (Bydgoszcz). Another 87 women were murdered during the 97-kilometer (60-mile) march to the town of Krone (Koronowo), where the survivors spent the night in the local prison. The next day, the Russians liberated 997 prisoners—the remainder had presumably died.

Only two members of the large group of SS men supervising OT Thorn were tried before Polish courts. The Toruń District Court sentenced Hans Jacobi, the commandant of Argenau and Korben, to six years in prison on May 2, 1949 (he died on August 30, 1949). The other defendant, Władysław Kulman, was sentenced to death by a judgment from the Toruń Special Criminal Court dated June 18, 1945; the sentence was carried out on August 31, 1945, at Toruń prison.

**SOURCES** AGK, PMW-BZW, Catalog No. 327, testimony of Ludwig Denzler given before an investigating officer of the AMC in Freising on September 15, 1945; AK-IPN, SOT, Catalog No. 181, records of criminal case against Hans Jacobi; SSKT, Catalog No. 12, records of criminal case against Władysław Kulman; AK-IPN Gd, Bydgoszcz Branch, witness examination reports (Piotr and Zofia Gębski, Takacs Andrasne, Bernard Bogun, Pelagia Dybowska, Henryk Libera); AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IB-3, I-IB-4, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-III, prisoner personal files; Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population;



Catalog No. I-IIIC-2, records of deaths of prisoners and unidentified female Jewish prisoners, individual and group (OT Thorn); Catalog No. I-IIID-5, lists of prisoners who died in the subcamps; Catalog Nos. I-IVH-5, I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; Catalog No. I-VB-7, hospital (Krankenbau) records; The Jewish Agency for Palestine. Dokumentacios Ogyosztaly, testimony of Stephen Horvath (copy at AMS); D. Drywa, *Podobozy (Aussenarbeitslager) KL Stutthof dla więźniów narodowości żydowskiej* (in print; typescript at AMS); J. Grabowska, *Marsz śmierci. Ewakuacja piesza więźniów KL Stutthof i jego podobozów 25 stycznia–3 maja 1945*, (Gdańsk, 1992); T. Jaszowski, “Masowy grób w Grodnie koło Chełmży,” and J. Libiszewski, “Obóz dla Żydów w Chorabiu,” both in *Z badań nad eksterminacją Żydów na Pomorzu i Kujawach* (Bydgoszcz, 1983); M. Orski, *The Czechs, Slovaks and Yugoslavs in Stutthof Concentration Camp* (Gdańsk, 1997).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, pp. 161–162, Sonderbefehl über die Aufstellung des Baukommandos “Weichsel.”

2. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-IB-3, I-IB-4, Kommandanturbefehle 1944–1945; AK-IPN, SOT, Catalog No. 181, records of criminal case against H. Jacobi.

3. AGK, PMW-BZW, Catalog No. 327, pp. 15–22, testimony of Ludwig Denzler, Oberabschnittsleiter supervising the construction of fortifications in the Toruń region, given before an investigating officer of the AMC in Freising on September 15, 1945.

4. Ibid., testimony of Ludwig Denzler; AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, orders for materials to mend clothing and shoes, dated November 3, 1944.

5. AK-IPN Gd, Bydgoszcz Branch, Catalog No. Ds. 53/64, testimony of former female prisoner Takacs Andrasne and witnesses of crimes committed on Jewish women: Bernard Bogun, Pelagia Dybowska, Henryk Libera.

6. AK-IPN Gd, Bydgoszcz Branch, Catalog No. Ds. 53/64.

7. AK-IPN Gd, SSKT, Catalog No. 12; Bydgoszcz Branch, Catalog No. Ds. 53/64, testimony of Piotr and Zofia Gębski.

8. AK-IPN, SOT, Catalog No. 181, records of criminal case against Hans Jacobi, testimony of H. Jacobi.

9. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-5, p. 94, Bescheinigung, Leiter des Oberabschnittes III S.A.-Oberführer Miedermüller to Reichsverteidigungskommissar Danzig-Westpreussen Ost-raumbau, October 9, 1944.

10. Ibid., p. 163, E. von Bonin (Leiter der Verwaltung des KL Stutthof) to the commandant of Stutthof concentration camp, dated November 22, 1944.

11. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, Tschesny to Stutthof concentration camp headquarters, October 2, 1944, Ehle to Verwaltung dated December 3, 1944; The Jewish Agency for Palestine. Dokumentacios Ogyosztaly, testimony of Stephen Horvath (copy at AMS).

12. AMS, Catalog No. I-IIIB-6, reports on the camp's population; AK-IPN, SSKT, Catalog No. 12, pp. 8–9, testimony of Helena Vajsz.

## THORN (*SS-NEUBAULEITUNG*)

This small prisoner detachment of probably several people was set up as part of the SS construction company in Thorn (Toruń). Based on partially surviving entries in prisoner files, it can be established that the subcamp operated between July 23 and December 18, 1940. According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), the SS-Neubauleitung detachment operated until February 8, 1941, but this claim is not supported by surviving records of the Stutthof concentration camp. A prisoner labor assignment record for another Thorn detachment, dated a year later with the identical month and date, was probably read in error.<sup>1</sup> The prisoners were put to work building or expanding the SS officers' (police) school in Toruń. When the work was completed, the prisoners were moved to Stutthof. One of the detachment's laborers was Jan Dłużewski, a Pole and a senior railroad assistant for the Polish National Railway in Danzig.

Another Stutthof subcamp was instituted in Thorn a year later, probably at the same site, the SS officers' school, and listed in prisoner records as TWL-Thorn (Truppenwirtschaftslager). Prisoners who were tradesmen were put to work finishing and fitting out the building. The subcamp operated between February 8 and April 12, 1941. When the work was completed, the prisoners were returned to the Stutthof camp.<sup>2</sup>

**SOURCES** This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 297. Primary sources for this subcamp are found in AMS, Catalog No. I-III, prisoner files.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS Catalog No. I-III-42542, files of prisoner Jan Dłużewski.

2. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-42162, I-III-50318, files of prisoners Bernard Czarliński and Józef Otto.

## THORN-WINKENAU (AEG)

The Thorn-Winkenu subcamp was formed pursuant to an ordinance issued on August 28, 1944, by Richard Glücks, chief of Amtsgruppe D of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), which concerned sending 250 Jewish women prisoners to Allgemeine Elektrizitäts Gesellschaft (AEG), a company in Thorn (Toruń). The ordinance was noted in an order by camp headquarters dated September 12, 1944.<sup>1</sup>

There was no special order issued to confirm that the subcamp had been established, as was the case with other camps instituted in 1944. The transport of September 13, 1944, was not the first one sent to Thorn. This is clear from a letter from the subcamp's commandant SS-Hauptscharführer Ludwig Blatterspiel to the clothing warehouse at Stutthof dated

September 4, 1944, regarding a shipment of clothing and underwear made on August 12, 1944. All the women had come to the camp from Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp on August 9, 1944 (that was the first transport from that camp to Stutthof). This is supported by information on a shoe shipment from Riga-Kaiserwald, narrowing down the date that the camp was formed to sometime between August 9 and 12, 1944. The number of prisoners from that transport can be placed to at least 150, based upon a supply ordering addendum dated September 4, 1944.<sup>2</sup>

Along with Siemens, AEG was one of Germany's largest electrical engineering concerns; it had 264 million Reichsmarks (RM) in authorized capital in 1943. The company employed 175,000 people in 1942; 10 years earlier, it had employed 30,000. The proportion of foreign workers it employed in 1941 to 1942 grew from 25 to 35 percent, on average. AEG manufactured the majority of weapons-related electrical systems, especially for aircraft, submarines, and other warships, as well as for artillery equipment, tanks, and V-weapons.<sup>3</sup>

The next transport of 280 women was sent to Thorn on October 30, 1944. In it were Hungarian Jewish women who had come to Stutthof from the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp on October 1, 1944. They had been put to work at the AEG works in Riga; previously they had been at the Auschwitz concentration camp.<sup>4</sup> Several SS men were sent with the Jewish women to Thorn; they had been transferred from the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann (Death's Head Battalion) at Riga to Stutthof on October 25, 1944, and assigned to the AEG subcamp. On the return trip, an escort composed of one noncommissioned officer (NCO), two SS men, and eight sailors from the 1st and 2nd Guard Companies was in charge of transporting 230 emaciated women to the Stutthof camp.<sup>5</sup>

Out of the 680 Jewish women sent to Thorn through late October 1944, 510 were still alive by late January 1945, which means that one more transport of at least 100 people must have come to Thorn in the meantime. The partially surviving hospital records on deaths at Stutthof's subcamps do not contain any names from AEG Thorn, and no personal accounts have been found to illustrate what kind of work was done in the factory or the living conditions in the camp.

The only source that describes the prisoners' situation in this camp is the vestigial correspondence of the subcamp's commandant, Blatterspiel, to the Stutthof clothing warehouse and the Prisoner Employment Department. In it he notes the inadequate and poor state of the clothing of the women who came from the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp, who were dressed in light summer clothes and shoes unfit for use. Just a few days after the first prisoner transport arrived, there was a shipment of clothing and underwear to Thorn, which later proved to be highly inadequate.<sup>6</sup>

The housing conditions at Thorn-Winkenu were worse than at the parent camp. Aside from making space available for the prisoners, AEG provided neither sleeping blankets nor straw mattresses. The subcamp's commandant asked the Stutthof warehouse for these items in early September 1944, requesting that two blankets and one straw mattress be sent for

each woman. There was also a shortage of shirts, stockings and underwear. It is not known whether the order was filled because the report for October 1944 is missing.<sup>7</sup>

Working conditions were very hard. This is evidenced by the large percentage of prisoners unfit for labor in late October 1944, due to their health, and the need to replace them with people in better physical condition. The camp statistics from October 1944 through late January 1945 are missing, so an accurate assessment of the scale of replacement cannot be assessed. The Jewish women were put to work at such labor as loading and unloading heavy machines for the factory, which was under construction, working at the river port, or manufacturing ammunition and weaponry.<sup>8</sup>

The evacuation of the detachment on foot began on January 20, 1945. The Jewish women were headed toward Bydgoszcz (Bromberg). The destination was the AEG factory in Germany, and the factory furnishings were evacuated as well. Even before the evacuation, several women including the Freumovits sisters tried unsuccessfully to escape. They were caught and escorted to the factory. There was another escape attempt during the march. The sisters hid with 10 other women. The engineering director of AEG hid 4 Jewish women from the escort in the boiler room.<sup>9</sup> The entire group was liberated on January 27, 1945, by Russian forces that occupied the factory.

The rest of the women evacuated to Bydgoszcz were liberated by Russian forces on January 26, 1945, in the village of Trzecieć (Goldfeld) near Bydgoszcz. During the march, many Jewish women were shot by the escort.<sup>10</sup>

**SOURCES** The secondary sources that mention this subcamp are M. Gliński, "Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945)," *StZeMu* 3 (1979); M. Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999); D. Drywa, *Zagłada Żydów w obozie koncentracyjnym Stutthof: (wrzesień 1939–maj 1945)* (Gdańsk: Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutowie, 2001). For additional information on AEG, see D. Eichholtz, *Geschichte der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft 1939–1945*, vol. 2 (Berlin, 1985).

Primary sources for this camp can be found in AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, Kommandanturbefehle; Catalog No. I-IVH-7, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; AI, account of Dobka Waldhorn; AŻIH, witness examination reports (Adela Day); The Jewish Agency for Palestine. Dokumentacjos Ogyosztaly, testimony of Gitta and Rella Freumovits (copy at AMS).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, p. 173, Kommandanturbefehle, no. 61, September 12, 1944.

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 191; see also Gliński, "Organizacja obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof (1 września 1939–9 maja 1945)," 3 (1979): 172–173, 212; M. Orski, *Niewolnicza praca więźniów obozu koncentracyjnego Stutthof w latach 1939–1945* (Gdańsk, 1999), p. 348.

3. D. Eichholtz, *Geschichte der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft 1939–1945* (Berlin, 1985), 2: 556–559.

4. The Jewish Agency for Palestine. Dokumentacios Ogyosztaly, reports of testimony of Gitta and Rella Freumovits (copy at AMS).

5. AMS, Catalog No. I-IB-3, p. 234, Kommandanturbe-fehle, no. 73, October 30, 1944.

6. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-7, p. 191, Blatterspiel to Kammerwart der Häftlingskammer des KL Stutthof, September 4, 1944.

7. Ibid.

8. AŽIH, Catalog Nos. 859, 1296, reports of examination of Adela Day; AMS, AI, account of Dobka Waldhorn.

9. AMS, AI, account of Dobka Waldhorn.

10. AŽIH, Catalog Nos. 859, 1296, reports of examination of Adela Day; and AMS, affidavits of former AEG Thorn prisoners: Rosa and Fira Paperny, Rita Feldman, Sara Dannenberg (letters sent to the Stutthof Museum in 1992 and 1994). See also D. Drywa, *Zagłada Żydów w obozie koncentracyjnym Stutthof: (wrzesień 1939–maj 1945)* (Gdańsk: Muzeum Stutthof w Sztutowie, 2001).

## TRUTENAU

A group of prisoners worked in the village of Trutenau (later Trutnowy) between Käsemark (Kiezmark) and Praust (Pruszcz Gdański) from April 10 to July 19, 1940, on a farm owned by someone named Behrendt (possibly Walter).<sup>1</sup> A labor assignment record in prisoner files documents the detachment's existence.<sup>2</sup>

In 1939, one of the farms in Trutenau cultivated a special variety of rose for the manufacture of rosewater used in the pharmaceutical and cosmetic industries. In November 1939, a detachment of prisoners from the camp at Danzig-Neufahrwasser was put to work there.<sup>3</sup>

**SOURCES** This subcamp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 298.

Primary sources for this camp are found in AMS, Catalog No. I-III, prisoner files. Information for identifying the farm's owner may be found in *Einwohnerbuch der Danziger Landkreise 1927/1928: Danziger Höhe. Danziger Niederung, Grosses Werder* (Danzig, 1927).

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trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. *Einwohnerbuch der Danziger Landkreise 1927/1928: Danziger Höhe. Danziger Niederung, Grosses Werder* (Danzig, 1927), 2:224.

2. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-50131, files of prisoner Marian Jasnoch.

3. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-41475, I-III-50184, files of prisoners Konrad Burandt and Richard Meinhardt.

## WESSLINKEN

The first 50 prisoners were sent from Stutthof to the town of Wesslinken (later Wiślinka) on the outskirts of Danzig

(Gdańsk) near Bohnsack (Sobieszewo) on May 29, 1940. They included building tradesmen and workers. They were put to work building and fitting out a brickyard.<sup>1</sup>

The prisoners were quartered in one of the barracks near the construction site. The other barracks were occupied by a group of approximately 200 British prisoners of war (POWs) who were put to work on the same project. When their assigned jobs (such as carpentry, construction work, and so on) were completed, some prisoners were sent back to the camp at Stutthof. New prisoners with other specialties were sent to replace them. Subsequent groups arrived in June and July 1940, one of which returned to Stutthof in mid-October 1940. The detachment was disbanded on December 15, 1940, and the prisoners returned to Stutthof.<sup>2</sup>

The Wesslinken brickyard detachment was reactivated in early 1943. SS-Schütze John Pauls was in charge of it until March 10, 1943, when he was reassigned to Sachsenhausen concentration camp. After the war, Pauls was tried by the Gdańsk Special Criminal Court and sentenced to death; the sentence was carried out on July 4, 1946, in a public execution in Gdańsk.<sup>3</sup>

**SOURCES** Information on this camp may be found in these sources: AMS, Catalog No. I-III, prisoner personal files; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Jan Nyśkiewicz, vol. 17); AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 417, records of criminal case against John Pauls; Catalog No. 422, sentence of judgment; AK-IPN Gd, surveys (Franciszek Przybylski).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49882, I-III-49973, I-III-50031, personal files of prisoners Antoni Nowak, Zygmunt Kwapisz, and Ignac Wójcik.

2. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 17:183, account of Jan Nyśkiewicz; AK-IPN Gd, personal survey of Franciszek Przybylski, n.p.

3. AK-IPN, SSK Gd, Catalog No. 417, pp. 79, 80, testimonies of prisoner Józef Bensz and defendant John Pauls at 1946 Gdańsk Trial; Catalog No. 422, sentence of judgment.

## ZEYERSNIEDERKAMPEN

In the first transport of November 8 or 9, 1939, 20 prisoners arrived in Zeyersniederkampen (now Kepiny Wielkie); they had volunteered from Stutthof to help build a new subcamp in the delta of the Nogat River.<sup>1</sup> Initially the prisoners were quartered in an abandoned barrack of a Reich Labor Service (RAD) camp. The actual camp, ready to take another 120 prisoners, was erected in mid-December approximately 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) away, between the banks of the Nogat and the levee near the village of Terranova (later Nowakowo). The camp was composed of one large barrack for approximately 150 persons, a separate kitchen, and facilities for the subcamp's commandant and guard staff, which were located outside the camp fence.<sup>2</sup>



The core group of prisoners arrived at camp on December 21, 1939.<sup>3</sup> Prisoners were rotated throughout the subcamp's operation from November 1939 to the spring of 1941.<sup>4</sup> A total of about 160 people lived there at one time,<sup>5</sup> and any vacancies caused by sickness or death were filled by sending additional transports from the camp at Stutthof. A truck would come from Stutthof every Saturday to replace prisoners who had become ill or died.<sup>6</sup>

Until mid-December 1939, while there were only 20 prisoners, the prisoners were supervised by 2 SS men, who transported the prisoners from Stutthof to Zeyersniederkampen. When the camp population had grown to approximately 150, SS-Oberscharführer Paul Görke took over as commandant, followed by SS-Oberscharführer Herbert Baumann. The guard staff was increased to approximately 14 SS men.<sup>7</sup> SS-Unterscharführer Franz Mielenz was commandant from April to July 1940, followed by SS-Oberscharführer Willi Redder.<sup>8</sup>

Housing, hygienic conditions, and clothing were all grossly inadequate. Neither the barrack nor the uniforms were sufficient protection against the weather. There were no bunks in the barrack. Prisoners who arrived at camp in the spring of 1940 reported that they had to sleep with no covering at all. The floor was spread with layers of straw, which was not changed for many months and became a hotbed for germs, causing contagious diseases. The lack of fresh underwear or opportunities to wash, as well as the filth and the climate, caused upper respiratory tract ailments, lice infestation, scabies, and diarrhea, among other ailments. Prisoners could not use the primitive latrine outside the barrack at night; they had to use metal containers left for them, of which there were an insufficient number.<sup>9</sup> The camp infirmary run by Dr. Aleksander Witkowski had no effective medication to help prisoners.

The prisoners were not given anything to eat during work. For breakfast they got black coffee and a piece of bread weighing about 200 grams (7 ounces) with a bit of margarine or beet jam. When they came back to camp after work, they were issued their final meal, most frequently a liter (4.2 cups) of soup made of rotted rutabaga, fresh cabbage or sauerkraut, and sometimes barley with potatoes or beans with a bit of fat. The prisoners' salvation came in the form of food packages sent by their families, who knew where they were, thanks to legal correspondence sent by the inmates and to the intercession of sympathetic locals. Sometimes the packages contained hidden banknotes, with which the prisoners bought bread in the shops in Zeyersniederkampen or Terranova from sympathetic Germans.<sup>10</sup> Correspondence was cut off from December 15, 1939, and after the first escape attempts, visits and food packages were cut off as well. These privileges were restored in mid-1940.

The prisoners were hired out to Deichverband des Kreises Elbing (Dike Formation of the Elbing District).<sup>11</sup> Mostly, they worked building a dike along the Nogat River. Work began at 5:00 or 6:00 A.M. and lasted 10 or 12 hours, depending on the season; reveille was an hour before the start of the

workday. The prisoners worked in several groups, each of which did something different: excavating clay, conveying it in carts to where the dike was being raised, forming the dike, or delivering sod and putting it in with stakes. The design called for a dike 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) long, 3 meters (9.8 feet) high, and 5 meters (16.4 feet) wide at the base. Other groups worked in the camp doing cleanup jobs, in the kitchen or infirmary, or in the transport column delivering supplies for the subcamp. On Sundays the prisoners were hired out to local farmers. In the winter when it was extremely cold and no longer possible to continue working on the levees, the prisoners were sent to dig up old willow trees growing along the route of the planned dike and to cut down reeds and brush used to reinforce the levees. Although this work was one of the easier jobs, it required great stamina because the prisoners had to cover considerable distances over the course of the day. They also removed snow from the road and built barracks in the neighboring village of Terranova.<sup>12</sup>

Worse than the work, however, was the way the SS men and prisoner foremen treated the prisoners. Former prisoner Franciszek Adamczyk testified that during work the SS men would position themselves every 18 meters (20 yards) or so and beat the prisoners with whips. The prisoners were also subjected to so-called cleanliness roll calls, in which they were rolled naked in the snow and beaten with birch branches.<sup>13</sup> Also, before the prisoners entered the barracks, SS men often lined up and ordered the prisoners to run the gauntlet between them while they administered a painful beating.<sup>14</sup>

In the winter of 1940, prisoners caught trying to send illegal correspondence were punished by flogging during the evening roll call. The most trivial offenses at the camp were punished this way, with 25, 50, or even 100 lashes. Prisoner E. Lewandowski, who walked away from camp looking for food, was shot by a guard who treated that as an attempt to escape from the detachment.<sup>15</sup> One Jew, Jakub Apfelbaum, was exposed by a prisoner's denunciation in December 1939; the SS men beat him mercilessly, and the next day they took him away to Stutthof.<sup>16</sup>

It should be stressed that not all the SS men and foremen in the same positions were so cruel; there were highly moral persons among them, including Rev. Józef Szarkowski, Franciszek Zieliński, and SS man Arno Rauchdt. These men were the exceptions, however. The guards' behavior even drew the attention of the local people, who filed a complaint with the Danzig Gestapo. The Gestapo sent an officer to inspect the camp, but although he did find numerous indications of beating and frostbite, none of the prisoners he questioned admitted being beaten, fearing retribution from the guards. The outcome of the inspection was that "we were beaten even more than before," as Jan Urbaniak said.<sup>17</sup>

Conditions at camp definitely deteriorated in late January 1940. That was due to the mostly unsuccessful attempts by prisoners to escape from the detachment and the resultant restrictions imposed by the subcamp's management. The only successful escape from the detachment was that of two sailors

in January 1940. They left the camp even before the barracks had been locked after the evening roll call. They crossed the frozen Nogat River at night unnoticed.<sup>18</sup> Two other prisoners who escaped in the winter of 1939–1940, independently of each other, were caught; one was tortured to death, and the other survived.<sup>19</sup> Władysław Dembski was caught while escaping on July 16, 1940; he died from gunshot wounds, beating, and bleeding.<sup>20</sup> The whole camp suffered the consequences of tightened discipline, such as night roll calls, a ban on correspondence, restrictions on receiving packages and visitors, and collective responsibility of the “neighbors” of any fugitive—the penalty being flogging.<sup>21</sup>

The detachment was disbanded on March 29, 1941.<sup>22</sup> Considering the frequent prisoner replacements, at least 100 should be added to the fixed population of about 160. According to Urbaniak’s testimony, of the 160 persons incarcerated at Zeyersniederkampen in December 1939, only 17 returned to the main camp on November 17, 1940.<sup>23</sup>

**SOURCES** This camp is listed in ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 298.

Primary sources for Zeyersniederkampen can be found in AK-IPN Gd, witness examination reports (Jan Urbaniak, Katowice branch; Franciszek Adamczyk, Gdańsk; Józef Faryj, Rzeszów); AMS, Catalog No. I-III, prisoner personal files; Lasik, Stutthof ac.; *Relacje i wspomnienia* (Bolesław Muński, vol. 9; Antoni Dulski, vol. 10; Jan Urbaniak, vols. 10, 18; Franciszek Adamczyk, vol. 24); Cmentarz-Zaspa [Zaspa Cemetery] comp. Andrzej Chudy; a prisoner’s testimony is available in J. Szarkowski, ed., *Wychowawca pokoleń: Wspomnienia zebrał i opracował W. Dążek* (Gdynia, 1996).

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10: 295, account of Jan Urbaniak; 14: 250, Józef Szarkowski; AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ka/ko235/70/B1, report of examination of witness Jan Urbaniak; J. Szarkowski, ed., *Wychowawca pokoleń: Wspomnienia zebrał i opracował W. Dążek* (Gdynia, 1996), p. 99.

2. Szarkowski, *Wychowawca pokoleń*, p. 102; AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10: 15–17, 295, 18:60, accounts of Antoni Dulski and Jan Urbaniak.

3. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 18:60, account of Jan Urbaniak.

4. AMS, Catalog No. I-III-43070, files of prisoner Stanisław Dziuba; *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10:11, account of Antoni Dulski; 9: 144, Bolesław Muński.

5. According to Antoni Dulski, 200 prisoners lived at the camp until mid-1940; later, when the carts of clay and sand were conveyed automatically, some prisoners were sent back to the camp at Stutthof. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10:26.

6. Ibid., 9:144, account of Bolesław Muński; 18:61, Jan Urbaniak.

7. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ka/ko235/70/B1, report of examination of witness Jan Urbaniak (Katowice); Szarkowski, *Wychowawca pokoleń*, p. 103; AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10: 296, 18:60–61, account of Jan Urbaniak.

8. AMS, Lasik, Stutthof ac.

9. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 143, account of Bolesław Muński; 10: 15–19, 300–302, Antoni Dulski and Jan Urbaniak.

10. Ibid., 10: 19–20, 304–305, accounts of Antoni Dulski and Jan Urbaniak; 18: 67, Jan Urbaniak.

11. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49943, I-III-49946, personal files of prisoners Jan Olejarz and Jan Zawadzki.

12. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 20–21, account of Antoni Dulski; 18: 63–64, Jan Urbaniak; Szarkowski, *Wychowawca pokoleń*, p. 103.

13. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10:12, account of Antoni Dulski; 18:69, Jan Urbaniak; 24:4, Franciszek Adamczyk.

14. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ka/ko235/70/B11, report of examination of witness Franciszek Adamczyk (Katowice).

15. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10: 22–24, account of Antoni Dulski; 18: 65–66, Jan Urbaniak; Szarkowski, *Wychowawca pokoleń*, pp. 108–109.

16. Ibid., 10:304, account of Jan Urbaniak.

17. Ibid., 18: 68.

18. Szarkowski, *Wychowawca pokoleń*, p. 106; AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10: 29, account of Antoni Dulski.

19. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ko. 33/68, report of examination of witness Józef Faryj; AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10:22, account of Antoni Dulski; 18:69, Jan Urbaniak.

20. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10: 23, account of Antoni Dulski; Cmentarz-Zaspa [Zaspa Cemetery], comp. Andrzej Chudy.

21. Szarkowski, *Wychowawca pokoleń*, pp. 106–108.

22. AMS, *Relacje i wspomnienia*, 10: 33, account of Antoni Dulski. We can take this date as being the most credible. According to other sources—ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 298; AK-IPN Gd, report of examination of witness Jan Urbaniak—this occurred between November 17, 1940, and January 27, 1941.

23. AK-IPN Gd, Catalog No. Ka/ko235/70/B1, report of examination of witness Jan Urbaniak (Katowice).

## ZEYERSVORDERKAMPEN

A prisoner detachment operated between 1939 and 1944 next to the Nogat River in Zeyersvorderkampen (now Kepiny Małe). It had little in common with the subcamps at Pröbbernau and Zeyersniederkampen on the other side of the river. The prisoners were put to work at local farms or in small tradesmen’s companies.

A detachment was first set up in Zeyersvorderkampen in 1939–1940. This is documented by labor assignment records in prisoner files. They cover the period from November 25, 1939, to June 10, 1940. In all three instances of such records that have been found, the prisoners were hired out to a German farmer named Fast.<sup>1</sup> All the prisoners had been sent from the camp at Stutthof.<sup>2</sup> They represented various trades, from farmworker to merchant to bricklayer.

Another subcamp was activated in the same place in the autumn of 1944, this time with female Jewish prisoners. The subcamp’s operation is documented by a letter of September

26, 1944, from the Zeyersvorderkampen township farm director Johannes Jahn to Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on providing the women with underwear, clothing, and shoes. The letter requested the shipment of clothes and underwear for the women in his administrative region, in the amounts that had been agreed upon with van Riesen, the farm director at Rosenort.<sup>3</sup>

Some 78 women prisoners were put to work at all the farms in Zeyersvorderkampen. That is the subcamp's population as reported by Jahn in late September 1944 when he ordered pullovers and socks. He thought that supplies for the women were inadequate and asked for the prompt delivery of needed items of clothing. The prisoners probably returned to the Stutthof camp in late November 1944 when they had completed the farmwork.

**SOURCES** ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 298.

Primary sources for this camp may be found in AMS, Catalog No. I-III; Catalog No. I-IVH-5, correspondence of the subcamp with Stutthof concentration camp headquarters on supplies; on Fast, see *Einwohnerbuch der Danziger Landkreise*

1927/1928: *Danziger Höhe; Danziger Niederung, Grosses Werder* (Danzig, 1927), 3: 377.

Marek Orski  
trans. Gerard Majka

## NOTES

1. According to the *Einwohnerbuch der Danziger Landkreise 1927/1928: Danziger Höhe; Danziger Niederung, Grosses Werder* (Danzig, 1927), 3: 377, Kornelius Fast held the post of Zeyersvorderkampen township administrator (Gemeindevorsteher). But because of the lack of sources from wartime, it is not known whether he continued to serve in that post in the period under discussion. As township administrator he could request prisoner labor at local farms or for the township administration or his own office.

2. AMS, Catalog Nos. I-III-49869, I-III-49932, I-III-49966, files of prisoners Mieczysław Sobierański, Leon Kotłowski, and Antoni Wasilewski. See also ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 298.

3. AMS, Catalog No. I-IVH-5, p. 62, Jahn to Stutthof concentration camp, dated September 26, 1944.





# VAIVARA



Soviet investigators inspect corpses from the Klooga subcamp of Vaivara which have been stacked for mass burning, September 1944.  
USHMM WS #98906, COURTESY OF GFH

## VAIVARA MAIN CAMP

Vaivara<sup>1</sup> was one of the last concentration camps to be established, at a time when two aims shaped decisions of the Nazi leadership: (1) to implement the final stage in the destruction of European Jewry by liquidating all remaining ghettos and (2) to utilize Jewish labor. On June 21, 1943, Heinrich Himmler decreed the closure of the remaining ghettos in the Baltic states, the transfer of ghetto inmates to newly formed concentration camps, and the deportation of as many able-bodied Jews as possible for work in oil-shale production in Estonia.<sup>2</sup> Vaivara was established on September 19, 1943, to hold this Jewish workforce.<sup>3</sup>

The production of oil from shale was the responsibility of the Baltische Öl GmbH or Baltöl (Baltic Oil), a subsidiary of the Kontinentale Öl AG, both operating within the sphere of responsibility of Dr. Krauch, chairman of the board of IG Farben and Generalbevollmächtigter für den Erzeugungsplan der chemischen Industrie (General Plenipotentiary for the Chemical Industry Production Plan). After the German occupation of Estonia in 1941, Baltöl took over and tried to reutilize the oil-mining facilities in northeastern Estonia.<sup>4</sup> In 1943, Baltöl was facing two important developments: first, the German withdrawal from the Caucasus made alternative sources of oil even more important than before; second, there was an increasing shortage of workers, caused in part by the German army's transfer of prisoners of war (POWs) to fortification and other projects. POWs had been the backbone of the Baltöl workforce. Baltöl needed labor to produce oil for the war effort, and Himmler wanted to dispose of a large remaining group of the Jewish population in the Baltics. Vaivara was the result.

At a July 19, 1943, meeting at the Commander of Security Police and SD offices in Reval, the officers made detailed plans for the establishment of Vaivara. The list of those present reveals that all local players were involved: the civil administration and SS-Police in Estonia; the German army (Wehrmacht); Baltöl; the Organisation Todt (OT); Einsatzgruppe Russland-Nord; and Einsatz Baltöl, which was in charge of construction projects.<sup>5</sup> The camp personnel were to be provided by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) in Berlin; the WVHA in Riga was in charge locally. The initial establishment of the camp (before personnel were transferred to Estonia) was undertaken by SS-Sturmbannführer Wossagk, who was the head of security (Abwehrbeauftragter) of Baltöl, and, under his direction, by the head of the plant protection force (Werkschutzleiter) Hilgenfeld.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout its existence, Vaivara was characterized by diversity. Two main employers, Baltöl and OT, used a multi-ethnic workforce of Soviet POWs, forced laborers, civilian workers, and concentration camp inmates.<sup>7</sup> Further, several camps at each work site were supervised and administered by

different organizations (POW camps by the Wehrmacht; civilian and forced labor camps by the civil administration, OT, and Baltöl; and the Vaivara subcamps by the SS and Security Police). The Jewish concentration camp inmates were strictly segregated from the others,<sup>8</sup> and Jews and POWs received worse treatment than other workers.<sup>9</sup> This mixture caused numerous frictions in the one year of Vaivara's existence.

The commander of Vaivara was Hans Aumeier, formerly Schutzhaftlagerführer in Auschwitz; his administrative staff consisted of eight SS members. Head of administration was Otto Brenneis. Dr. Franz von Bodmann, SS doctor for all camps, was in charge of monitoring the work ability of inmates, which included curing as well as killing. During an illness in December 1943, Bodmann was replaced by Dr. Krebsbach from Riga. Franz Mang was in charge of a dental station. A branch office of the Deutsches Hygiene Institut in Riga was established in Kohtla-Järve. In general, very few and low-ranking Germans were assigned to Vaivara and its subcamps—in most cases, only a commander and a medical orderly (Sanitätsdienstgrad, SDG). The role of SDGs was unusually prominent; often they also took over the function of camp commanders. This was caused by the disastrous hygienic conditions in all Vaivara camps and by outbreaks of illnesses, in particular epidemic typhus (*Fleckfieber*). From January to March 1944, Bodmann got 10 additional Wehrmacht medical orderlies assigned to Vaivara.<sup>10</sup> In the first few weeks, the newly established camps were often run by OT personnel; some smaller camps remained under OT commanders. One characteristic feature of the Vaivara camps is a frequent movement of SS personnel and inmates from one camp to another. In several cases, camp commanders took inmates they knew with them to new assignments, but in most cases the movement was caused by shifting work priorities and short-term assignments. For presumably the same reasons, several camps that were initially planned for Baltöl plants—such as Slanzy—were not set up. While the SS camp staff remained skeletal, the hierarchy of inmate functionaries was fully developed, ranging from camp elders (Lagerälteste) to elders for sections (Blöcke) and rooms (Zimmer), prisoner police, Kapos, prisoner clerks, doctors, and nurses. The camps were guarded by the Estonian Schutzmannschaftsbataillon 287 and the Russian Schutzmannschaftsbataillon 290. These battalions were under the command of the Commander of the Order Police (KdO) and were assigned to the camps by the SS- and Police Leader (SSPF) Reval. The guards also accompanied inmates to the work sites; the foremen were mostly OT. In some cases, OT personnel were armed to take on guarding functions.

Most of the camps were located in the oil-shale region of eastern Estonia. The administrative staff and the main camp were located in Vaivara. In October 1943, subcamps



(*Arbeitslager*) existed in Klooga, Narva, Soski, Auvere, Kerstowa, Ereda, Jõhvi, Kuremäe, Port Kunda, Kiviõli, and Vivikonna.<sup>11</sup> The mix between Baltõl production sites and Vaivara camps leads to some confusion about the proper names and locations of subcamps. One example is Kohtla-Järve, one of the centers of Baltõl and OT activity. The company lists 1,163 Jews working at Kohtla-Järve and another 856 at Kohtla; but no corresponding camps can be found in the monthly reports by the Vaivara SS doctor.<sup>12</sup> One has to assume that the inmates of either of the subcamps Ereda or Kiviõli were marched to Kohtla-Järve; former inmates often recall the long distances they had to cover to get to and from work. Because of the advance of the Red Army, the more eastern camps had to be evacuated in February 1944; Aumeier's headquarters were moved to Saka. In the same area, the Aseri, Goldfields, and Sonda subcamps were established, together with a group of temporary camps in southern Estonia and, in the summer of 1944, the Lagedi subcamp near Reval. In August and September 1944, the Germans retreated completely from Estonia, and all camps were evacuated. In addition to the Vaivara camps, the Security Police had its own camp system in Estonia for incarcerating real or perceived political opponents.

The majority of Vaivara inmates were deportees from the Vilnius and Kaunas ghettos in the summer and fall of 1943; in many cases, they comprised whole families. Former inmates often recall how and where one after the other of their family members perished, until only they themselves or maybe another survived to see liberation. By the end of 1943, a small group of German and Czech women, who had been deported to Estonia in September 1942 and had been kept in Security Police camps, were transferred to the Vaivara system. Another group of inmates came from Riga-Kaiserwald, and another from Hungary in the summer of 1944. Prisoner numbers from Bodmann's reports are 6,982 in October 1943, a peak of 9,207 in November 1943, and a decline from 8,210 in February

1944 to 6,662 in June 1944. According to former inmates, they received a number upon arrival, which they kept during their numerous transfers to other camps. The numbers of individual inmates in the Klooga index confirm this: many are too high for the total number of Klooga inmates, but they add up to roughly 9,000.<sup>13</sup>

The purpose of the Vaivara camp system was the fullest exploitation of the work capacity of the inmates. For this reason, large killings of the able-bodied did not take place before the retreat. Individual killings, most in a gruesome manner, were whimsical killings by specific subcamp commanders, acting out their murderous impulses at whatever camp they were assigned to. Apart from these individual killings, selections and killings of old and weak prisoners took place on a continuous basis. As whole families were deported from Lithuania, many old and sick people and children found their way into the camps. Already in his October 25, 1943, report, Bodmann euphemistically mentioned that mostly old Jews had "died"—that they were those who could not adapt to the changed conditions and that this would constitute a relief for the camps.<sup>14</sup> Apart from ongoing selections and killings—the reason Bodmann visited the Vaivara camps on a regular basis—two large groups of inmates were deported. In February 1944, 907 old and sick inmates and 111 children were deported to the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration camp. Among the inmates, deportation to Riga-Kaiserwald was equated with death. In April 1944, 500 inmates, including children (who had been kept separately), were deported from Ereda and taken over by the SD. Bodmann gives contradictory information about the final destination of the transport, mentioning both Riga-Kaiserwald and Auschwitz; however, one mother had insisted on accompanying her child and testified later that the transport went to Auschwitz.<sup>15</sup> Inmates suffered from disease, cold, hunger, and exhaustion in large numbers. In all camps, facilities to burn corpses were set up, preferably in somewhat hidden places.<sup>16</sup> The medical personnel tried to control the 1943–1944 typhus epidemic through quarantines and hygienic measures like boiling all drinking water, and they also worked at combating lice and vermin. One witness, however, reports that compulsory washing with hot water on the camp square in subzero temperatures was more detrimental than beneficial to the inmates' health.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, Aumeier was congratulated for taking initiative during the typhus epidemic.<sup>18</sup>

Labor in the camp was very hard and often beyond the strength of the inmates. Not only former inmates recall this, but Baltõl and OT reports mentioned this repeatedly. The Jewish workforce was not considered an adequate replacement for the Soviet POWs, who were often miners by profession. Weakened by malnutrition and cold and lacking shoes and clothing, the Jewish contingents were considered capable of only 50 percent of the POW and civilian work capacity.<sup>19</sup> For this reason, the Baltõl management tried to avoid assigning Jews and refused to deport additional Hungarian Jews to their work sites.<sup>20</sup> Some inmates were used as craftsmen in special workshops, producing clothing and shoes. This type of work seemed to have made the most



Soviet investigators inspect corpses from the Klooga subcamp of Vaivara which have been stacked for mass burning, September 1944. USHMM WS #98901, COURTESY OF ESTHER ANCOLI-BARBASCH

sense as far as productivity was concerned. As Baltöl was mainly interested in improving productivity, they supplied additional foodstuffs. Most former inmates recall that entirely insufficient portions were given to them, indicating that the problem lay mainly with the SS camp administration. For the October 1943–June 1944 reporting period, Bodmann lists 1,506 deaths in all Vaivara subcamps, with a peak of 296 in November and December and another 245 in March 1944. This was about 16.5 percent of the camp population.

Evacuations of camps took place several times, causing inmates to endure difficult marches. Only occasionally was transportation provided; during most of the evacuations, prisoners were forced to march without sufficient shoes, clothes, or food. Large numbers of inmates died from exhaustion or, when they were incapable of moving on, were killed. From the German administrative perspective, evacuations were complicated by the fact that different organizations were responsible for different types of inmates. The army moved the POWs, the companies moved their workforce, and the SS moved the Jewish concentration camp inmates. This added considerably to the already existing chaos; but, as usual, Jews and POWs were treated worse than others. Evacuation plans from March 1944 actually detail the plan to march 5,000 Jewish inmates from eastern Estonia via Ereda, Kohtla, and Kiviõli to Riga—a march estimated to take three weeks.<sup>21</sup> In August and September 1944, the final evacuation from Estonia was planned, but it was delayed by a series of conflicting orders from Hitler, first forbidding and then finally allowing evacuation.<sup>22</sup> In this period, inmates were moved further to the west and finally loaded on ships or, because there was not enough ship space, crowded into the Klooga subcamp and a makeshift camp in Lagedi, near Tallinn. During the voyage along the Baltic coast, several ships sank. Most of the inmates were brought to Stutthof near Danzig and after that to other camps in Germany. Some actually ended up in another shale mining facility in Dautmergen, a subcamp of Natzweiler, where they encountered the former commander of Vivikonna and Ereda again. Not all inmates were supposed to be deported, however. In the last days of July 1944, presumably on July 20 and days following, Bodmann conducted particularly strict selections in one camp after another. Former inmates refer to it as the “10 percent selection,” since fully 10 percent of the inmates were loaded on trucks and taken away. In several camps, the already suspicious remaining inmates asked the selected inmates to leave information on the trucks. The trucks returned with bloodstained clothes and messages that the deportees were to be shot near Ereda. All the SS personnel went away for this action and returned in a drunken stupor with bloodstained uniforms. Former OT personnel in Ereda witnessed the mass executions on July 23 and 24, 1944.<sup>23</sup> On September 19, 1944, the last day before the final evacuation, the remaining inmates of Klooga were also shot.

Most of the major perpetrators in Vaivara served in a number of concentration camps during the war and were sentenced after the war for their activities in camps other than Vaivara. Aumeier was sentenced and executed in Poland in 1948; Dr. Krebsbach was sentenced to death in 1946 in Dachau. Some of the minor figures received jail sentences from U.S., Polish, and Soviet authorities. Bodmann committed suicide in May 1945; Brenneis was killed in the last days of the war. The Soviets conducted a trial in 1951 against members of the Schutzmannschaftsbattalion 287.<sup>24</sup> The German authorities conducted a number of investigations against former camp personnel, some of which led to trials. Helmut Schnabel received a life sentence in 1977; former SDG Rolf Klicker received a reduced sentence of six years, because he had been a minor during the war.<sup>25</sup> Ernst Runde was indicted but committed suicide in 1967 in prison. Oskar Helbig was indicted as well, but in the 1970s he was declared unfit to stand trial. Erich Scharfetter fled to Egypt in 1960, when the investigation against him commenced, but returned in 1977 and was given a life sentence in 1980.<sup>26</sup> Wilhelm Werle and Wilhelm Genth were investigated and died in the 1960s; others, like Alfred Engst, died in the 1950s, before the investigations of events in Estonia took a serious turn after the establishment of the Central Office for State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in 1958. Other perpetrators could not be identified, often because witnesses could only remember a last name. The only perpetrator about whom numerous serious allegations were made, who was never located, is Kurt Pannicke. He came from Wittenberg, later in the Soviet occupied zone, and neither the German Democratic Republic (GDR) nor the West German authorities could trace him.

**SOURCES** The most important sources are the reports from the SS camp doctor (Lagerarzt), which cover the period from September 1943 to June 1944. The reports were only discovered in the summer of 2002 in the EHM, holding documents 152/2/40. In the ESTA, the following records have been preserved: R 187 Baltöl, R 169 OT/Einsatzgruppe Rusland-Nord, Einsatz Baltöl, R 966 AL Narva-Ost, R 170 AL Klooga. Witness testimony can be found in German trial records, the most comprehensive at the ZdL case numbers AR-Z 246/59 and AR-Z 233/59. Witness statements can also be found in the oral history collections in YVA.

Not much has been published on Vaivara. The most comprehensive study was written by Mark Dworzecki, who was an inmate himself and conducted postwar interviews with other former inmates: *Jewish Camps in Estonia* [in Hebrew] (Jerusalem: YV, 1970). An article by Alfred Streim gives an overview of the findings of German courts: “Konzentrationslager auf dem Gebiet der Sowjetunion,” *Datte* 5, (1989). A recent, unpublished study by an Estonian historian uses newly accessible material in Estonian archives: Riho Västriku, “KL Vaivara” (unpub. MSS, Tallinn). The diary of an inmate of Klooga has been published: Herman Kruk, *The Last Days of the Jerusalem of Lithuania: Chronicles from the Vilna Ghetto and the Camps, 1939–1944*, ed. and introd. Benjamin Harshav and

trans. Barbara Harshav (New Haven, CT: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 2002).

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## NOTES

1. In the following, reference to any of the sources used will only be made if part of the text is quoted verbatim or a statement warrants special attention.

2. June 6, 1943, RFSS an HSSPF Ostland, Chef WVHA, BA, NS 19/1740.

3. October 2, 1943, RSHA an Verteiler, BA, R 58/264.

4. See March 4, 1944, Mathy, Direktor der Baltischen Öl GmbH, Bericht, ESTA, R 187/1/1.

5. July 21, 1943, Wossagk, Abwehrbeauftragter Baltöl, Aktennotiz, ESTA, R 187/1/33.

6. Ibid.

7. See January 15, 1943, OT, Bestand Ostländerlager Falkenhorst, ESTA, R 167/1/5.

8. September 30, 1943, Baltöl, Arbeitseinsatz den [sic] Juden, ESTA, R 187/1/33.

9. June 26, 1944, OT/Russland-Nord/Baltöl, ESTA, R 169/1/3.

10. January 26, 1944, Monatsbericht SS Arzt, EHM, 152/2/40. The author wishes to thank Meelis Maripuu and Riho Västriik for making these reports available.

11. October 25, 1943, Monatsbericht SS Arzt, EHM, 152/2/40.

12. N.d., Belegschaft Neubauprogramme; July 19, 1944, Baltöl Aktennotiz—both: ESTA R187/1/24.

13. Card index, ESTA, R 170; 1992, Benjamin Anolik, YVA, 03/6548; January 20, 1944, SS Wirtschaftler Riga, Beurteilung Aumeier, BA, Aumeier SS file.

14. October 25, 1943, Monatsbericht SS Lagerarzt, EHM, 152/2/40.

15. February 20, 1944, March 26, 1944, April 25, 1944, SS Lagerarzt Berichte, EHM, 152/2/40; October 27, 1964, Molly In., vol. 12; March 22, 1965, Molly In., vol. 13; July 27, 1965, Molly In., vol. 14—all: ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

16. November 25, 1943, Monatsbericht SS Arzt, EHM, 152/2/40.

17. July 15, 1965, Nissan An., vol. 14, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

18. January 20, 1944, SS Wirtschaftler Riga, Beurteilung Aumeier, BA, Aumeier SS file.

19. February 2, 1944, Baltöl Aktennotiz; February 20, 1944, OT/Einsatz Baltöl, Aktenvermerk; July 19, 1944, Baltöl, Aktennotiz—all: ESTA, R 187/1/24.

20. June 2, 1944, Baltöl an Arbeitseinsatzstelle Baltöl, ESTA, R 187/1/32; June 27, 1944, Beauftragter für den Arbeitseinsatz, ESTA, R 187/1/33.

21. March 5, 1944, Mineralölkommando an Heeresgruppe Russland-Nord, ESTA, R 187/1/67.

22. N.d., Übersicht über die Weisungen; conflicting Hitler orders from August 9, 1944, August 11, 1944, August 13, 1944—all: ESTA, R 187/1/24.

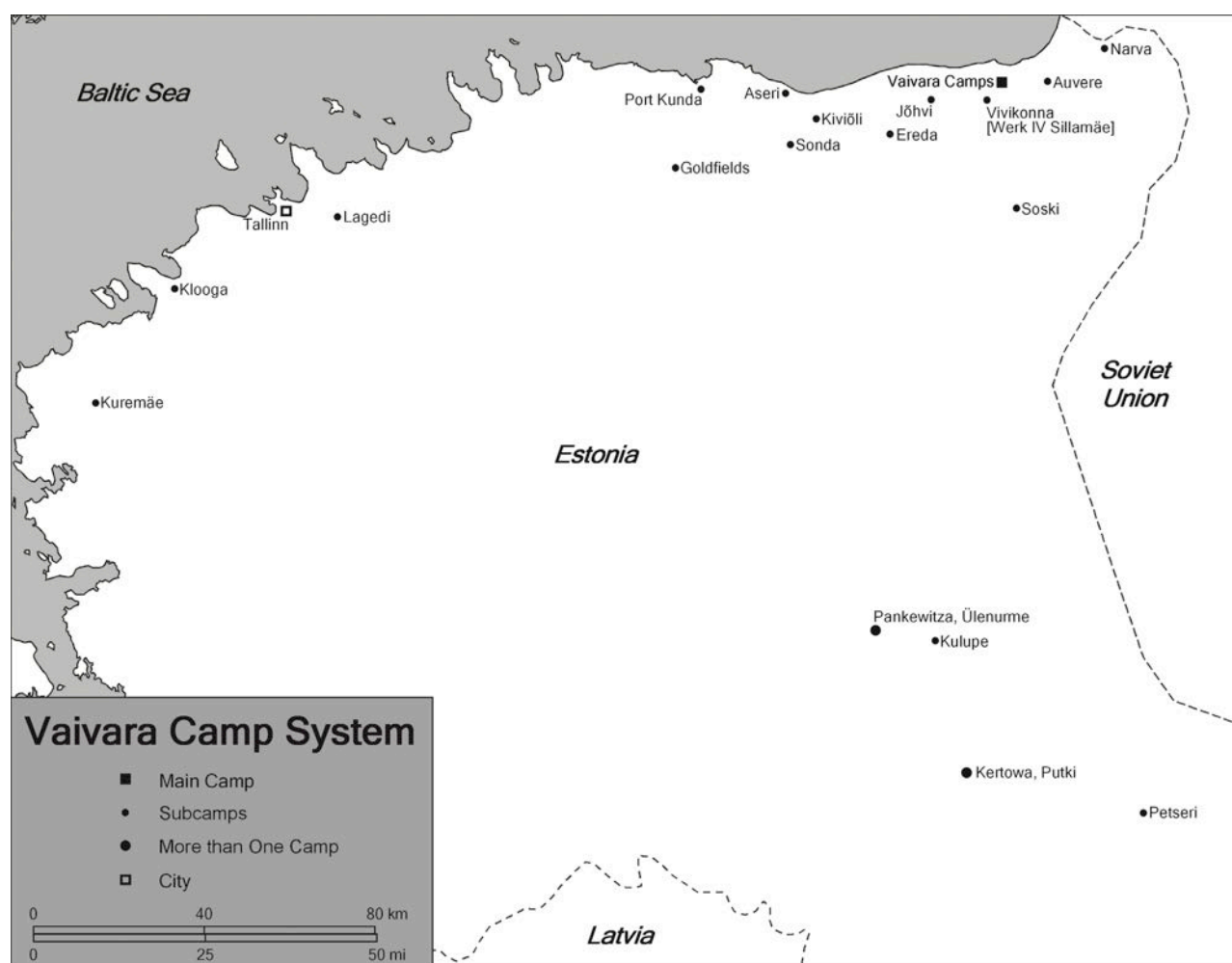
23. April 25, 1963, Franz Le., vol. 11A; July 21, 1976, Fritz Se., vol. 30—both: ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

24. ESTA, Fond 129/16210jv, information courtesy of Riho Västriik.

25. LG Hannover, 11Ks 2/75.

26. LG Stade, 9 Ks 1/78-23/78.





### ASERI [AKA OT OSTLÄNDER LAGER]

The Aseri subcamp was established on May 8, 1944. It held 225 inmates and was monitored by 23 guards. The camp commander was Kurt Pannicke; witnesses recall a deputy nicknamed “Boxer” or “Giraffe.” The SS medic (SDG) assigned to Aseri was Erich Scharfetter. The camp elder was Diller. One witness stated that there were Dutch personnel in the camp, one of whom helped inmates; another, Wilhelm Genth, beat many of them.<sup>1</sup> Inmates either worked in a quarry or laid down railway tracks. Housing consisted of wooden barracks. Even according to the reports of the SS camp doctor, Bodmann, hygienic conditions and food supply in Aseri were inadequate.<sup>2</sup>

In September 1943, French, Spanish, and Dutch forced laborers were working in Aseri; in February 1944, the camp was still referred to as “OT [Organisation Todt] Ostländer Lager.” Vaivara inmates were marched to Aseri and remained there until August. In typical Vaivara fashion, Pannicke was transferred from one camp to another, and he took a group of Jewish inmates he selected with him.<sup>3</sup> According to witness statements, Pannicke knew inmates individually and exhib-

ited a godlike attitude, as expressed in his saying, “I am killing my Jews myself.”<sup>4</sup> Inmates were beaten on a special bench for stealing food during work assignments outside the camp. One witness related a rather unusual experience: a German army colonel requested a daily work detail of 20 inmates for the sole purpose of giving them food.<sup>5</sup>

Bodmann “selected” 10 percent of the Aseri inmates, including children that the inmates had previously been able to protect. After the selection, the remaining inmates heard machine-gun fire near the camp. One witness stated that a wounded survivor came back to report that the victims were shot near Erede; this account would be consistent with the overall pattern of killings after the big selection in the summer of 1944. Pannicke returned with a bloodstained uniform, and when asked what had happened by the inmates who were requested to wash it, he joked that he had been involved in a duel.<sup>6</sup> Some inmates were deported by ship from Aseri via Kiviõli to Stutthof in the summer of 1944; others remained in the Vaivara camp system.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”  
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## NOTES

1. October 4, 1965, Sima Sk., vol. 14, BA-L, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
2. May 26, 1944 and June 26, 1944, Monatsberichte SS Lagerarzt, EHM, 152/2/40.
3. October 4, 1965, Sima Sk., vol. 14; October 6, 1968, Iccak Zo., vol. 24—both: BA-L, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
4. August 19, 1965, Szabatai Ge., vol. 14; October 4, 1965, Sima Sk., vol. 14—both: BA-L, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
5. September 19, 1962, Efim. Ko., vol. 14, BA-L, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
6. October 4, 1965, Sima Sk., vol. 14; October 22, 1968, Sima Sk., vol. 24; July 1, 1971, Herschel Dr., vol. 27—all: BA-L, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

## AUVERE

The Auvere subcamp, which the Germans established in the fall of 1943, was one of the smaller camps. In October 1943, it contained 406 inmates; in November, it held 542 prisoners and was considered overcrowded. In January 1943, the number of inmates was 531, but 487 of those inmates were sent on an evacuation march in February 1943. On February 4, 1944, the camp was considered closed.

The first inmates were transferred to Auvere immediately after deportation from Vilnius and Kaunas; others arrived later via Vivikonna. The first camp commander was an Organisation Todt (OT) member; he was replaced by a German police officer, remembered by inmates as Wittner. He was succeeded by Ernst Runde around Christmas of 1943, who also acted as SS medic (SDG). The camp elder was called Jankelewicz. The work was very hard, consisting of building a narrow-gauge railway in a swampy area, which meant that the inmates were standing up to their ankles in ice-cold water. Others worked at woodcutting. OT supervised the work. The inmates were first housed in a former school building; later *Tonnenzelte*, a sort of emergency barracks, were added.

The typhoid epidemic of the winter of 1943–1944 reached Auvere, and in December 1943, 35 inmates had died and 123 were in quarantine. In January 1944, another 12 deaths were registered. The SS camp doctor, Bodmann, fell ill himself in the December period and was temporarily replaced by Dr. Krebsbach. An inmate acted as grave digger. The food situation was as bad here as in other Vaivara camps. Inmates who worked outside the camp were always trying to obtain supplementary food; 1 inmate, who was apprehended with a piece of bread, was killed by the SDG. Another witness recalled how the SDG shot an unnamed inmate who had fallen to his knees, begging for his life. This inmate had been given a few fish by an Estonian.<sup>1</sup>

Due to the approach of the Red Army, Auvere was evacuated on February 4, 1944, and 487 inmates were forced to march via Vaivara to Kiviõli, a considerable distance in the middle of winter with plenty of snow on the ground. On January 29, 1944, 40 sick inmates had been transported to

Vaivara. The march was supervised by Runde and a Wehrmacht SDG. Runde himself recalled that the marching column stretched to 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) and was guarded by the Estonian police. Most witnesses recall the terrible circumstances of the march, during which feeble inmates were thrown into a lake.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

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## NOTE

1. March 14, 1971, Aron Sch., vol. 27, BA-L, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

## EREDA

Ereda was operated by Baltische Öl GmbH, or Baltöl (Baltic Oil), as production site (*Werk*) number X. Before the Germans established the main Vaivara camp, the workforce at Ereda consisted of a mix of civilian laborers, prisoners of war (POWs), and forced laborers. A Waffen-SS depot (*Reservelager*) was nearby. In the vicinity of Ereda, there were a number of work sites, such as mines for oil shale, coal pits, refineries (in nearby Kohtla-Järve), and several building sites run by the Organisation Todt (OT).<sup>1</sup> Ereda was one of the first Vaivara camps to be set up, initially only on a temporary basis, and it contained 245 inmates in October 1943. In November, plans were changed, and the number of inmates was raised to 630. They were supposed to build a new camp 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) away. In December, this plan was dropped, and Ereda continued to consist of two, close-by camps, referred to as the lower camp and the upper camp. In December and January, 752 inmates were incarcerated in Ereda, but the number rose sharply with the influx of evacuees, which brought the total up to 1,600 in February and 1,907 in March. In May 1944, there were 1,497 inmates guarded by 61 Russian guards. As of July 19, 1944, 1,132 Jews worked on OT construction sites. The companies considered the number of Jewish inmates to be too high for acceptable productivity.<sup>2</sup>

When the first Jewish prisoners arrived, Ereda was still run by OT. After the takeover by the SS administration, the first camp commander was Heinz Drosihn, with Becker as deputy. Drosihn was succeeded by Helmut Schnabel. Erich Scharfetter was in Ereda during the December 1943–January 1944 period of the typhus epidemic; later Rolf Klicker was SS medic (SDG). Former inmates mention as camp elders Lehmann, Rauch, and Glaser. Some witnesses have bad recollections of some of the camp functionaries, and they commented on the lack of solidarity in the camp.<sup>3</sup> Drs. Konjurski, Ponwaski, and Konis were mentioned as camp doctors. Roughly 1,000 Jewish inmates were sent to Ereda directly after their deportation from Lithuania in August–September 1943, some of whom were moved to Narva (see Vaivara/Narva) after roughly one month. In the winter of 1943–1944, a small number of Jewish women, who had been deported to Estonia from Germany and Theresienstadt in 1942,

were transferred from the Reval prison to Ereda, presumably in an effort to separate all Jewish from non-Jewish inmates, though 1 of them held that this was meant as punishment for maintaining contact with their families at home with the help of German workmen.<sup>4</sup> In February 1944, when the more eastern subcamps of Vaivara were evacuated, Ereda became one of the reception camps. The inmates of Narva, for instance, were marched to Ereda under Schnabel's command, and many of them were shot on the way. Some inmates thus encountered family or friends from whom they had been separated. In the early summer of 1944, Hungarian women were deported to Ereda. According to German witnesses from OT, Ereda was liquidated by the end of July 1944, and—as in Aseri and other subcamps—shortly afterward the victims of the “10 percent action” were shot there.<sup>5</sup>

The most dramatic incident in the history of Ereda is connected with the transfer of the group of women from Reval to Ereda. Camp commander Drosihn fell in love with one of the young women, leading to an improvement in the inmates' living conditions. One witness recalls a New Year's Eve celebration where Drosihn was drinking toasts to the inmates and wishing that everybody would be home the following year.<sup>6</sup> The relationship was discovered, and Drosihn, who must have been aware that the penalty for *Rassenschande* (racial defilement) was death, sought the assistance of his friends in the OT, who helped him to escape and hide. After a few days, however, both Drosihn and the woman were apprehended—either they were shot or they committed suicide. This took place at the end of February or in early March 1944. The episode had a profound effect on the SS camp administration, and strict regulations were implemented to avoid another occurrence. Schnabel took over as camp commander.

Ereda consisted of an upper and a lower camp built on swampy ground. The first inmates had to build their own accommodations; even essentials like a camp kitchen were missing. The housing situation was unsatisfactory, consisting initially of Quonset-type huts, which provided no shelter from the cold. The inmates referred to these huts as “dog-houses.” Inmates' hair sometimes froze to the ground during the night, and they had to cut it off in order to be punctual for roll call. Only in June 1944 was the camp connected to running water, which allowed the inmates to wash daily. The death toll due to the bad living conditions was high: 109 deaths in February 1944 and 161 in March 1944. Because of the numerous construction sites in the vicinity, inmates had to march considerable distances to their workplaces, in the winter and with wooden clogs, which exhausted them even more. After February 1944, the camp became so overcrowded that inmates hardly had room to lie down. In the January–February period, an epidemic of typhus broke out, which added to the general chaos in the camp. Corpses were regularly burned in pits in a clearing in the woods nearby. The sick and the children were confined to the lower camp, where conditions were even more atrocious. On February 14, 1944, all the sick people, together with doctors and nurses and 184 children from the lower camp, were deported. Ereda continued to be used as a collection point for sick inmates; in April

1944, another large group was deported. In July 1944, the “10 percent selection” took place in Ereda as in other subcamps (see “Vaivara Main Camp”), and the camp was evacuated. The inmates were transported by rail, with the exception of roughly 100 people who were left behind, supposedly to clean up the camp.

Schnabel committed numerous acts of atrocity and murder and was considered a sadist. Even former OT personnel commented on the terrible conditions in the camp, the frequent floggings, and the daily deaths of inmates. Several of the killings that Schnabel committed were talked about throughout the camp: one was the killing of two inmates who had asked for a second helping of soup; another, the drowning or starvation (accounts differ) of a newborn baby. Another incident concerned an inmate who, due to illness, could not reach the camp latrines in time and was shot by Schnabel with the words: “Damn dog, you are soiling the white snow.” A young girl was ordered by Schnabel to clean his boots while he was walking around in them, forcing her to crawl on her knees after him while he kicked her in the head.<sup>7</sup> One of the former Jewish camp doctors commented that Schnabel liked to see blood. Only when the treatment by the Jewish doctors gave Schnabel relief from his arthritis did he treat the inmates somewhat better. Schnabel used a great deal of alcohol; to procure it, two youngsters from the camp bartered food supplies for alcohol in the nearby village. Dealings of this nature seem to have made Schnabel somewhat approachable; at times, both he and the SDG could be bribed with valuables.<sup>8</sup> Most of the former inmates comment more favorably on the behavior of the OT men, who tried to improve the food situation.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

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## NOTES

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2. June 27, 1944, Bevollmächtigter für den Arbeitseinsatz, ESTA, R 1887/1/33.
3. Gerszon Karapansa, YV, 03/1780; Rosalie Szoszana Harten, YVA, 03/2262; Se'adya Bahat, YVA, 03/8657; Aharon Nahimowicz, YVA, 03/3957.
4. July 13, 1965, Hilda Le., vol. 14, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
5. April 17, 1963, Franz Le., vol. 11A, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
6. Simon Tubiaszewicz, YVA, 04/396.
7. June 9, 1966, Sara Mi., vol. 22, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
8. July 11, 1973, Yakov Pe., vol. 28, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

## GOLDFIELDS (“GOLDFELD”)

Goldfields was part of the Baltische Öl GmbH, or Baltöl (Baltic Oil) concern, named such by a British company in the interwar years. Jewish workers were used for several Baltöl building projects. In February 1944, the Goldfields subcamp opened with 1,200 inmates. In March the number rose to



1,543, but in May there were only 889 inmates in the camp. In July 1944, Baltöl statistics show 405 Jewish workers on Goldfields construction sites.

The camp commander at Goldfields was Fritz Stiewitz. According to one witness, Stiewitz originated from Frankfurt, and some of the female inmates knew him from school (this in reference to the Frankfurt deportees, who came via the Reval prison to the Vaivara camps). According to the same witness, Stiewitz was not so bad by himself, but became cruel under group pressure from other SS soldiers.<sup>1</sup> Inmates remember SS medic (SDG) Erich Scharfetter, nicknamed “Kirkennik,” who was routinely assigned to camps to combat typhus epidemics. In May 1944, the SDGs were Heinrich Helmlinger and Theodor Schmitz. Some inmates remember Raphael Oster as camp elder; others recall somebody named Dipante.<sup>2</sup> In the final period, Kurt Pannicke, who had marched some of the inmates of Aseri to Goldfields, presumably in preparation for the final evacuation, took over as camp commander.

Inmates of Ereda report that they were marched daily to nearby Goldfields to work on construction. When the new camp opened, Stiewitz selected the first group of inmates from those he knew in Ereda. They were housed in unused barracks and worked building railway tracks and on other construction sites. Goldfields was one of the camps to receive the populations of the already evacuated camps. In March 1944, the inmates of Kuremäe arrived in Goldfields, leading to a sharp deterioration in hygienic conditions. All of the inmates were infested with lice. In April 1944, 150 inmates were sent to Klooga, bringing some relief from the overcrowding. Inmates from Aseri recall arriving as late as August 1944. In this period, no productive work was conducted, as everybody knew that the end was near.<sup>3</sup> A large group of inmates managed to escape, but Pannicke organized a search, during which many of the escapees were shot.<sup>4</sup> The final evacuation took place in part by truck. A truck loaded with 50 SS men in black leather coats accompanied them. After an error in direction, panic seized the already apprehensive inmates, who jumped off the trucks and tried to hide. Shots were fired, a few people were killed, but the rest came back and were finally deported from Reval to Stutthof by ship.<sup>5</sup>

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

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## NOTES

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2. March 1, 1966, Israel Polizei, Bericht 10, statement by Meir Mark Dworzecki, vol. 16, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59; Abraham Halpern, YVA, 03/3201.

3. August 17, 1965, Alan We., vol. 14, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

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## JÖHVI (JEWE)

Apart from oil-shale mining, Organisation Todt (OT) was engaged in multiple projects at Jöhvi, which was listed as Werk IV of Baltische Öl GmbH, or Baltöl (Baltic Oil). The other projects included building fortifications and digging antitank trenches; constructing a power station, a hospital, and barracks; and cutting wood for the construction projects. Jöhvi housed a number of German offices, an Estonian security police outpost, a local army commander (Standortkommandant), and a field hospital (*Hauptverbandsplatz*) located next to a hospital under construction and a big cemetery. It must have been a place of some importance, for when Reichskommissar Lohse inspected the Baltöl and OT sites on September 1, 1943, he visited Kiviõli and Jöhvi.

In October 1943, the first 201 inmates of Jöhvi were placed in unused barracks. While their number slightly increased to 264 in December, the camp never physically grew bigger. It was obviously meant as a temporary camp, because by the end of December, it was closed. One witness recalls that he remained behind with a group to clean up.<sup>1</sup> In February 1944, it was reopened for a short period, this time containing 190 inmates. The barracks for Jewish inmates were close to a Russian camp but strictly separated by barbed wire. OT personnel recalled that the Jews were later replaced by prisoners of war (POWs).

When deportees from the first transport from Vilnius arrived in Jöhvi, the camp was not yet incorporated into the Vaivara system. Even afterward, no SS commander was assigned to Jöhvi, but the camp was run by OT and a camp elder. The OT also supplied the camp guards. Former inmates have positive recollections of the OT supervisor, who on one occasion tore a picture of Hitler from the wall.<sup>2</sup> SS medic (SDG) Erich Scharfetter, nicknamed “Kirkennik,” was the only SS member active in Jöhvi for lengthy periods of time due to his function in disinfecting inmates.<sup>3</sup> In December 1943, an epidemic of typhus erupted. Scharfetter killed sick inmates through injections and shot others who were running a fever, causing widespread panic and several suicides among the inmates. The remaining sick inmates were sent to a hospital in Vaivara.

Jewish female inmates from the Jöhvi camp worked as cleaning personnel in OT offices. A female German office worker, in charge of payment of salaries, recalls that they were pale, malnourished, and insufficiently clad and that she gave them food.<sup>4</sup> Former OT men mentioned that the Jewish cleaners cried because their hair had been cut and that the Jews working on construction complained about hunger.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

Ruth Bettina Birn

## NOTES

1. July 11, 1973, Yakov Pe., vol. 28, ZdL, AR-Z 233/5; July 11, 73, Fajwel Mi., vol. 28, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

2. Izhak Kaufman, in a 1964 symposium on Estonian camps, YVA, 03/2810.

3. Urteil LG Stade gegen Erich Scharfetter, February 1, 1980, 9 Ks I/78-23/78.

4. October 20, 1960, Erna Ho., vol. 3, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

## KERSTOWA AND PUTKI

The Germans established Kerstowa as a temporary camp in October 1943. Its 348 inmates had to work on a demolition project that was supposed to last for one or two weeks. The camp was not run by SS personnel and was far away from the other Vaivara camps. In November, the camp was dissolved, and the remaining 159 inmates were transferred via Narva to a new camp, Putki.

Putki was located in an area of forest and swamp, housed 145 inmates, and was run entirely by the Organisation Todt (OT). In January 1944, 198 inmates were transferred from Narva, bringing the camp population to 340. The camp operated until February 4, 1944, when the Red Army's advance made the OT retreat. The 334 remaining inmates were marched by Wehrmacht medic Rabel to Vaivara, under terrible conditions, through forests and swamps.<sup>1</sup>

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

Ruth Bettina Birn

## NOTE

1. Reports of the SS-Lagerarzt, October 25, 1943, November 25, 1943, December 29, 1943, January 26, 1944, February 20, 1944—all: EHM, 152/2/40.

## KIVIÖLI I AND II

Kiviõli was a center of industrial activity: the headquarters of Baltische Öl GmbH, or Baltöl (Baltic Oil), had its office there, and the Mineral Oil Command (Mineralölkommando) and the General Labor Leader (Generalsarbeitsführer) of the Organisation Todt (OT) Industrial Protective Service (Werkschutz, supervised by the gendarmerie detachment leader, Gendarmeriegebietsführer) were stationed there.<sup>1</sup> In addition, a German gendarmerie post and a local headquarters (*Ortskommandantur*) of the German army were located there. The commander of the Security Police of Estonia had a branch office there, headed by Heinz Zielfeld. The various construction projects at Kiviõli were considered of great importance.<sup>2</sup>

In October 1943, Kiviõli contained 448 inmates; they were housed in temporary barracks until additional facilities were built. The number of inmates rose steadily, from 698 in November to 1,300 in February 1944, and to 1,689 in May and June. On July 19, 1944, 1,462 inmates worked at Baltöl construction sites in Kiviõli.<sup>3</sup> In February 1944, 104 old and sick inmates were deported to the Riga-Kaiserwald concentration

camp; in May, 250 sick people from Ereda were brought to the camp; and in June, 200 inmates from Goldfields were transferred to Kiviõli.

Two camps existed—Kiviõli I and II—but they were administered as one. The commander of Kiviõli I was Wilhelm Werle; the deputy commander and SS medic (SDG) was Ernst Runde. A dental station was run by Franz Mang. In March 1944, after the Germans had to leave Vaivara, Oskar Helbig became deputy commander. The camp doctors have been identified as Dr. Wolkowyski and Dr. Naftali Resnik; the camp elder, as Zepelewicz (or Cypelewicz). At a later point, Reissig took over as the commander. The commander of Kiviõli II was Wirker, although Erich Scharfetter acted for him occasionally. In May 1944, 71 guards monitored 1,689 inmates. Some female inmates recall female army auxiliaries (*Blitzmüdel*) as their guards.<sup>4</sup>

Sanitary conditions were initially bad but slowly improved, in part because of security considerations. Baltöl considered the installation of running water a necessity because the use of a common well increased the risk of escapes and undermined the separation of Jewish inmates from others.<sup>5</sup> Communication between the two camps seems to have been possible, and, to a certain degree, contact between male and female inmates was also possible. Kiviõli I was considered the better place; former inmates recall sufficient food—even kosher (without meat)—and celebration of Jewish holidays was possible.<sup>6</sup> The Jewish criminals (*Shtarke*) held a strong influence in the camp.<sup>7</sup>

Former inmates of Kiviõli I recall that Runde harassed them at roll call; they also describe Helbig as a sadist, whereas the commander was seen as a moderating influence. One former inmate, who was deported directly from Vilnius to Kiviõli I and stayed there until mid-1944, describes Runde as the main negative influence in the camp.<sup>8</sup> Both Runde and Helbig are alleged to have killed inmates on big piles of hot slag; Helbig actually had several feeble inmates thrown on it, so that they burned alive.<sup>9</sup> Inmates of Kiviõli II reported that Wirker was quite active in the camp, supervising activities in the sickroom, ordering specific roll calls to be conducted on Sundays, and committing a number of atrocities. The ongoing selections claimed victims from among Hungarian Jewish women, many of whom arrived in the camp pregnant.

The “10 percent selection” (see “Vaivara Main Camp”) took place at both camps, conducted by the SS camp doctor, Bodmann. The camp elder and doctors of Kiviõli I were among those selected. It appears that the lists of “unfit” inmates had been prepared in advance.<sup>10</sup> As in other camps, the inmate in charge of vehicle maintenance looked on the returning truck and found indications in several languages that those selected were being shot close to Ereda.<sup>11</sup> An SS driver returned with his arm wounded and his rifle broken, complaining about “the Jews” who had done that to him; the other SS officers had bloodied and dirtied uniforms and boots; the SS dentist brought a box with gold teeth back. According to a former German police officer, Kiviõli was also the site of the elimination of mass graves by Sonderkommando 1005.<sup>12</sup>

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

Ruth Bettina Birn

## NOTES

1. Otto Me., p. 146, vol. 1, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
2. September 20, 1943, OT/Einsatzgruppe Russland Nord, Gieseler an Reichsminister für Bewaffnung und Munition, Speer; OT/Einsatzgruppe Russland Nord, Gieseler an Leiter OT Zentrale, Dorsch—both: ESTA, R 187/1/7.
3. July 19, 1944, Baustellenplanung, ESTA, R 187/1/124.
4. Nechama Leibiski, YVA, M1E/2444.
5. October 4, 1943, Baltöl, Überwachung der Juden, ESTA, R 187/1/33.
6. Arye Rubinstein, YVA, 03/9681; Arie Orbach, YVA, 04/2733; Chienna Yakobson, YVA, 03/5988; Gerszon Karapansa, YVA, 03/1780.
7. Gerszon Karapansa, YVA, 03/1780.
8. October 20, 1965, Hirsz An., vol. 14, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
9. Alfred Streim, “Konzentrationslager auf dem Gebiet der Sowjetunion,” *DaHe* 5 (1989): 181.
10. Mira Brojdo, YVA, 04/396.
11. November 10, 1967, Joseph Le., vol. 23, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
12. July 3, 1968, Josef Sch., vol. 7, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

## KLOOGA

The subcamp at Klooga was located west of the city of Tallinn, outside the northeastern mining and oil-shale district, and it was not connected with Baltische Öl GmbH, or Baltöl (Baltic Oil). In 1942, camps for resettlers from the army area “Russia-North,” in Klooga-Lodensee, Polküla, Pakri, and Baltisch-Port, were based at Klooga. In 1943–1944, Klooga was a camp for Russian forced laborers; from 1943 on, it was the barracks grounds and administrative offices of the 20th Estonian Waffen-SS division; and then it became a subcamp



Soviet investigators inspect corpses from the Klooga subcamp of Vaivara which have been stacked for mass burning, September 1944.

USHMM WS #98905, COURTESY OF ESTHER ANCOLI-BARBASCH

of Vaivara. A work detail (Aussenkommando) was located in nearby Laoküla.

The camp population in Klooga was more stable than in other Vaivara camps. Many former inmates stated that they had been deported directly from Lithuania to Klooga and remained there until August–September 1944. In October 1943, Klooga already contained 1,453 inmates; in November, 1,854; and in April 1944, 2,080. In May 1944, there were 2,122 inmates and 112 guards. In November 1943, 250 inmates were sent to work camps near Dorpat; in April 1944, 250 were received from Ereda and Goldfields; and in May, more inmates were received from Kiviõli. Men and women were housed in solid barracks in separate parts of the camp. Running water and elementary sanitary facilities existed; the Vaivara SS camp doctor, Bodmann, considered the conditions in Klooga better than those in any other camp. In the final stages of German occupation of Estonia, many inmates from other camps and the SS camp administration—including Aumeier, Brenneis, and Bodmann—crowded into Klooga, waiting for transport by ship to Germany.

The camp commander was Bock, though it is unclear whether he held that position for the whole period. For the last few weeks in the summer of 1944, he was replaced by Wilhelm Werle. The SS medics (SDGs) were Wilhelm Bahr and Karl Theiner (confirmed for May 1944); inmates name others, among them Wilhelm Genth. Female inmates were guarded by female SS guards, one of whom was transferred from Ravensbrück. Sources mention Melzer and Frieda Beiwill as camp elders; others mention Fried and Muskat. Jewish camp police were present, and inmates were assigned as work supervisors. Former inmates also speak about the presence of organized Jewish criminals from Vilnius (*Die Shtarken, unsere Unterwelt*), which, contrary to the other inmates' apprehensions, turned out to be a positive element, organizing the stealing and distribution of food.<sup>1</sup> Witnesses also speak positively about an SS man in charge of supplies, who would give them the opportunity to steal or barter for food and bring it back to the camp.<sup>2</sup> This story is confirmed by the former cook of a navy work detail in Klooga.<sup>3</sup> Dutch civilian laborers working close by also supplied inmates with food.<sup>4</sup> According to criminal investigations conducted by the Estonian security police, a lively trade bartering clothes for food took place between Klooga inmates working outside the camp and the local population, in particular Russians from the resettlement camp.<sup>5</sup>

Work consisted of the production of concrete mines supervised by the Organisation Todt (OT) and a special command of the German navy, construction activities under the OT, or work at a sawmill. The OT also worked with non-Jewish forced laborers. A card index of inmates of Klooga and their work assignments gives an overview of the work details, which included pouring concrete, construction, transport, the sawmill, craft shops, cleaning details, and the army supply depot Reval (*Truppenwirtschaftslager*).<sup>6</sup>

Former inmates recall few instances of killings before September 1944. One scene that many remembered took place upon arrival of the deportation train. After disembarking, in-



mates had to line up in front of a long table and deliver their valuables or money to the SS. One former Jewish Vilnius ghetto policeman obviously tried to conceal money and was shot on the spot in public view. Bodmann and the medical personnel repeatedly killed sick inmates with injections. Corporal punishment was meted out; on one occasion, an inmate was beaten to death by three SS men. Different variants exist about the killing of a newborn baby, which a medic with the nickname “Antek” burned in the oven of the sawmill. Other atrocities are attributed to Antek as well; and several inmates claim that he was in fact Wilhelm Genth. However, many of the allegations do not coincide with the established stages of Genth’s camp career. Other sources claim that Wilhelm Bahr murdered the baby; Bahr was confirmed as a medic in Klooga.

Klooga was liquidated on September 19, 1944. Inmates from outside work details were brought back to the main camp, which was cordoned off with the help of units of the 20th Waffen-SS Division under the command of Sturmbannführer Georg Ahlemann.<sup>7</sup> The SS tried hard to avoid a panic among the inmates and promised that everybody would be evacuated to other camps in Germany. They even provided a particularly good meal. It cannot be ascertained who was in command on that day; the obvious person would be the then-camp commander Werle, although he denied this and claimed that the (higher-ranking) Verwaltungsführer Brenneis had taken over. Apart from the Vaivara personnel present in Klooga, a group of 20 or 30 people from the Commander of Security Police and Security Service in Reval arrived on the morning of September 19 to carry out a mass killing. All the inmates had to sit down cross-legged on the camp ground. Several hundred young men were then called up and had to carry stout pieces of wood out of the camp. After that, inmates were marched out of the camp in small groups. At some point, the sound of gunfire confirmed the suspicions of the waiting inmates; in addition, 1 man came running back and shouted warnings before he was shot. In the ensuing panic, over 100 inmates were able to flee and hide. The wood that the inmates had carried had been used to form pyres. People were shot and fell onto them, then a new layer of wood was added and the next group shot. Other inmates were shot in a shed, but several people escaped before it was doused with gasoline and burned. The pyres were also set on fire. Russian prisoners were shot as well.

At the end of the day, the Germans left the camp. The inmates in hiding were liberated by the Red Army a few days later. The Red Army widely reported on what had happened and took pictures of the execution site, and the Klooga mass murder was introduced in the Soviet trial against Friedrich Jeckeln and others in Riga in 1945–1946. For these reasons, this mass killing and Klooga itself have become more widely known than other subcamps where similar events took place—for instance, Ereda.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

Ruth Bettina Birn

## NOTES

1. Abraham Aharonson, YVA, 03/2926; manuscript by L. Buzhanski, YVA, M 1-E/822; Israel Segal, YVA, 03/2669.
2. Abraham Aharonson, YVA, 03/2926.
3. July 12, 196?, Wilhelm Fö., vol. 17, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
4. Abraham Aharonson, YVA, 03/2926.
5. Individual cases in ESTA, R 64/1/159-167.
6. See R 170, ESTA. A full evaluation of the index was done by Riho Västriik and kindly made available to the author.
7. July 9, 1974, Anklageschrift Georg Ahlemann, LG Köln, 130 24 Js 14/70.

## KUREMÄE

The first 150 inmates of the Kuremäe subcamp were housed in a former community center (*Gemeindehaus*). Everything was lacking: food, water, latrines, shoes, and clothes. Even the Vaivara SS camp doctor, Bodmann, remarked on the desolate conditions. The inmates had to build the fences enclosing the camp themselves; later a few emergency barracks (*Tonnenzelte*) were erected. Some people were directly deported from Kaunas to Kuremäe; others arrived later via other camps. Inmates worked on a narrow-gauge railway. In November 1943, the number of inmates increased to 462. Bodmann complained about the high percentage of people unfit for work but mentioned that the numbers had “decreased.”<sup>1</sup> From this remark one can conclude that the 33 deaths registered in November were not due to natural causes. In December 1943 and January 1944, the number of inmates was slightly lower, and 10 and 14 deaths occurred, respectively. In February 1944, the population sharply increased to about 850, due to the transfer of 437 inmates from Soski. On February 8 and February 16, inmates were killed by Soviet artillery at their work sites. Kuremäe was closed in March 1944.

The camp commander was Alfred Engst; the SS medic (SDG) was Knott. SDG Erich Scharfetter was also present. The guards were Russians or Ukrainians. Dr. Dworzecki was the camp doctor. Later, at the time of the evacuation of most eastern camps, Wilhelm Genth, who was acting as commander in Soski, marched the Soski inmates to Kuremäe with the help of the Estonian guards. The inmates recall having “been driven like cattle” and that Scharfetter killed several people on the way.<sup>2</sup> After Kuremäe was evacuated, the inmates were absorbed into other camps. Several witnesses list Goldfields as the next station.

Scharfetter was infamous for his acts of cruelty; he killed inmates with injections but also by cutting their throats or with a pickax. An inmate recalls the murder of 19 sick inmates; later, that inmate, who had to burn the corpses, recounted that all 19 had wounds inflicted by a pickax.<sup>3</sup> A German court sentenced Scharfetter to life imprisonment for 18 counts of murder.<sup>4</sup>

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”  
Ruth Bettina Birn

## NOTES

1. November 25, 1943, Monatsbericht SS Lagerarzt, EHM, 152/2/40.
2. June 7, 1967, Abraham Kr., vol. 4, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
3. Iser Zak, YVA, 04/400.
4. February 1, 1980, Urteil Scharfetter, LG Stade, 9 Ks 1/78-23/78.

## LAGEDI

The subcamp at Lagedi existed only briefly, approximately from July to September of 1944. Entries on transfers in the Klooga card index indicate that it was considered a work camp.<sup>1</sup> When the transports of inmates coming from camps evacuated in the second stage of the retreat could not be housed in Klooga, a camp was erected close to Reval in Lagedi near the railway line. Inmates were initially living in the open; later they constructed temporary shelter. In August 1944, material to erect barracks was supplied by Klooga. The camp commander was Helmut Schnabel. SS medic (SDG) Scharfetter seems also to have been present at one stage, and there are allegations against him of killings of inmates in pairs. At one point the camp was bombarded by the Soviets, and some inmates were wounded. In the final evacuation, the inmates were transported by ship to the Stutthof concentration camp. When they left, only a group of approximately 80 inmates remained to clean up. Former inmates later heard that the 80 were killed after they performed the work. The German camp personnel shot them after the Estonian guards refused to do it.

On August 18, 1944, 500 inmates from Klooga were brought to Lagedi, which was at that point empty except for camp commander Alfred Engst and two Jews. Some inmates have positive recollections of Engst; for instance, he allowed them to bathe once a week. The inmates had to dig antitank trenches. Shortly before the evacuation, the Vaivara SS camp doctor, Bodmann, conducted a final selection. On September 18, 1944, Krebsbach, Brenneis, and other SS officers arrived to tell Engst that the camp inmates would be evacuated to another location. Inmates were driven away by truck. The last truck containing members of work details was delayed, and upon arrival at its destination—a clearing in a wooded area—the inmates overheard the driver being told that he was too late. They were taken to Reval, where they spent the night in the prison, and then they were brought to Klooga on September 19. Later they realized that all the others had been shot in the woods, but they were brought back to be killed in the big action in Klooga. A truck with female inmates also arrived too late for the execution in the forest, and they were then transported back to Klooga via the Reval prison.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”  
Ruth Bettina Birn

## NOTE

1. R 170, ESTA. A full evaluation of the index was done by Riho Västriik and kindly made available to the author.

NARVA [AKA NARVA-OST]  
(AND HUNGERBURG)

The Germans established the Vaivara subcamp Narva-Ost (as the official letterhead stated) in the fall of 1943, when Kurt Pannicke was transferred there with 500 inmates. Other inmates arrived from Vivikonna or, at later points, from other camps. One former inmate recalls that he volunteered for Narva in order to get away from the terrible conditions in Ereda.<sup>1</sup> In October 1943, the Vaivara SS camp doctor, Bodmann, listed 1,548 persons at Narva; in November, 1,693. In November 1943, 300 inmates were sent to a work detail (Aus-senkommando) in Hungerburg (Estonian: Narva-Jõesuu). Consequently, the population decreased to 1,290 in December, then to 1,004 in January. In February 1944, Narva was evacuated, and 733 inmates had to march for 20 hours to Vaivara.

The Narva camp was located in a former factory; the inmates lived in factory buildings, men and women in separate sections. The SS medic (SDG) was Ernst Runde. Helmut Schnabel acted for Pannicke in January 1944 when the latter was ill. Diller was named as camp elder. The camp clerk (Schreiber), a man called Brojde, or Broido, was well known among the inmates from Vilnius, because he had once been a Lithuanian consul. The guards were Estonians and Latvians. From the reports on the shooting of two inmates—who were allegedly trying to escape—the guard figures as a “Schutzmann.”<sup>2</sup> Dutch laborers worked close by; their food was prepared in the so-called Dutch kitchen.

Work consisted of building fortifications and digging anti-tank trenches for the Pantherstellung, an army defensive network, as well as roadwork, woodcutting, and construction projects by various companies under the auspices of the Organisation Todt (OT). The Pantherstellung was given high priority; on March 1, 1944, the army planned to assign 3,000 Jewish workers to this project.<sup>3</sup> Surviving OT invoices for compensation paid for the laborers working on their construction sites show an 11-hour workday.<sup>4</sup> Inmates in the Hungerburg camp did forestry work. This camp was run by OT. When a typhus epidemic struck, however, SDG Scharfetter was temporarily transferred there. In January 1944, the subcamp was closed.

The surviving records show that the camp was organized in sections (*Blöcke*) and rooms (*Zimmer*); transfers from one room to another were recorded, as well as the number of sick inmates in the sickroom (*Revier*) or the amounts of wooden clogs or pieces of clothing distributed to inmates.<sup>5</sup> The recollections of former inmates create a not-so-orderly picture of a world of hunger, cold, exhaustion, sickness, lice, and typhus. Food was entirely inadequate; inmates recall receiving a daily ration of 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread and 0.5 liters (2 cups) of soup. Even Bodmann admitted that the work at Narva was extraordinarily hard and the conditions bad. The number of deaths was high—125 in December 1943 alone. The few surviving camp records report several cases of inmates leaving their workplace to beg for food. Malnutrition led to famine

edema, and typhus was rampant. As early as November 16, 1943, inmates attempted to escape. (The Estonian Security Police helped track down escapees, as a warrant indicates.)<sup>6</sup> One former inmate recalled that he escaped and went to town, where he tried to find work, but he was ferreted out by an informer and was returned to the camp via the police prison.<sup>7</sup>

On top of the overall bad conditions, the SS officers running Narva were of a particularly murderous disposition. Pannicke was only 26 years old, and he exhibited a strange mix of favoritism toward certain inmates and, at the same time, extreme cruelty. He seems to have enjoyed the limitless power his position gave him, telling inmates that their lives were entirely in his hands.<sup>8</sup> At other times he could joke with them and show concern for their well-being. During marches he made them sing Jewish songs.<sup>9</sup> Pannicke also enjoyed his material advantages: he forced an inmate shoemaker to steal leather from the OT to make boots for his girlfriends, and he gave jewelry or gold to the camp elder to buy him additional food.<sup>10</sup> Mimicking the sound of his name, inmates nicknamed him “Peiniger” (Torturer).

Runde had the nickname “Meine Herren!” (Gentlemen!) because he used to publicly address inmates this way. Helmut Schnabel was not stationed in Narva but visited his friend Pannicke often. On these visits, excessive consumption of alcohol and murderous rampages were common. One of the worst episodes occurred around Christmas 1943 or New Year’s Eve 1944, when Pannicke and his friends walked onto the camp ground and beat and trampled several inmates to death in full view of the prisoners standing to attention. Many witnesses also recall the deportation of Brodje, one of Pannicke’s former favorites, presumably during the “10 percent selection.” When Pannicke gave Brodje’s leather jacket to another inmate, everybody knew what his fate had been.

Pannicke regularly beat inmates at roll call, forced them to stand overly long at attention as punishment, killed weak people or threw them into a canal adjoining the camp grounds, and drilled them to remove their caps and put them back on with military precision. Runde regularly checked the camp infirmary and throttled sick inmates. The room elder (Stubenältester) then removed the corpses and took them off the list of inmates, which Runde then countersigned. Sick people were also killed through injections. The background for this can be found in Bodmann’s reports: in November 1943, he complained about the high number of old inmates but hoped that by the “harsher measures” (*bärteren Masstab*) applied by Runde the numbers could be decreased. In December, most old Jews were reported to have died. At the time when the typhus epidemic was rampant, one of the inmates recalls Bodmann saying that the best thing would be to raze the entire infested camp.<sup>11</sup> Corpses were burned in a factory oven on a regular basis. Feeble inmates were also “finished off” by the work supervisors.

In February 1944, Narva was evacuated due to the advancing front line; the inmates were marched via Vaivara to Ereda. Schnabel may have supervised the march; other witnesses recalled Pannicke as supervisor. The march claimed many victims.

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”  
Ruth Bettina Birn

## NOTES

1. June 7, 1961, Abraham Kr., vol. 6, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
2. Undated handwritten fragments, ESTA, R 966/1/1.
3. March 1, 1944, Mineralölkommando Estland, Aktennotiz, ESTA, R 187/1/24.
4. Lohnstundenachweis für Baustellenlohnempfänger, ESTA, R 966/1/1.
5. See ESTA, R 966.
6. November 16, 1943, Viks, Suchbefehl, ESTA, R 62/1/25.
7. Mordechai Rosenberg, YVA, 03/3085.
8. October 14, 1965, Sima Sk., vol. 14, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
9. July 1, 1971, Herschel-Chane Dr., vol. 27, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
10. November 5, 1962, Zelik Gu., vol. 12, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
11. October 25, 1965, Joseph Ba., p. 1848, 1. Ausfertigung, Bd 12A, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

## PANKEWITZA

The Germans established a camp at Pankewitza, 50 kilometers (about 31 miles) west of Pleskau, in November 1943. Two hundred and fifty inmates from Klooga were transferred there on November 11 and housed in barracks. For December, the same numbers are listed.

No further information on this camp is available.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

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## PETSERI, ÜLENURME, KULUPE

In January 1944, 198 inmates were registered at the work camp at Petseri; 3 deaths occurred during that month. There were 127 inmates in the nearby camp at Ülenurme, and 299 in Kulupe. These camps were too far away from the headquarters in Vaivara to be inspected regularly by the SS doctor. The SS medic (SDG) Karl Theiner was in charge of all three camps. In March 1944, 513 inmates from all three camps were deported, and after a German army unit refused to allow Jews into their delousing facilities, the prisoners were brought to Riga-Kaiserwald. Former inmates recalled that they worked on a railway originating in Dorpat and that camps were shifted according to the progress of construction.<sup>1</sup>

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

Ruth Bettina Birn

## NOTE

1. 1949, Affidavit Mirkin Le., vol. 15, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59; 30.8.1967, Ela Ko, vol. 26, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.



## PORT KUNDA

A subcamp of Vaivara, at Port Kunda, was established in the autumn of 1943 with the purpose of supplying the Port Kunda cement factory with manpower. The factory was situated on the north coast of Estonia between Tallinn and Narva. It was built in the 1890s by the then-largest Danish industrial corporation FL Smidth & Co., which took over the ownership of Port Kunda in 1922 in cooperation with Swedish interests. Port Kunda Cement, with approximately 1,200 workers, was self-sufficient in all raw materials. It was run by Danish engineers until 1940, when the factory was nationalized in the wake of the Soviet occupation of Estonia. Soon after the German attack on the Soviet Union in 1941 and the subsequent occupation of Estonia, negotiations between the German and the Danish governments were initiated concerning a Danish takeover of Port Kunda. On the Danish side, negotiations were conducted by Minister of Public Works Gunnar Larsen, who was able to utilize his personal connections with German Minister of Armaments and War Production Fritz Todt. In alliance with Todt, Larsen bypassed the German Foreign Ministry and instead approached newly appointed Minister of the Occupied Eastern Territories Alfred Rosenberg, who was eager to produce political results. Negotiations were probably facilitated by the fact that, in 1935, Larsen, an engineer who studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, had taken over the leadership of FL Smidth & Co. and was now both director and chairman of the board of that corporation. Thus, already in the autumn of 1941, the former director of Port Kunda, Theodor Hansen, returned to the factory; and during Larsen's official visit to the Baltic lands, the Reichskommissariat Ostland, in April–May 1942, the factory was formally handed over to the Danes. The reinstallment of the former owners was one of the few tangible results of the work accomplished by Larsen and the so-called Danish Committee for the Eastern Areas, initiated by him and established under the auspices of the Danish Foreign Ministry.

At Port Kunda, cement production had already commenced in August 1942, but it was seriously hampered by a chronic shortage of labor, and Hansen repeatedly asked the local German authorities for extra manpower—specifically, 200 men for the oil-shale quarry at Ubja.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the FL Smidth & Co. headquarters in Copenhagen urged Reichskommissar Hinrich Lohse to solve the problem. The Technisches Hauptamt Estland regarded Port Kunda Cement—Estonia's only cement factory—as crucial for the supplying of cement for the Organisation Todt (OT); and in the summer of 1943, Port Kunda Cement was characterized as an armaments concern (*Rüstungsausbau*) of decisive importance to the war (*kriegsentscheidender Bedeutung*). The same year, the factory produced 49.3 tons of cement, covering 90 percent of the minimum demand in the Generalbezirk Estland.<sup>2</sup> In September 1942, 40 local Roma (Gypsies), who had been interned by the occupation authorities, more than half of whom were women, were set to work at the factory. Later that year, an extra 62 refugees and settlers from the Leningrad

area arrived with their families. When in April 1943 these people were shipped to Finland as part of a German-Finnish settlement program, production at the factory came to a standstill.<sup>3</sup>

Heinrich Himmler's order of June 21, 1943, to dissolve the Jewish ghettos of the Reichskommissariat Ostland and set the prisoners to work in the camps of the Estonian oil-shale areas helped solve the problem. On September 15, 1943, Vaivara was established at Narva as the main camp for 27 work camps in northern Estonia. A few weeks later, a camp connected to Port Kunda Cement was set up. On October 10, 1943, the first contingent of Jewish prisoners—approximately 60 men and 10 women—arrived from the ghetto of Vilnius and were put behind barbed wire. Shortly thereafter, they were joined by up to 200 Jewish prisoners who were among those evacuated from the Kaunas ghetto on October 28.<sup>4</sup> Thus, from October 1943, there were two camps at Port Kunda. One was the “Jewish Camp” situated in the woods at a closed-down oil-shale quarry at Vainamoisa, approximately 11 kilometers (6.8 miles) outside Port Kunda. Every day, the Jews were marched from their wooden barracks to the limestone quarries at Arro and Allofer and the oil-shale quarry at Ubja, where they worked under inhuman conditions. The limestone and oil shale they mined were transported by train to the cement plant at Port Kunda. At times, some of the Jewish prisoners were sent to Port Kunda to assist in cement production. The camp at Vainamoisa was guarded by the Training and Reserve Battalion 20 of the Estonian SS, commanded by the German SS-Unterscharführer B. and a few other German SS. Information is unavailable about whether any of these people were ever tried before a court after the war.<sup>5</sup>

The other camp was a stone house (still standing in 2006) on the factory grounds, where the Gypsy families lived. Guarded by Estonians, they carried out the most exhausting work at the plant, reloading the oil shale as it arrived from the quarries outside Port Kunda. At the time of the Danish administration from 1941 to 1944, one Gypsy was shot while trying to escape. The surviving Gypsies were released on the day before the arrival of the Red Army in the summer of 1944.

The Jews and Roma at Port Kunda's two camps endured hard physical labor. According to survivors, the commandant would often hit and threaten the prisoners, leaving them to wait for hours in the cold when they had finished work. Hansen left Port Kunda immediately after the arrival of the Jews, leaving the administration of the factory to the remaining five Danish engineers. According to an interview with one of the engineers, the inmates were given the same quantities of food and cigarettes as the staff.<sup>6</sup> In February 1944, as the German-Soviet front drew near, production facilities were taken over by the German authorities.

As many as 500 people might have worked at Port Kunda's limestone and oil-shale quarries when the factory was abandoned in July or August 1944. Shortly before the evacuation, elderly people and children were taken away and shot in the woods. The surviving prisoners were sent to Tallinn and were

taken by ship to Danzig/Gdańsk, where they were set to work in the Stutthof concentration camp. The few survivors were finally marched to Germany, where they were liberated in the spring of 1945.<sup>7</sup>

The FL Smidth & Co., later FLS Industries, was partially compensated for its loss of property by the Soviet authorities in the 1960s, but in 1997 the corporation again claimed compensation, this time against the newly reestablished Estonian state. The claim was given up when shortly thereafter it was revealed in the Danish media that the corporation had been involved in the use of forced labor during the war. FLS Industries then initiated a search for survivors. A total of 12 surviving Jews and Roma from Port Kunda were thus compensated economically for their suffering during World War II.

**SOURCES** The history of the FL Smidth & Co., the Danish Committee for the Eastern Areas, and the cement plant and labor camp at Port Kunda is treated extensively in Joachim Lund, *Hitlers spisekammer* (Gyldendal: Copenhagen, 2005), a summary of which can be found in Joachim Lund, “Denmark and the ‘European New Order,’ 1940–1942,” *CEH* 13:3 (August 2004): 305–321. On the Estonian camps, see International Red Cross, *Catalogue of Camps and Prisons in Germany and German Occupied Territories*, vols. 1–3 (Arolsen, 1949–1959); *Die deutsch-faschistische Okkupation in Estland. Aus der Mitteilung der staatlichen Sonderkommission für die Feststellung und Untersuchung der Missetaten deutsch-faschistischer Eindringlinge und deren Helfershelfer*, 29.11.1944 (Tallinn, 1963); Roswitha Czollek, *Faschismus und Okkupation* (Berlin, 1974); M. Dworzecki, *Jewish Camps in Estonia 1942–1944* (Jerusalem, 1970); Franz W. Seidler, *Die Organisation Todt. Bauen für Staat und Wehrmacht 1938–1945* (Koblenz, 1987); and Alfred Streim, “Konzentrationslager auf dem Gebiet der Sowjetunion,” *DaHe* 5 (1989).

On the early history and geographic details of Port Kunda Cement, see “Cementfabriken ‘Port-Kunda’ med tilhørende bivirksomheder” (unpub., FL Smidth, 1932). Figures on cement production in the Reichskommissariat Ostland are given in “Abschlussbericht des Wirtschaftsstabes Ost 1944–1945,” printed in Rolf-Dieter Müller, ed., *Die deutsche Wirtschaftspolitik in den besetzten sowjetischen Gebieten 1941–1945* (Boppard, 1991). Survivors’ accounts from the Estonian camps are published in Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman, eds., *The Black Book* (New York, 1981), pp. 390–398.

Primary source material on the labor camp and production at Port Kunda include Danish as well as German archival sources. The DNA in Copenhagen holds the archives of the Committee for the Eastern Areas of the Danish Foreign Ministry as well as the diary of Minister Gunnar Larsen. Details of the labor camp are given most extensively in the postwar trial of the director of Port Kunda, Theodor Hansen, in the ACCC, 21. Dept. No. 477, 1946 (RA-ZMLF, Copenhagen). Additional information on Port Kunda Cement is found in the archives of FLS Industries (Copenhagen). Internal correspondence of the German authorities and their correspondence with the Danish counterpart are to be found in the PAAA, Büro Staatssekretär I (Berlin), and the archives of the Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories (BA, R 6, Berlin). Part of the documents are printed in German as well as in Danish in *Beretning til Folketinget*, afgivet af den Parlamentariske Kommission, etc. (Copenhagen, 1945–1953). The BA branch in Aachen holds the

*Tätigkeitsberichte* of Technisches Hauptamt Estland, Gruppe Bauwirtschaft, as well as Hauptamt IV (Technik) beim Generalkommissar in Reval [Tallinn] and the Organisation Todt/Einsatzgruppe Russland Nord (esp. R 50 I/391–396). See also Kriegstagebuch für das Wehrwirtschaftskommando Reval (BA, R 91, Reval/2, Berlin). A few surviving documents of the Sipo in Reval regarding the Jewish camps exist in Osobyj Archiv (RGVA) 504 K/2/8 (Moscow).

Additional information was given in interviews with former engineer at Port Kunda Tage D. (Copenhagen, 1993 and 1994) and surviving prisoners Abram Majerowitj Krein in 1944 (ZSL-L, 110 AR 1409/97). In 1997, William Kagan and Charles Lubock, both living in the United States and located with the help of the USHMM, were interviewed by Danish journalist Lisbeth Jessen, as was the daughter of Lejb Radzelis, also a former Port Kunda prisoner (Dahlin et al. 2002; Lund 2005), as well as Port Kunda residents Pauline Kroon, Ursel Onk, and Arnold Emme (cited in Lisbeth Jessen, “F.L. Smidth i Estland,” in *Magtens bog*, ed. Ulrik Dahlin et al. [Aschehoug: Copenhagen, 2002], pp. 876–896).

Joachim Lund

## NOTES

1. See Theodor Hansen to FL Smidth & Co., Copenhagen, August 15, 1943, FLS, “Fortroligt indhold. Beretninger fra dir. Theodor Hansen samt dokumenter ang. Retssagen.”
2. Questioning of Theodor Hansen in the Copenhagen City Court, 21. Dept. No. 477 / 1946 (RA-ZMLF).
3. Memorandum, Theodor Hansen, May 1943, pp. 10–12. FLS, “Fortroligt indhold. Beretninger fra dir. Theodor Hansen samt dokumenter ang. retssagen” (Confidential. Reports of Dir. Theodor Hansen and documents concerning the trial).
4. Questioning of Theodor Hansen in the Copenhagen City Court, 21. Dept. No. 477/ 1946 (RA-ZMLF, Copenhagen).
5. Information given by DRM-BK, 1998.
6. Interviews with civil engineer Tage D., Copenhagen, 23.04.1993 and 02.06.1994. Tage D. was stationed by FL Smidth & Co. at Port Kunda in spring 1943.
7. Interviews with William Kagan and Charles Lubock, October 1997.

## SONDA

The Germans established the camp at Sonda with 200 inmates on February 20–22, 1944, during the second phase of the existence of the Vaivara camp system. Sources show 293 inmates in March 1944; the number declined to 270 by June. Inmates were transferred to Sonda from Narva or from other camps after their closure (see Vaivara/Narva). Witnesses recall Wirker as the first commander, and then Reissig. Prisoner work consisted of clearing forests. The Vaivara SS camp doctor, Bodmann, considered this light work, requiring little strength, while former inmates recall deaths caused by exhaustion and illness.<sup>1</sup> In May, sick inmates from the camp hospital (*Krankensammellager*) in Ereda were transferred to Sonda. Camp statistics show 6 deaths in March, 8 in April, and

7 in May and in June. On May 26, 1944, the SS medic (SDG) was Wilhelm Genth, and the camp guards numbered 25.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

Ruth Bettina Birn

#### NOTE

1. Zyusman So., p. 1670, vol. 11A, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

### SOSKI

Soski was located near Lake Peipu in a densely forested, swampy area in Estonia. In October 1943, 495 inmates were housed there in makeshift barracks, sleeping on the bare ground. The number of inmates remained roughly the same until the camp's evacuation. In December 1943, the camp commander was Reissig. Some former inmates report arriving in a first group of 150 people from Ereda (see, Vaivara/Ereda) with Reissig and that Alfred Engst became his deputy. Others recall Engst as the first commander. All seem to remember that Engst was much worse than Reissig. In the winter of 1943–1944, SS medic (SDG) Wilhelm Genth arrived for a short period, presumably to act for Reissig, who had contracted typhus and was transferred to the military hospital in Narva (see Vaivara/Narva) on December 21, 1943. According to reports from the Vaivara SS camp doctor, Bodmann, Genth had already made an unsuccessful attempt to reach Soski in November.

Witnesses recall laying railway tracks and loading and unloading boats on the nearby river and that no Organisation Todt (OT) personnel were present in the camp. Work was very hard. One inmate remembers Soski as the worst camp in which he had ever been imprisoned.<sup>1</sup> While no organized killings took place, inmates died slowly of starvation. In December 1943, 23 deaths were registered. An inmate died after a severe beating. On February 3, 1944, the Red Army was only 4 or 5 kilometers (2.5 to 3.1 miles) away, and the Germans suspected Jewish inmates of contacting Soviet partisans. Bodmann received the order to go to Soski and organize a retreat. SDGs Genth and Lingg led the march over frozen swamps to Kuremäe (see Vaivara/Kuremäe). Several inmates died due to the harsh conditions.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

Ruth Bettina Birn

#### NOTE

1. June 6, 1962, Abraham Kr., Anlageband IV, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

### VAIVARA SUBCAMP

Vaivara was home to the staff of the entire Vaivara main camp under Hans Aumeier and also to a subcamp that served as a transit camp for newly arriving inmates before their transfer to other subcamps. In September 1943, this camp held 202

inmates; in October, 1,237; and in February 1944, 1,292. Because of its function as a transit camp, the Vaivara subcamp contained a high number of old and infirm inmates, as well as children. The main camp's SS doctor, Bodmann, mentions 202 children in October 1943, crammed into a barrack, which he saw as an inevitable burden on the camp for “security reasons.”

The first inmates arrived in the Vaivara subcamp during the summer of 1943; one inmate remembers the date as August 6.<sup>1</sup> For a brief period, an Organisation Todt (OT) man was in command; after a few weeks, Kurt Pannicke took over, until he was transferred to Narva (see Vaivara/Narva) at the end of September. In that period, inmates recall Diller as camp elder, who went with a number of other inmates to Narva with Pannicke.<sup>2</sup> From the end of September or early October 1943 until the evacuation of the camp in February 1944, Helmut Schnabel was commander. He brought inmates with him from his previous camp, Vivikonna (see Vaivara/Vivikonna). Oskar Helbig was Schnabel's deputy. Other inmates recollect Fritz Stiewitz and Adolf Kley acting for Schnabel toward the end. SS medics (SDGs) named were Heinrich Hemlinger, Rolf Klicker, and Heinrich Schattkus. Several SDGs were assigned to supervise the evacuation marches, where female guards were also present. The camp elder under Schnabel was called Meir Zwei; other inmates say it was Isaak Jutan. The SS personnel from nearby headquarters also made appearances in the work camp.

Inmates did labor in the forest, on the railway line, or at construction sites. Work was organized by the OT. Dutch workers were housed close by, and some female camp inmates worked in the so-called Dutch kitchen. The Vaivara subcamp was a central point for other camps, with a camp pharmacy delivering medicine to all the affiliated work subcamps. Inmates who attempted to escape had to wear a piece of red cloth on their chest and were moved from their individual camps to Vaivara.<sup>3</sup> In December 1943, typhus broke out; 20 percent of the inmates succumbed to the epidemic, and sick inmates from other camps were transferred to quarantine in the Vaivara camp hospital.

Food was insufficient in Vaivara. Former inmates recall receiving 125 grams (4.4 ounces) of bread and some soup and tea each day, leading to hunger-induced illnesses. Craftsmen were in a better position because they arranged to trade food for their products, making use of those in the work details outside of the camp. Several SS men and Germans from other organizations working close by had caps or garments custom made by Jewish craftsmen.<sup>4</sup> A former Vaivara cap maker could still remember Aumeier's and Bodmann's head sizes in his postwar statement.<sup>5</sup>

Continuous selections were conducted; though they were considered a secret, inmates found out that those selected were shot 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) away from the camp, in the woods.<sup>6</sup> Sick inmates in the camp hospital were killed with injections. A special command for burning the corpses was set up.

Both Pannicke and Schnabel inflicted continuous punishment and torture on the inmates. Pannicke used to drill in-



mates during roll call; Diller gave the commands for the “caps on, caps off” game. One former inmate had no positive recollections of Diller in general; he is alleged to have stolen valuables.<sup>7</sup> Schnabel was zealously active in Vaivara as in his other assignments, searching the barracks for inmates dodging work, beating inmates who spilled their soup, forcing the whole camp to do demeaning exercises during roll call, and killing inmates who had stolen potatoes or received a second helping of soup.

Many former inmates recalled two particular atrocities. One was the killing of Dr. Katz, a dentist, who as an older man could not work anymore and was hiding during the day in the barracks. Schnabel found him, beat him, and while he was lying on the ground, poured a bottle of Lysol into his mouth.<sup>8</sup> The second incident was the killing by Pannicke of an inmate who had been an official of the Jewish council in Vilnius. During roll call, the whole camp was made to stand to attention and watch while the inmate was slowly tortured by having to do “exercises” (*Sport treiben*), leading to his death.

In January 1944, inmates were sent to the Vivikonna subcamp, thus relieving Vaivara’s overcrowded conditions; in the same month, however, the inmates of the closed camps Hungerburg and Jõhvi (see Vaivara/Narva and Vaivara/Jõhvi) arrived at the Vaivara subcamp. In February 1944, 604 sick people and 185 children were sent to Ereda (see Vaivara/Ereda). By this time, the first wave of evacuations from the East had arrived in the Vaivara subcamp, including inmates of Narva, Auvere, Putki, and Vivikonna. Moreover, the Vaivara subcamp itself had to be evacuated immediately, on February 4 and 5, 1944. There were 2,466 inmates that marched to the new Vaivara subcamps Kiviõli, Ereda, Jõhvi, and Goldfields. During the evacuation march from Vaivara, inmates had to cover long distances: 65 kilometers (40.4 miles) to Kiviõli, 45 kilometers (28 miles) to Ereda, 50 kilometers (31 miles) to Goldfields, and 28 kilometers (17.4 miles) to Jõhvi. The marches took three days in bad weather conditions. Soviet planes bombarded the prisoner columns, causing casualties, while others died due to exhaustion or were shot.

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”

Ruth Bettina Birn

## NOTES

1. Sania Janiska, YVA, M-49-E/4257.
2. August 19, 1965, Szabatai Ge., August 10, 1965, Zelik, Gu.—both: vol. 14, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
3. February 26, 1971, Mendel Kr., vol. 27, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
4. May 12, 1974, Gita-Ita Ba., vol. 28, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
5. August 10, 1961, Mosze Da., vol. 11, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
6. Ibid.
7. Sania Janiska, YVA, M-49-E/4257.
8. August 18, 1965, Hirsch Kl., vol. 14, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.

## VIVIKONNA OT AND VIVIKONNA BALTÖL [AKA WERK IV SILLAMÄE]

The mining facilities at Vivikonna were an important part of the Baltische Öl GmbH, or Baltöl (Baltic Oil), operation. In the first meeting between the Security Police and Baltöl representatives on July 19, 1943, 400 Jewish concentration camp inmates were promised to the Vivikonna mine. Organisation Todt (OT) planned several construction projects in Vivikonna, including building barracks for the Jewish Camp Vivikond (Judenlager Vivikond). Vivikonna consisted of three camps, the first of which was already closed in October 1943. There were 1,300 inmates assigned to this camp, housed in very inadequate barracks. For the November–December 1943 period, the Vaivara SS camp doctor, Bodmann, mentioned two new camps, one called “Vivikonna OT,” the other, “Vivikonna Baltöl.” The Baltöl camp contained 699 people, and the population remained constant. In the Baltöl organization, this work site was referred to as Werk IV Sillamäe. Inmates mined shale in open pits doing alternating shifts with Russian prisoners of war (POWs). Baltöl set strict rules to ensure a separation between Jewish and Russian workers.<sup>1</sup> Vivikonna OT was set up with 100 inmates transferred from Vaivara; inmates transferred from the Jõhvi subcamp increased the number to 474 by January 1944. The camp was located in an isolated spot in the woods. In February 1944, plans were made for evacuation; the SS and Police Leader was in charge of the Vaivara inmates, who represented roughly one-third of the Baltöl workforce.<sup>2</sup> Workers were to be marched toward Kiviõli, Kohtla-Järve, and Ereda. On February 2, 1944, 872 inmates from the OT camp were evacuated; on February 12, 698 inmates from the Baltöl camp followed.

As no original documents have survived indicating the names of camp commanders, it is somewhat difficult to differentiate between the camps, based on witness testimony only. Helmut Schnabel is mentioned as commander of the first camp, after a brief transition period under OT. He had a deputy with a glass eye. Camp elders named were Jutan, Heiman, and Szczibuk (phonetic spelling). When Schnabel was transferred to Vaivara, inmates were transferred with him and to other camps. The inmates did forestry work, built railroad tracks, or dug trenches under the supervision of the OT. Initially there was no running water, the ground was swampy, and barracks were built on stilts.

Bock, who later became the commander of Klooga, was mentioned as commander of one of the camps.<sup>3</sup> This camp was presumably Vivikonna Baltöl, as it was described as relatively big, and inmates worked in a quarry, mining coal and shale. The medical orderly (SDG) was Schattkus. The camp elder was Aranowicz; doctors named were Buzhanski and Fried.<sup>4</sup> Overall, inmates recall conditions in this camp as relatively good, particularly in comparison to the other one. It is not clear who the commander of Vivikonna OT was.

Former inmates from the camp under Schnabel’s command remember selections and shootings of the elderly and

the infirm. The children in the camp were gathered together at one point and taken away on trucks. This led to heart-breaking scenes. For example, one child was hammering at the window of the barracks in which she was locked up, but when her mother tried to get close, Schnabel shot the mother. Inmates recall that OT men were appalled by these scenes. Schnabel tortured the inmates; he tried to extort valuables from them, and he shot some of them afterward. He ordered an old man, who had fallen in the swampy ground and could not get up, to be shot. He beat a mentally disabled youngster and put him in a ditch full with water overnight. Schnabel is reported to have said that Jews were not human beings.<sup>5</sup>

**SOURCES** For all relevant sources, see “Vaivara Main Camp.”  
Ruth Bettina Birn

#### NOTES

1. November 22, 1943, Baltöl, Arbeitseinsatz der Juden, ESTA, R 187/1/33.
2. February 27, 1944, Bericht zur Räumung Werk IV Sil-lamäe, ESTA, R 187/1/7.
3. October 1, 1965, Eliezer Bu., vol. 14, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59; January 25, 1967, Lea Pe., vol. 22, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.
4. Raya Golembo, YVA, 03/3200.
5. August 25, 1965, Harry Hirsch Ka., vol. 14, ZdL, AR-Z 233/59.





## WARSCHAU



Post-liberation view of a guard tower at Warschau concentration camp.  
USHMM WS #80906, COURTESY OF JULIUSZ BOGDAN DECZKOWSKI

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## WARSCHAU MAIN CAMP

The Warschau concentration camp, known in Poland as Ge-siówka because it stood at 45 Ulica Ge-sia, was established in the summer of 1943 on the ruins of the Warsaw ghetto. After the deportation of the last of Warsaw's Jews, the Jewish quarter was to be razed and rendered uninhabitable, but not before all usable building materials from the ghetto had been recovered. But the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in April and May 1943 stymied German plans. The Germans' scorched-earth tactics under Jürgen Stroop to quell the Jewish resistance reduced the area of the ghetto to rubble. After the defeat of the Jewish resistance fighters, the Germans could now proceed to salvage significant quantities of construction materials, especially bricks and scrap metal, from the debris to be used in support of the German war effort. For this task, Stroop suggested the deployment of Jewish prisoners who would be incarcerated in a concentration camp converted from the former ghetto prison. The Germans also expected to uncover large caches of secreted valuables hidden by the deported Jews. Furthermore, clearance of the rubble would facilitate the effort of German forces to uncover the hiding places of Jewish fugitives from the German assault on the ghetto in cellars, bunkers, and dugouts. Finally, it was in the Germans' interest to erase all evidentiary traces of their annihilation of Warsaw's 400,000 Jews.

In an apparent endorsement of Stroop's proposal, in June 1943, Heinrich Himmler ordered Oswald Pohl's SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) and the Security Police (Sipo and SD) in the General Government to erect a concentration camp on the site of the destroyed ghetto. It was Himmler's wish not only to salvage bricks, scrap metal, and other building materials from the rubble of the former ghetto

but also to seal all underground hideouts, flatten it to the ground, and plant a park in its place. Responsibility for the implementation of this plan was delegated to Hans Kammler, chief of the WVHA's Office Group C.

The Warschau concentration camp was officially established on July 19, 1943, with 300 prisoners, German inmates from Buchenwald, both political opponents of the regime and common criminals, who would soon become the camp's de facto administrators. In April 1944, the camp was annexed to the Majdanek concentration camp in Lublin and assumed the new name of Lublin concentration camp–Warsaw labor camp (Konzentrationslager Lublin–Arbeitslager Warschau). The camp's first commandant was SS-Obersturmbahnführer Wilhelm Göcke, who was transferred in September 1943 to establish a concentration camp in Kauen (Kovno or Kaunas); after his departure the camp was headed first by SS-Hauptsturmführer Nikolaus Herbet and then by SS-Obersturmführer Friedrich Wilhelm Ruppert, the commandant of the camp when it was evacuated in July 1944. Four German construction firms—Merckle (Ostrów Wielkopolski), Ostdeutscher Tiefbau (Naumburg), Berlinisches Bau-geschäft (Berlin), and Willy Keymer (Warsaw)—were contracted to execute Himmler's order with the assistance of the German Eastern Railway (Ostbahn).

Jewish male inmates from Auschwitz constituted the prisoner labor force for the execution of this project. Two series of transports of Jewish prisoners arrived in Warsaw. Four transports with 3,683 Jews arrived in Warsaw from Auschwitz in August, October, and November 1943.<sup>1</sup> After mid-May 1944, transports of an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 Hungarian Jews replenished the inmate population, which was considerably depleted by then. To the Germans, the key criteria in the selection of these prisoners were their relatively decent physical condition, since the work would be heavy and arduous, and their non-Polish origins, because they did not want Jewish prisoners to fraternize with Polish civilians employed in the same work area. Moreover, command of Polish would be an invaluable asset in the event of escape. Thus the Germans deliberately selected Jews from Western and Central Europe and Greece for prisoner labor in Warsaw. In spite of German intentions, several Jewish prisoners in the Warschau concentration camp had migrated westward from Poland before the war and therefore spoke Polish. In the November 1944 transport, moreover, the Germans were forced to include 50 Polish Jews because there were not enough non-Polish prisoners available to fill the quota of 1,000 men. A couple of thousand paid Polish civilian workers and dozens of salaried German technicians augmented the camp's Jewish labor force.

The bulk of the Jewish prisoners were assigned to the demolition of the ghetto. It entailed several steps: gathering



Post-liberation view of Warschau concentration camp; the Jewish cemetery on Okopowa Street is visible in the background on the left behind the camp.

USHMM WS #80904, COURTESY OF JULIUSZ BOGDAN DECZKOWSKI

bricks from the ruins of the ghetto—that is to say, not only recovering bricks already lying on the ground but also demolishing the unstable walls of dilapidated buildings for their bricks; cleaning the bricks by scraping the mortar from them; and stacking them in piles for conveyance by trucks (driven by Poles) to trains. The prisoners were forced to perform this task mostly with the use of their bare hands and occasionally primitive tools like picks and shovels. In the spring of 1944, the use of dynamite, often planted by the prisoners, was introduced to raze remaining buildings. This was backbreaking, exhausting, and dangerous work, and many prisoners were killed and injured. The bricks were heavy, especially for men suffering from fatigue, malnutrition, and disease. Prisoners frequently fell from the heights of ramshackle buildings earmarked for demolition. The tempo was brisk, and German overseers disciplined prisoners who were unable to maintain the pace or abandoned their labor for a brief respite. In his account of the ghetto's demolition, one surviving prisoner writes, "Human life played no role whatsoever."<sup>2</sup> The stupefying lengths to which these prisoners were driven are attested to by the results of their forced labor. By June 1944, they had demolished an area of approximately 10 million square meters (nearly 12 million square yards) and collected 34 million bricks, 6,000 tons of scrap metal, 1,300 tons of iron ore, and 805 tons of nonferrous metals.<sup>3</sup>

Officers of the SS unit assigned to the Warschau concentration camp, which amounted to a company, were transferred from various other camps, including the Sachsenhausen and the Lublin subcamp Trawniki. After the annexation of the camp to Majdanek in April 1944, SS personnel from Lublin replaced the original SS unit. The primary function of the SS in Warsaw was to guard the periphery of the camp. In spite of this minimal task, the camp's Jewish prisoners bore the brunt of oppressive SS tactics, as the SS unit attached to the camp never recoiled from acts of violence. The SS unit assigned to the Warschau camp appears to have exhibited an unreflective "healthy, common sense" or "everyday understanding" that Jewish concentration camp inmates were enemies of the state, enemies whose execution—largely through work at this late stage in the war—was totally appropriate.<sup>4</sup> In the Warschau camp, SS violence was prompted further by prospects of personal enrichment. SS men were enticed not merely by the plunder of valuables discovered by prisoners in the debris of the ghetto but also by the hope of lining their own pockets with the gold teeth of the camp's dead—and occasionally barely living—prisoners. The ferocity of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, in which Jewish insurgents had managed to kill and wound several SS men, apparently served to intensify the loathing of Jews among the SS men in this unit into a violent animosity.

SS brutality aside, the German prisoner-functionaries, who essentially ran the camp, dispensed most of the daily humiliation and degradation that the prisoners suffered. Prisoner-functionaries took pains to intimidate the Jewish prisoners under their control with forcible measures and even wanton cruelty. This was especially true of the criminal

elements among the Kapos, whose feral instincts were directly opposed to the prisoners' welfare. But because of their own inmate status, most of the German prisoner-functionaries were probably most concerned with their own survival, to which aim the Jewish prisoners were expendable.

Hundreds of Jewish prisoners died from sheer exhaustion, mistreatment, and execution; in addition, a typhus epidemic in the winter of 1944 devastated the inmate population. Starvation rations and primitive sanitation, even by the low standards of the concentration camp system, helped create conditions conducive to disease. Lice spread quickly through the camp in the winter of 1943–1944, and typhus then struck the camp with a vengeance in January and February 1944. Afflicted prisoners were placed in an isolation barrack, where they just lay on soiled pallets, receiving no supplemental rations or antibiotics until they either recovered or died. The epidemic created a legion of walking skeletons—"Muslims" (*Muselmänner*) in the universal argot of camp life—who, enervated by camp conditions, gave up on themselves and apathetically awaited death. By March 1944, approximately 75 percent of the camp's Jewish prisoners had died, with approximately 1,000 men still alive. Since the ghetto's demolition was not completed, German authorities decided to replenish the camp's depleted Jewish workforce with additional Jewish prisoners from Hungary in June 1944.

Jewish prisoners employed various stratagems to survive their plight. Successful escape from the camp was rare, since fleeing prisoners had to overcome two sets of guarded walls—the wall surrounding the camp proper and the ghetto wall. Apprehended escapees were hanged in the presence of the entire inmate population, in an effort to deter others from contemplating flight. Since escape was impractical, survival demanded the capacity to endure the deplorable conditions of camp life by navigating breaches in the camp's brutal regime. Physical self-preservation necessitated what was called, in the universal vernacular of the concentration camp system, "organizing." In the Warschau concentration camp this activity essentially entailed scavenging through the rubble of the ghetto for abandoned objects of value and then either selling them for cash to buy food or bartering them directly for food in the flourishing underground economy established between Jewish prisoners and Polish civilian workers. When it later became more difficult to locate items of value in the rubble, many prisoners had their gold teeth extracted by fellow prisoners and then sold them to Poles for either bread or cash to buy bread.

There was modest cultural activity among the Jewish prisoners. A few prisoners would meet in the barracks for prayer. Jewish classics found in the rubble were smuggled into the camp and either passed from person to person or read aloud in the barracks. A few fortunate prisoners were able to draw from a stable reservoir of emotional sustenance from friends or relatives. Jewish prisoners from Greece found fellowship among themselves not only because they felt different from their fellow Jews who hailed from the continent but also because they shared a distinct cultural and communal tradition.



Although the Germans planned to complete demolition of the ghetto by August 1, 1944, the Soviet advance to the east bank of the Vistula forced the camp's closure in July 1944. The Germans decided to evacuate the prisoners westward in the first of the large wave of death marches undertaken in the terminal phase of the war. Before evacuation, the Germans killed a couple hundred of the most debilitated prisoners; approximately 300 prisoners decided to take their chances and volunteered upon request of the camp's authorities to remain after evacuation to complete the dismantlement of the camp. On July 28, the Germans evacuated approximately 4,500 of the remaining 5,000 prisoners under heavy SS guard in the direction of Kutno, located 120 kilometers (about 75 miles) west of Warsaw. The Germans shot any prisoner breaking ranks or falling behind. Marching in scorching summer heat, the prisoners were wracked by thirst. The death march to Kutno lasted three days. On August 2, the surviving prisoners were loaded into boxcars on a train to Dachau for a journey of almost 750 kilometers (466 miles). Conditions in the cars were abysmal. Approximately 100 men were crammed into each boxcar without any rations. Scores of prisoners died en route from suffocation and heat prostration, while several became mentally unhinged during this agonizing journey. This death train reached Dachau on August 6. Of the prisoners who were evacuated from Warsaw, not quite 4,000 survived the death march and death train to Dachau.<sup>5</sup>

In Warsaw itself, the Warsaw Uprising erupted on August 1, and on August 5, the "Zośka" battalion of the Polish underground Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*, AK) liberated the Warschau concentration camp. In a fierce skirmish on the first day of the uprising, Polish fighters had already freed a group of 50 Jewish prisoners toiling outside the perimeter of the camp. Of the roughly 350 Jewish prisoners freed in the camp by the AK, dozens, including 24 women, had been transferred on July 31, from Pawiak. (Pawiak was the notorious prison for Poles suspected of underground activities; its

inmate population included Jews discovered in hiding on the "Aryan" side or temporarily spared from destruction because of their indispensable manual skills.) The vast majority of liberated prisoners volunteered to fight in the uprising and served the revolt in various capacities. A special Jewish fighting platoon and a Jewish brigade to construct barricades were formed from liberated prisoners. These units sustained heavy losses. The morale of the former prisoners was corroded, however, when antisemitism reared its ugly head in the fighting units; antisemitic Poles even killed several liberated prisoners who volunteered for combat units. With the defeat of the Warsaw Uprising by superior German forces on October 2, the surviving Jewish prisoners were compelled either to flee or go into hiding in bunkers. Life in the bunkers was a grueling ordeal. When the Red Army finally entered Warsaw on January 17, 1945, only 200 Jews, among them former prisoners from the Warschau concentration camp, reemerged from their bunkers still alive.

The existence of the Warschau concentration camp is hardly mentioned in standard accounts of the Holocaust. It was doubtless a minor camp in the large scheme of things, but it dispensed more than its fair share of suffering. Thousands of Jews fell victim there to the Nazi annihilationist labor policies. Of the 8,000 to 9,000 inmates who were impressed into the prisoner labor battalion of this camp between the summers of 1943 and 1944, 4,000 to 5,000 of them perished in the course of the camp's existence, during the camp's evacuation, and in battle or in hiding after liberation.

There have been several postwar trials of camp personnel. In the late 1940s, eight SS men were executed for the murder of camp prisoners—five in German courts and three by the Polish regional court in Lublin. In addition, Walter Wawrzyński, the camp's initial orderly, was convicted in an East German criminal court in Leipzig in 1950 of the murder and mistreatment of camp prisoners. On appeal, his death sentence was reduced to life imprisonment.<sup>6</sup> In July 2000, the U.S. District Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania vacated the citizenship of Theodor Szezhinsky because of his service in the ranks of the *Waffen-SS* in various concentration camps, including the Warschau concentration camp. He should have been ineligible for a visa to enter the United States after the war.<sup>7</sup> Substantial evidence from the camp was introduced during the trial in Poland of Jürgen Stroop, who was executed in 1951 for his role in the persecution of Jews and Poles in Warsaw. Both Germany's Central Office of State Justice Administrations (*ZdL*) in Ludwigsburg in the 1970s and the Polish Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation-Institute of National Memory from 1974 to 1996 conducted extensive investigations of camp personnel. In both 1974 and 1980, German state prosecutors in Munich terminated the proceedings, and in 1996 the Investigative Department of the Provincial Procurator in Warsaw followed suit for similar reasons: the death of many suspected culprits, the failure to discover the whereabouts of others, and the difficulty of identifying the perpetrators of numerous individual killings.



A member of the Polish "Zośka" Battalion escorts two Jews liberated from the Warschau concentration camp, August 5, 1944.

USHMM WS #80910, COURTESY OF JULIUSZ BOGDAN DECZKOWSKI

**SOURCES** There exists a modest literature on the Warschau concentration camp. Effective surveys from its establishment to its liquidation are Tatiana Berenstein and Adam Rutkowski, “Obóz koncentracyjny dla Żydów w Warszawie (1943–1944),” *BŻIH* 62 (1967): 3–22; and Adam Rutkowski, “Le camp de concentration pour Juifs à Varsovie (19 juillet 1943–5 août 1944),” *Le monde juif* 49:147–148 (1993): 189–216. The author’s essay “Jewish Prisoner Labour in Warsaw after the Ghetto Uprising, 1943–44,” *Polin* 17 (2004), focuses on the experiences of the camp’s Jewish inmates.

Source material for the Warschau concentration camp is scattered in various archival record groups. The most interesting Nuremberg Trial documents pertaining to the camp are Stroop’s final report of May 16, 1943, on the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto, which contains his recommendation to establish a concentration camp for Jewish prisoners on the ruins of the ghetto (PS-1061); Himmler’s order of June 11, 1943, to establish a concentration camp in the former ghetto (NO-2496); Pohl’s announcement of July 23, 1943, of the establishment of the camp (NO-2516); and four reports by Kammler from October 1943 through June 1944 on the progress of the demolition of the former ghetto by the camp’s prisoners (NO-2503, NO-2517, NO-2504, NO-2505). Files from Stroop’s trial in Warsaw in 1946, located in IPN and available on microfilm in USHMM, 1998.A.0255, 3 reels, contain several relevant documents. In the course of its investigation, the ZdL amassed several witness statements from SS men and German prisoners assigned to the camp (available at BA-L). The evidentiary record of the Szebinskyj trial includes two transfer reports and a troop muster roll, all of which were discovered in Russian archives, showing the transfer of SS units to and from the Warsaw camp. The AŻIH, RG No. 301, and YVA, Record Group No. 03, possess the most extensive collection of Jewish survivor accounts of life in the camp. On transports from Auschwitz to Warschau, see Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: Henry Holt [Owl Books], 1997). Two survivors of the camp have published memoirs. In *Zibn in bunker* (Warsaw: Idisz Buch, 1962), Chaim Etzel Goldstein movingly describes not only life in the camp but also the camp’s liberation by the AK, inmates’ participation in the Warsaw Uprising, and his concealment in a bunker

after defeat of the Polish revolt until the Soviet liberation of Warsaw in January 1945. This book has been translated from the Yiddish into English by Charles Goldstein as *The Bunker* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1970). The English version is abridged, and several passages dealing with the camp and the aftermath of its liberation are missing from the translation. In addition to conditions in the camp, the journey to Dachau is recounted in Max Mannheimer, *Spätes Tagebuch: Theresienstadt-Auschwitz-Warschau-Dachau* (Zurich: Pendo Verlag, 2000).

Gabriel N. Finder

## NOTES

1. For documentation of these transports, see Danuta Czech, *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1939–1945* (New York: Henry Holt [Owl Books], 1997), pp. 475, 501, 502, 535.
2. Alois Eisenhändler, “Bericht über das Konzentrationslager Warschau” (unpub. memoir, December 1967), AŻIH, 301/6401, p. 3.
3. See report of Hans Kammler, “Bericht über den Stand der Arbeiten in Sperrgebiet Warschau,” June 10, 1943, Nuremberg Trial document NO-2504.
4. See Karin Orth, “The Concentration Camp SS as a Functional Elite,” in *National Socialist Policies: Contemporary German Perspectives and Controversies*, ed. Ulrich Herbert (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), pp. 306–336.
5. See the log entry in “Zugang-Nummern vom 6.5.1942 Nr. 29912 bis 13.4.1945 Nr. 153268 Dachau 3K,” AG-D, Archiv-Nr. 31765.
6. The file number of the unpublished verdict in the trial is LG Leipzig Gr. Strfk. (201) 3/50, April 28, 1950. His death sentence was reduced by the appellate court to a life term because of the failings of capitalist society to reform him during his recidivist youth before consigning him to the concentration camp system! The file number of the unpublished decision of the Erste Grosse Strafkammer des Landgerichts Leipzig is Gr. Strfk. [Grosse Strafkammer] (201) 3/55—19 St. Ks 4/50.
7. *U.S.A. v. Theodor Szebinskyj*, 104 F.Supp.2d 480 (July 24, 2000).





## WEWELSBURG

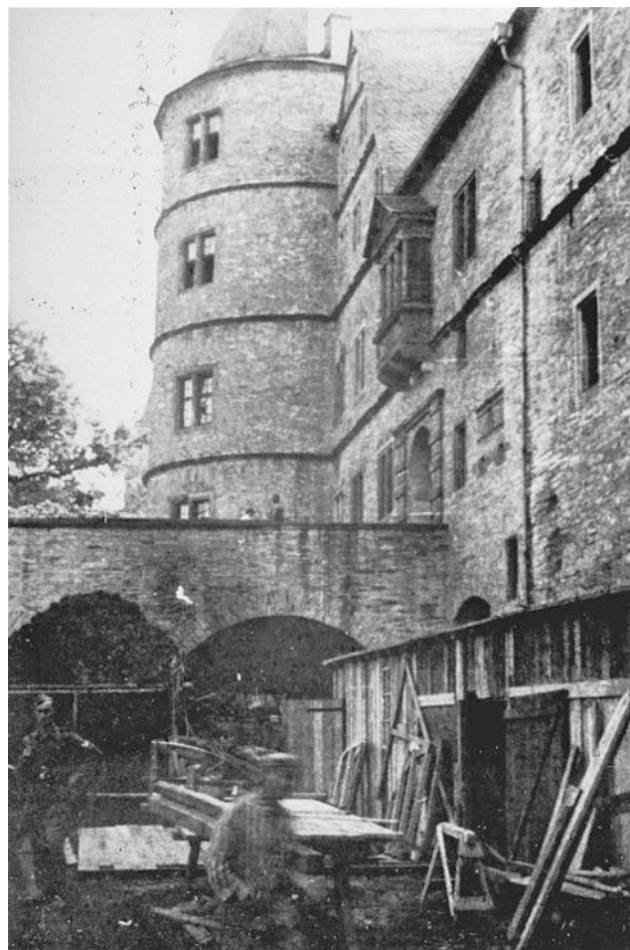


The wooden gate tower at Wewelsburg concentration camp, 1941.  
USHMM WS #82780, COURTESY OF AKM-WN

## WEWELSBURG MAIN CAMP [AKA NIEDERHAGEN]

On September 1, 1941, the Wewelsburg subcamp was renamed the “Wewelsburg concentration camp” (KL Wewelsburg).<sup>1</sup> With 480 prisoners it was the smallest autonomous main camp within Germany. Prior to this, the camp in the village of Wewelsburg, about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) to the southwest of Paderborn, Westphalia, was a Sachsenhausen subcamp, financed by the Association for the Promotion and Maintenance of German Cultural Memorials e.V. (Gesellschaft zur Förderung und Pflege deutscher Kulturdenkmäler e.V.).<sup>2</sup> Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler founded the association in 1936. He used it as the developer for his building project “Wewelsburg.” As a registered association, the company—unlike the SS, which was not a legal entity—could acquire donations and credit. The Wewelsburg Renaissance castle had been built by the Paderborn prince-bishops (Fürstbischof) at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In 1934, the Büren Council leased the castle to the association. Himmler planned to establish a Reich Leadership School (Reichsführerschule) there, the SS-Schule Haus Wewelsburg. It would later become a large ideological-religious center for the SS.

For the necessary renovations and expansion of the castle, Himmler initially used the Reich Labor Service (RAD). When these workers were transferred to build the Westwall and the project was facing a shortage of labor, Himmler, as did other SS economic enterprises, considered the use of concentration camp prisoners for his private construction project. By using concentration camp labor, he was able to continue the building project, regularly obtaining exemptions from the general building prohibition for his private building project, which was not vital for the war effort. A detachment of “preventive custody” prisoners (*Befristeter Vorbeugehäftlinge*, BV) was sent to Wewelsburg in May 1939. Following two escape attempts, which caused much public attention, and resulted in the deaths of the escapees, the detachment was replaced in February 1940 by Jehovah’s Witnesses. In the summer of 1940, the prisoners constructed a protective custody camp on the outskirts of Wewelsburg, on the boundary with Niederhagen. Other categories of prisoners were sent to Wewelsburg from the autumn of 1940, and the number of prisoners steadily increased to 470. On January 7, 1941, the work detachment was confirmed as a Sachsenhausen subcamp.<sup>3</sup> The transformation of the subcamp into an autonomous main camp did not occur because of the increasing size of the camp but for economic reasons. The sale of the Wewelsburg subcamp to the state relieved the “Gesellschaft” from the financial pressure that it was under. Initially there was some uncertainty, but on October 15, 1941, the name “Niederhagen concentration camp” was finally decided upon.<sup>4</sup> The Reichsführer-SS probably chose the name Niederhagen to disguise the concentration camp and to hide the connec-



A Niederhagen prisoner and an SS guard in the moat of the Wewelsburg castle, where work proceeds on the refurbishing of the SS crypt, 1941–1943.

USHMM WS #82778, COURTESY OF AKM-WN

tion between the concentration camp and his construction project at Wewelsburg.

The protective custody camp initially consisted of 4 barracks; the number subsequently increased to 16. The barracks were in two rows. Next to the prison camp was an industrial quarter with workshops and garages and opposite was an SS camp and building yard. The prisoners were given new prisoner numbers when the camp became autonomous. There were German prisoners, Jehovah’s Witnesses, BV prisoners, political and so-called asocial prisoners, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), homosexuals, and Jews; and from 1941 there were more and more foreign prisoners including prisoners from Poland, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium. The prisoners were sent to the camp either individually or in groups from other concentration camps, especially Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen, or directly



from Gestapo offices, especially those in the Ruhr but also Paderborn and Osnabrück. These prisoners were mostly Polish and Ukrainian forced laborers who had been arrested by the Gestapo. Many of the Soviet prisoners arrived at Wewelsburg as prisoners of war (POWs) or in transit transports.

As the Jehovah's Witnesses were the only prisoner group during the initial phase, they, unlike in other camps, took over in Wewelsburg the positions for prisoner self-administration: Willi Wilke was camp elder (Lagerältester); Wettin Müller was camp scribe (Lagerschreiber). The block elders (Blockältester) were Jehovah's Witnesses, German politicals, asocials, and BV prisoners. The Kapos and foremen were mostly BV prisoners and asocials. BV functionaries wore a green triangle and excelled in their brutality and unscrupulousness at Wewelsburg—for example, in the prisoner infirmary (block 11) and the punishment detachment, Forest Settlement (Waldsiedlung). Jehovah's Witnesses played an important role in the camp and tried to remain true to their beliefs. They smuggled bibles and other religious works into the camp and conducted secret bible studies. Their solidarity and common, strong belief gave them the strength to survive the extreme camp conditions in Wewelsburg.

During 1942, there were on average 1,000 prisoners in the camp. In 1943, the number increased to around 1,500 prisoners. In the period up to August 1941, 48 prisoners died. When the camp became autonomous and new prisoner groups were admitted into the camp, the numbers of dead rapidly increased: by the end of 1941, another 80 prisoners had died; in 1942, 868 died; and to April 1943, when the main camp was dissolved, 287 prisoners died. The reason for the increase in the death rate was in part due to the physically weak condition of the prisoners, especially the Soviet prisoners, who were sent to Wewelsburg from June 1942, and in part due to the extremely poor living and work conditions in the camp. Some 1,285 of the approximate 3,900 prisoners who arrived in the camp between 1939 and 1945 died,<sup>5</sup> of whom 734 were of Soviet origin. It is likely that only a few Jewish prisoners were sent to Wewelsburg—20 death certificates suggest a Jewish background. In the summer of 1942, a crematorium was established in the camp because of the high death rate. Until October 1942, the corpses were taken to the crematoria in Dortmund and Bielefeld-Brackwede. It is thought that initially in Wewelsburg there were transportable crematoria ovens. They were reintroduced at the beginning of 1943. While constructing the crematorium, the SS established in the camp a Registry Office (Standesamt), which from January 1, 1943, kept a register of deaths. As an autonomous concentration camp from April 1942 to March 1943, the Niederhagen concentration camp also functioned as the execution site for the Gestapo Westfalen/Lippe office. It can be proved that 56 people were murdered, of whom 42 were hanged and 14 Soviet POWs were shot at the nearby shooting range. The hangings took place in a walled-in arrest bunker. The victims included female Soviet forced laborers as well as two boys, a 14-year-old Pole and a 15-year-old German Jew.

In 1940, Reinhard Heydrich had introduced for the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) an official categorization of the camps. Niederhagen was a category 1 camp for “less serious protective custody prisoners capable of rehabilitation, special cases, and individual arrest.”<sup>6</sup> However, the conditions on the ground did not correspond in any way with this official description. The living and work conditions in Wewelsburg were brutal. Many prisoners died because of the heavy work. A detachment was occupied with the renovation and extension of the Wewelsburg north tower, which was to be the ideological center of the facility. When excavating the “vault,” which was planned for honoring the dead, the prisoners had to excavate more than 4 meters (13 feet) of rock with inadequate tools. The work in the constant cold and damp vault meant that the prisoners had to use the maximum physical exertion. Nevertheless, the work detachments in the north tower were regarded as relatively safe work sites by the prisoners, where they were largely protected from mistreatment by the SS. It was different in the three quarries (in the castle, at the railway station, and in the village of Ahden, several kilometers away), building roads, renovating the Marx manor, and constructing the SS settlement Waldsiedlung: there were deaths in these detachments almost every day, with the dead being brought back to the camp. Other work detachments constructed a villa for the architect Hermann Bartels or worked on the north terrace of the SS guard building in front of the castle. The concentration camp prisoners worked in the SS gardens and began excavation work for commercial buildings in the SS camp. They were exploited until they were totally exhausted. The principle “Destruction through Work” (*Vernichtung durch Arbeit*) accurately describes the working conditions for the work detachments in Wewelsburg. The SS treated qualified skilled tradesmen and workmen with more consideration because they could not be replaced so easily. They worked relatively securely in expanding the north tower and in a number of workshops. There were other tasks to be done in the camp's industrial sector, including the camp-owned laundry, tailor's shop, SS garages, and kitchens, or in constructing the camp.



Wewelsburg-Niederhagen prisoners work in a quarry, 1941-1942. USHMM WS #85257, Courtesy of AKM-WN

The infirmary was located in Barracks 15. Conditions there were catastrophic. There were no medicines or instruments. Block 11 was an additional infirmary. Its cellar was used as a storage room for corpses until they were taken to the crematorium. Once inside the infirmary the ill prisoners were at the mercy of the SS and some orderlies who mistreated the prisoners. Survivors have stated that the sick were murdered either by injections or by having cold showers. However, there were no medical experiments in Wewelsburg. On the other hand, Niederhagen was one of the camps from which the death transports for the concentration camp “euthanasia” policy, code-named “Aktion 14f13” (Operation 14f13), departed. In a letter dated December 10, 1941, the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) mentions Niederhagen and other camps as those that will be inspected in the following year by the doctors’ commission to select prisoners. The attached sample questionnaire contained the details of a Wewelsburg prisoner.<sup>7</sup> It is not known how many Wewelsburg prisoners were victims of the Aktion 14f13. Those prisoners who remained in Wewelsburg knew the purpose of the selections because the personal items of the dead prisoners were returned to Niederhagen.

An Obersturmbannführer of the Waffen-SS Reserve, Adolf Haas was in command of the protective custody camp in Wewelsburg from June 17, 1940. Once the camp was declared a subcamp in January 1941, he reorganized the camp administration along the lines of the organizational structure required by the IKL, that is, along the lines of the Dachau concentration camp. The camp administration was divided into five areas. Satter was the camp commandant’s adjutant (Department I). SS-Sturmscharführer Friedrich Schultes was in charge of the Political Department (Department II). Wolfgang Plaul, Haas’s predecessor as detachment leader, became leader of the protective custody camp (Department III) and Haas’s replacement when he was absent. To 1942, the Labor Service Leader (Arbeitsdienstführer) was Ludwig Rehn. He was then transferred to Neuengamme and Sachsenhausen. The first administration leader for Department IV was Hermann Michl. The camp doctor at Niederhagen (Department V) was SS-Untersturmführer Dr. Franz Metzger. He was transferred in December 1942 to the SS-Panzer Grenadierdivision “Totenkopf” (Death’s Head) The concentration camp personnel included not only the command office but the guards. The SS guards in Wewelsburg were taken from the SS-Death’s Heads Units stationed locally. They were organized into guards’ units. Gustav Strese was in command of the First SS-Totenkopf-Sturmabteilung Niederhagen-Wewelsburg.

According to the prisoners, Adolf Haas was unpredictable and ruthless. The master baker joined the Nazi Party in 1931 and the SS a year later. He was in command of the SS region (Oberabschnitt) Rhein-Westfalen and in 1935 was promoted to SS-Sturmabteilungsführer. However, a service opinion dated October 4, 1937, excluded him from any further promotion because of his poor writing skills.<sup>8</sup> He undertook a course in Sachsenhausen before he took command in Wewelsburg. After the dissolution of the Niederhagen concentration camp,

Hass, with some of the Wewelsburg concentration camp personnel, was appointed camp commandant at the newly created camp at Bergen-Belsen. He has not been heard of since the end of the war.

After the German defeat at Stalingrad, the architect Bartels could not prevent the stopping of the construction work. A decree dated January 13, 1943, ordered the cessation of all “non-vital war construction work.” In the middle of March 1943, an expert committee appointed by Oswald Pohl appeared at Wewelsburg, to examine whether the protective custody camp and the industrial section could be expanded into an armaments factory. The SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) was considering giving the camp a new use for armaments production. These considerations were part of the overall program to replace the labor shortage in the armaments industry with concentration camp prisoners. However, the armaments industry did not want the Niederhagen concentration camp. Even before the committee had completed its investigations, it was recalled. The decision to dissolve the camp remained. A circular decree dated March 23, 1943, ordered the end of all admissions to the Niederhagen concentration camp.<sup>9</sup> In a surviving express letter dated April 5, 1943, the Niederhagen concentration camp office demanded that the State Police Office (Stapoleitstelle) Düsseldorf not admit any more prisoners to Niederhagen, although a transport from Paderborn on May 7 would be accepted.<sup>10</sup> The large majority of the prisoners were sent in the months of April and May to Buchenwald, Ravensbrück, Dachau, and Bergen-Belsen. The official date for the dissolution of the Niederhagen concentration camp was April 30, 1943.<sup>11</sup> At this point, there were around 150 to 200 prisoners in the camp, mostly Jehovah’s Witnesses. On May 7, the camp commandant Haas accompanied a prisoner transport with some of the guards to Bergen-Belsen. A small detachment of 49 German prisoners remained. They were now under the control of the Buchenwald concentration camp. In the period that followed, the number of prisoners was reduced to 42, of whom 40 were Jehovah’s Witnesses. The other 2 were political prisoners. The camp Registry Office was closed. The last entry in the register of deaths is for April 12, 1943. After that no more deaths were recorded. The remaining prisoners were given Buchenwald prisoner numbers and were accommodated in a workshop barracks in the industrial quarter.

The empty protective custody camp was used from the autumn of 1943 as a resettlement camp by the SS-Main Office Ethnic German Liaison Office (Stabshauptamt Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, VOMI) for so-called ethnic Germans. At the end of 1944, one of the barracks in the camp was occupied by a Gestapo office from Gelsenkirchen whose own office had been bombed. In the autumn of 1943, an army physical training camp (*Wehrertüchtigungslager*) was established in the former SS camp. The number of SS guards was reduced at first to 12 and in November 1944 to 5. The detachment leadership reported to the Buchenwald concentration camp. Until the end of 1943, SS-Unterscharführer Otto Jacob was leader. He was followed in 1944 by SS-Sturmmann



Schiering, who in turn was replaced by SS-Rottenführer Skuppi.

The SS no longer saw the need to maintain total control. The prisoners could move relatively freely around the industrial quarter and parts of the village. They worked under better conditions, particularly in the gardens, and did small jobs at the castle and in the village. In 1944, the Jehovah's Witnesses began to operate an illegal press to print their literature. It was distributed throughout all of northern Germany with the help of Jehovah's Witnesses who were still free. This conspiratorial underground work continued until American soldiers liberated the work detachment. U.S. troops entered Wewelsburg at around 7:00 A.M. on April 2, 1945. They were surprised to find a concentration camp. Himmler's strategy to camouflage his SS construction project at Wewelsburg was a success. Two days before the Americans arrived, Himmler ordered an SS detachment to blow up Wewelsburg. While the castle was completely burned out, the outer walls and the north tower remained.

Two postwar trials dealt with the crimes committed at the Niederhagen concentration camp. The first trial took place in 1952 by jury at a Paderborn court. A former "asocial" Kapo was charged with "crimes against humanity" and sentenced to four years' imprisonment. The State Prosecutor successfully appealed, and the charge was amended to "injury causing death." In April 1954, the sentence was increased to five years and eight months.<sup>12</sup> The second Wewelsburg trial took place in 1970–1971. Five years of investigations preceded the trial. The trial was prepared by the Senior State Prosecutor in Cologne in conjunction with the Auschwitz Trial, which was prepared by the Zentralstelle in Nordrhein-Westfalen, who was charged with handling National Socialist crimes in concentration camps. Two former SS noncommissioned officers and two former Kapos (a political prisoner and an asocial prisoner) were charged with murder and suspected murder; all other charges lapsed because of the statute of limitations. It could not be proven that the accused had personally committed murder, and they were acquitted. Nevertheless, the court in its judgment made their moral guilt clear.<sup>13</sup>

**SOURCES** The first groundbreaking research on the history of the Niederhagen concentration camp was done by Paderborn University professor Karl Hüser at the end of the 1970s, at the request of the Documentary and Memorial Center in KM-WN, which was founded in 1982. He published his results in 1982 in an exhibition catalog, *Wewelsburg 1933–1945: Kult- und Terrorstätte der SS. Eine Dokumentation* (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 1982). The second edition was published in 1987. Another work is Kirsten John's monograph "*Mein Vater wird gesucht . . .*" *Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers in Wewelsburg*, 4th ed. (Essen: Klartext, 2001). The focus here is on the pris-

oner groups and includes some prisoner biographies. The brochure by Wulff E. Brebeck and Karl Hüser, *Wewelsburg 1933–1945: Das Konzentrationslager*, 3rd expanded ed. (Münster: Landesbildstelle, 1998), provides an overview. An expanded English translation has appeared as *Wewelsburg 1933–1945: A Cult and Terror Centre of the SS* (Münster: Landesbildstelle, 2000).

With a few exceptions, the original Niederhagen concentration camp files have been lost. It is therefore necessary to rely on files in other archives (e.g., the BA-B; BA-BL, which includes the former BDC; ITS) and memorials (AG-S; APMM). There is no prisoner card index; as a result, the names, for example, and the exact number of prisoners cannot be determined. However, they can be reconstructed in part from using prisoner lists in other camps. Some finds in Russian archives (e.g., RGVA) provide further leads that have not yet been researched. It is oral history sources and trial files—especially the second Wewelsburg Trial (available at NWHStA-(D) ZA-K) and a few chronicles (Pfarrchronik Wewelsburg, in KPAW; Gemeindechronik Wewelsburg, 1814–1947, in Standesamt Büren)—that document the life of the prisoners in the Niederhagen concentration camp. In the collection at the AKM-WN are oral and written reports by survivors as well as recorded conversations with former Niederhagen prisoners (on audio and videotape).

Kirsten John-Stucke  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Kommandoliste, August 31, 1941, in AG-S, R 214 M 55; Mitteilung des Amtschefs W VIII Horst Klein an Hauptamtschef Oswald Pohl, August 31, 1941, in NMT, Case IV, Doc. Nr. NO-547, p. 2.
2. Vereinssatzung, Abschrift des Registerauszugs, 1948, in BA, Z 36 1, 501/49.
3. Stärkemeldung, January 7, 1941, in AG-S, OLS XV 10.
4. Befehl Nr. 388 im *Verordnungsblatt der Waffen-SS*, October 15, 1941.
5. Todesanzeigen Wewelsburg/Niederhagen, 1940–1943, in Standesamt Büren.
6. Runderlass des Chefs der Sipo und der SS, January 2, 1941, in *Allgemeine Erlassammlung RSHA* 2f VIIIa, p. 13.
7. Musterbogen, in APMM.
8. Personalakte Haas, in BA-BL.
9. Runderlass des Chefs der Sipo und des SD, March 23, 1943, in ITS, HM Niederhagen-Wewelsburg KL Bu.
10. Schnellbrief, April 5, 1943, *ibid.*
11. Schreiben von Haas an Landrat, May 4, 1943, *ibid.*
12. Der Leitende Osta. Paderborn, Archiv, Prozess AZ: 7 Ks Ls Ms 2/51.
13. Unterlagen der ZSSStA-K bei dem Lt. Osta. Köln zum zweiten Wewelsburg-Prozess beim LG Paderborn; Prozessunterlagen betr. KL Niederhagen-Wewelsburg, AZ: 24 JS 2/69 (Z), in NWHStA-(D) ZA-K (Rep. 118 Nr. 855-935).



# SECTION III

## YOUTH CAMPS



SS officers, including the head of the Race and Settlement Main Office (RuSHA) chief SS-Brigadeführer Otto Hofmann (second from left), inspect the Litzmannstadt youth camp in 1943. Hofmann's presence suggests that the inspection took place in connection with the Germanization of certain Polish youth.

USHMM WS #02378, COURTESY OF IPN





## INTRODUCTION TO THE YOUTH CAMPS

The idea of establishing a separate prevention institution (*Be-wahranstalt*) or assembly camp (*Sammellager*) for the “difficult or impossible to educate” youth, who had become noticed because of their stubborn and deviant behavior, was not new. From the mid-1920s, youth welfare workers, lawyers, medical practitioners, psychiatrists, and adherents of the “racial hygiene” movement had been demanding such institutions to deal with the high level of care (and thus expense) for such youths. Without any further education, they would be held for an indefinite period of time in such institutions with their labor being exploited. Those advocating such a policy were not successful during the Weimar Republic, but this changed from 1933 with the assumption of power by the National Socialists and the establishment of the concentration camp system.

A series of decrees and orders from 1937 set the legal and institutional basis for the struggle against youth degeneration. A decree dated October 14, 1937, on “preventive criminal measures” established what was regarded as “asocial behavior,” which was “someone who acts against the community, even if such actions were not criminal, but showed that he or she did not want to be part of the community.”<sup>1</sup> This decree formed the basis for the persecution of anyone who deviated from National Socialist norms and ideals. In 1938, there followed a further series of decrees and regulations that dealt with the treatment of asocials and called for the “protective custody” of whole families as well as suggesting the registration and police surveillance of asocials.

Following a circular decree by the Reich Ministry of the Interior (RMdI) on May 24, 1939, the Reich Center for Combating Youth Criminality (Reichszentrale zur Bekämpfung der Jugendkriminalität) was established as a department of the Reich Criminal Police Office (Reichskriminalpolizeiamt, RKPA). This authority was tasked with the police surveillance of youths and the power to use force, including sending youths to closed reform institutes. Later, it would be in charge of the “police youth protection camps” (*polizeiliche Jugendschutzlager*). In actuality, they were concentration camps for youths. On December 22, 1939, at a conference on “degenerate youth,” Reinhard Heydrich demanded the establishment of reform camps for youths (*Jugenderziehungslagern*). This demand was supported in the following months by Hermann Göring and Heinrich Himmler. On June 26, 1940, the Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA) issued a circular announcing that the confinement of youths to police youth protective custody camps could begin within a short period of time. In the end, three such camps opened: Moringen (for boys) in August 1940, Uckermark (for girls) in June 1942, and Litzmannstadt (for Polish juveniles) in December



German personnel review Polish children at roll call at the Litzmannstadt youth camp. Note the military caps worn by some prisoners.  
USHMM WS #14203, COURTESY OF IPN

1942. All remained in operation almost until the end of the war.

Youths were admitted to the Jugendschutzlager on racial, religious, or political grounds. They included the so-called Hamburg Swing Youth (Swing-Jugend), who were accused of establishing a dangerous clique even though they only wanted to listen to jazz, then regarded as un-German, and had formed their own subcultures to do so. The authorities also confined homosexuals, Sinti and Roma (Gypsies), Jews, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Youths in the camps were subjected to military drill, euphemistically termed “community training” (*Gemeinschaftserziehung*). The stated aim was character education, focusing on cleanliness, order, punctuality, discipline, and above all, work. The inmates worked on agricultural estates, at armaments

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firms, and at workshops of various sorts. Living arrangements were primitive, the food and clothing inadequate, and the punishments severe. Death rates were not as high as in some of the adult concentration camps, but prisoners did die in significant numbers.

**SOURCES** Sources on the youth protection camps can be found in the individual camp entries.

Jürgen Harder

### NOTE

1. Quoted in Detlef Peukert, *Volksgenossen und Gemeinschaftsfremde. Anpassung, Ausmerze und Aufbegehren unter dem Nationalsozialismus* (Cologne, 1982), p. 250.



## **POLISH YOUTH CUSTODY CAMP OF THE SECURITY POLICE LITZMANNSTADT [AKA POLENLAGER, KRIPOLAGER]**

Between December 1, 1942, and January 18, 1945, the Reich Criminal Police Office (RKPA; also designated the Reich Security Main Office [RSHA], Office V) operated a camp for Polish juveniles inside the Łódź ghetto. Called the Polish Youth Custody Camp of the Security Police in Litzmannstadt (Polen-Jugendverwahrlager der Sicherheitspolizei in Litzmannstadt), it was administratively related to the German “youth protection camps” (*Jugendschutzlager*) at Moringen and Uckermark.<sup>1</sup> Directed by the Criminal Police (Kripo), it deployed forced labor for the SS-Business Administration Main Office’s (WVHA) Office Group D (Inspectorate of Concentration Camps, IKL).<sup>2</sup> In 1969, the International Tracing Service (ITS) classified the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager as a concentration camp.

Two months after the German invasion of Poland, the RSHA inaugurated an arrest campaign against juvenile delinquents. To this end, RKPA head Arthur Nebe called for the establishment of *Jugendschutzlager* in the Old Reich and the newly incorporated territories of Poland. Although he ordered the Kriminalpolizeistelle Lodsch (effective April 11, 1940, the Germans renamed the city Litzmannstadt) to establish a Polish youth camp on April 1, 1940, his order took more than two years to implement.<sup>3</sup> The delay was partly attributable to the imposition of German administration in the annexed territories, particularly of the welfare authorities, but space accommodation for the juveniles also played a role. Litzmannstadt’s Kripo and mayor’s offices repeatedly complained about rising youth crime in 1940 and 1941 but only obliquely connected the Polish children’s begging, stealing, and smuggling (especially into the Łódź ghetto) to the underlying Nazi policies.<sup>4</sup> Among these policies were the forced labor drafts and mass arrests of

Polish adults and the instability caused by the “racial” selection and deportation to the General Government of Poles, respectively, by the SS-Race and Settlement Main Office (RuSHA) Aussenstelle Litzmannstadt and the RSHA Umwandererzentralstelle Posen. In situating the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager in the ghetto, the Kripo followed the precedent set by the “Gypsy” camp’s (*Zigeunerlager*) formation inside the Łódź ghetto between October 1941 and January 1942.

Although the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager was established on the disingenuous pretext of combating juvenile crime, the children’s case files reflected the Kripo’s persecution of “asocials” and outcasts elsewhere and its solution of social problems through policing.<sup>5</sup> Grounds for confinement included membership in the Jehovah’s Witnesses and listening to illegal radio transmissions.<sup>6</sup> Many children were orphans or lacked parental supervision because one parent was held in another camp or performed forced labor, while the other parent was deceased. Some young Auschwitz prisoners were transferred to Litzmannstadt.<sup>7</sup>

Erected in the Marysin district inside the northeast quadrant of the Łódź ghetto at Ulica Przemysłowa 72, the compound consisted of two city blocks surrounded by a high barbed-wire fence and encompassed a section of the New Jewish Cemetery. Construction commenced on September 30, 1942. The Marysin district featured residences for privileged Jews, including ghetto eldest (*Ältester*) Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, and small agricultural plots essential for the ghetto’s subsistence. As was the case with the Gypsy camp, Jewish laborers seem to have erected the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager. On November 24, 1942, the ghetto chronicler, Dr. Oscar Singer, observed, “The construction of a Polish camp for youth in Marysin continues at a swift tempo.”<sup>8</sup> A few Jewish skilled workers served as the camp’s trade school instructors. The ghetto’s inhabitants called the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager the “Polish” (*Polen-*) or “Kripo camp” (*Kripolager*).<sup>9</sup>

Kripo officials, SS, and ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutschen*) from the Reichsgau Wartheland guarded Litzmannstadt. On January 1, 1943, the commandant, Kripo official, and SS-Sturmbannführer Karl Ehrlich, issued the Litzmannstadt camp order (*Lagerordnung*).<sup>10</sup> Like the IKL’s regulations, it prescribed punishments including beatings with wooden canes or rubber truncheons for offenses such as speaking Polish. The inmates were subjected to paramilitary discipline similar to that found in IKL camps, like roll calls.<sup>11</sup> The females’ camp leader was Eugenie Pohl, a 19-year-old Łódź native who changed her Polish name (Genowefa Pol) after signing the German National List (*Volksliste*). Another Łódź native, Isolda (Sydomia) Bayer, administered the female section.

Called dependents or pupils (*Zöglinge*), the prisoners originally comprised gentiles aged 12 to 16 from the newly incorporated territories.<sup>12</sup> When the Youth Welfare Offices (*Jugendämter*) in Wartheland, Ostoberschlesien, Danzig-West Preussen, and elsewhere dispatched fewer youth than



SS-Sturmbannführer Karl Ehrlich reviews Polish male prisoners at the Polish Youth Custody Camp of the Security Police in Litzmannstadt, nd. USHMM WS #00845, COURTESY OF IPN



Mug shot of an unidentified female prisoner at the Litzmannstadt youth camp, October 7, 1943.  
USHMM WS #00587, COURTESY OF LYDIA CHAGOLL

anticipated, the Kripo reduced the confinement age to 8 in order to enlarge Litzmannstadt's camp population. Some inmates were as young as 4 years old.<sup>13</sup> The first group arrived at the camp on December 11, 1942. Litzmannstadt held approximately 1,000 inmates per month.<sup>14</sup> For each inmate, the administration produced an index card with mug shot and periodic conduct (*Führung*) reviews. The Kripo divided the *Zöglinge* into three levels (*Stufen*): (1) newcomers, (2) reformables, and (3) incorrigibles. Some males wore military uniforms, while females had gray dresses.<sup>15</sup> The inmates' labor consisted mostly of manufacturing straw shoes as well as cartridge belts for the German army.<sup>16</sup>

Because the RSHA deemed undesirable the mixture of Polish and German youth, the SS-RuSHA Litzmannstadt Aussenstelle received the order to screen the camp "racially," starting with the youngest *Zöglinge*.<sup>17</sup> The RuSHA chief, SS-Gruppenführer Otto Hofmann, inspected the Litzmannstadt camp in the spring of 1943.<sup>18</sup> The inmates found "racially valuable" were dispatched to Litzmannstadt's Germanization camp at Ulica Sporna 73.<sup>19</sup>

Between May 1943 and January 1945, Litzmannstadt recorded 77 deaths, including one shooting. During the pe-



Female prisoners stand at roll call, dressed in industrial smocks, at the Litzmannstadt youth camp. In the background is the girls' camp leader, Eugenie Pohl, December 1942.  
USHMM WS #15002, COURTESY OF IPN

riod from September 1943 to November 1944 (except October 1944), inmates were hospitalized for scabies (497 cases), tuberculosis (216), trachoma (116), and mumps (106). They also suffered numerous work-related injuries and had poor dental care. In December 1943 and January 1944, a louse-borne typhus epidemic (*Fleckfieber* or *Flecktyphus*) resulted in the hospitalization of over one-third of the camp's population (378 cases) during these months.<sup>20</sup> Although the camp had an infirmary, the authorities quarantined over 200 typhus-infected children at the ghetto's infectious disease hospital at Ulica Dworska. On December 21, 1943, Rumkowski was ordered to evacuate 100 Jewish patients from the hospital. This order imposed a burden, Singer wrote, because typhus had only recently been contained in the ghetto and the evacuated patients' health remained in jeopardy. Under the care of Czech Jewish pediatrician Dr. Emil Vogl, most of the Polish patients recovered, and the ward was closed on March 1, 1944.<sup>21</sup>

According to ITS, Dzierżążnia and Tuchingen (Tuszyn) were Litzmannstadt subcamps. An agricultural estate approximately 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) from Łódź, Dzierżążnia opened on January 12, 1943, and closed on July 31, 1944. Under Lagerleiter and police official Hans Heinrich Fuge, the 200 female prisoners raised food to support the main camp. Between August 16, 1943, and March 28, 1944, the Umwandererzentralstelle Posen put Tuchingen, a three-story building, "at the [youth camp's] disposal" (*zur Verfügung*).<sup>22</sup>

Four and a half months after the deportation of the Łódź ghetto's inhabitants to Auschwitz, where the majority were murdered, the Germans abandoned the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager during the Red Army's advance on January 17–18, 1945. The inmates were not evacuated. Distantly witnessing the destruction of the Radogoszcz prison, Litzmannstadt inmate Apolonia Beda "feared that they [the Germans] would come back and burn us, but they had actually gone." Soon afterward Łódź resident Janina Ruta-Koperkiewicz saw the children scavenging for food outside the camp.<sup>23</sup>



In 1948, the United States sentenced Otto Hofmann to 25 years in the “RuSHA” case at Nuremberg.<sup>24</sup> After 1945, Eugenie Pohl reverted to her Polish name and became a kindergarten teacher in Łódź. In 1974, a Polish court sentenced her to 25 years’ imprisonment.

**SOURCES** The most important secondary sources about the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager are Józef Witkowski, *Hitlerowski obóz koncentracyjny dla małoletnich w Łodzi* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich Wydawnictwo, 1975); Julia Wasiak, “Obóz dla dzieci i młodzieży polskiej przy ulicy Przemysłowej,” in *Obozy hitlerowskie w Łodzi*, ed. Albina Głowackiego and Sławomira Abramowicza (Łódź: Okręgowa Komisja Badania Zbrodni Przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu w Łodzi Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej, 1998), pp. 153–170; and Roman Hrabar, Zofia Tokarz, and Jacek E. Wilczur, *The Fate of Polish Children during the Last War*, trans. Bogdan Buczkowski and Lech Petrowicz (Warsaw: Interpress, 1981), pp. 76–84. Hrabar, Tokarz, and Wilczur furnish an estimate of the monthly camp population on p. 82. At [www.holocaust-education.de](http://www.holocaust-education.de), students Małgorzata Kołodziejska and Anna Słowińska posted an article on this camp at Lernen aus der Geschichte (Learning from History): “Memento. Das Kinderkonzentrationslager in Litzmannstadt.” This site has useful information about Eugenie Pohl’s career. Filmmaker Lydia Chagoll has also written about this camp in *Im Namen Hitlers: Kinder hinter Stacheldraht* (Cologne: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1979). A map of the camp’s position in the ghetto may be found in Julian Baranowski, *Zigeunerlager in Litzmannstadt 1941–1942—The Gypsy Camp in Łódź—Obóz cygański w Łodzi* (Łódź: Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi, 2003). This camp is listed in ITS, *Vorläufigen Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1969), 2:513; ITS, *Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945)*, 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 2:717; and *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem (CCP)*, ed. Martin Weinmann, with Anne Kaiser and Ursula Krause-Schmitt, prepared originally by ITS (1949–1951; repr., with new intro. matter, Frankfurt am Main: Zweitausendeins, 1990), p. 322. On RuSHA Aussenstelle Litzmannstadt, see Isabelle Heinemann, “Rasse, Siedlung, deutsches Blut”: *Das Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt der SS und die rassenpolitische Neuordnung Europas* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2003).

Primary sources for this camp begin with USHMMA, RG-05.008M, Stadtverwaltung Litzmannstadt Records, Reel 7, File 36, Stadtverwaltung Litzmannstadt, Jugendamt, “Massnahmen gegen die Verwahrlosung der polnischen Jugend,” 1940–1944, reproduced from APL. Additional relevant holdings at USHMMA include RG-55.003\*55, Aleksander Tytus Kulisiewicz Litzmannstadt camp music collection, and RG-55.005\*15, Piotr Hyszek Litzmannstadt camp poetry collection; and the Łódź Ghetto Tageschronik in RG 15.083 M, APL, *Przełożony Starzeństwa Żydów w Getcie Łódzkie*, Reel 253, sygn. 1081–1086; Reel 254, sygn. 1087–1088. The published and translated version of the chronicle Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944*, trans. Richard Lurie et al. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), selectively reproduces references to the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager. Some 45 photographs of the youth camp, including the Dzierżanica and Tuchingen subcamps, are

found in USHMMA, 200.7035, Litzmannstadt (Jugend-schutzlager). Witkowski and Hrabar reproduce and cite German documents and Polish testimonies, the originals of which may be found in AK-IPN, APL, and WAP-By. On Hofmann and on the SS-WVHA’s relationship to the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager, see *TWC*, vols. 4–5. The Lernen aus der Geschichte Web site reproduces Polish testimony, including the statements of Apolonia Beda and Janina Ruta-Koperkiewicz. A prisoner memoir is Tadeusz Raźniewski, *Chcę żyć* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódzi, 1971).

Joseph Robert White

## NOTES

1. RSHA V A3 Nr. 3050/42, Schnellbrief (Abschrift), Betr.: “Einweisung von verwahrlosten Kindern und Jugendlichen polnischen Volkstums in das Polen-Jugendverwahrlager Litzmannstadt,” November 23, 1942, USHMMA, RG-05.008M, Stadtverwaltung Litzmannstadt Records, Reel 7, File 36, pp. 29–30 (hereafter RG-05.008M/7/36/29-30).

2. R-129, Pohl to Himmler, April 3, 1942, *TWC*, 5:298.

3. Nebe, RSHA V Nr. A 3 521/40, to Leiter der Staatlichen Kriminalpolizei Kriminalpolizeistelle in Lods, Schnellbrief, April 1, 1940, Betr.: “Pol. Unterbringung krimineller und asozialer Minderjähriger,” RG-05.008M/7/36/1.

4. On the welfare authorities, Fürsorgerin Genz, Vermerk, April 12, 1940, *ibid.*, p. 2; for the Litzmannstadt Kripo’s complaints about Polish youth crime, Staatsliche Kriminalpolizei Kriminalpolizeistelle Litzmannstadt, Tgb. Nr. 1069/40/KD.6, to the Regierungspräsident Litzmannstadt, November 12, 1940, Betr.: “Verwahrlosung der polnischen Jugend,” *ibid.*, pp. 4–7; Tiemer, Staatliche Kriminalpolizei-Kriminalabteilung, Tgb. Nr. 693/41, Bericht, Betr.: “Zunahme der Kriminalität bei den polnischen Jugendlichen,” March 14, 1941, *ibid.*, pp. 18–19; for the Litzmannstadt Stadtverwaltung’s complaints, Bürgermeister Marder to the Regierungspräsident Litzmannstadt, Betr.: “Verwahrlosung der polnischen Jugend,” January 21, 1941, *ibid.*, p. 13; Stadtrat Lindner, “Niederschrift über die Dezernentenbesprechung am Dienstag, den 4.2.41: Punkt 4, Verwahrlosung der polnischen Jugend,” *ibid.*, p. 14.

5. Quotation in Staatsliche Kriminalpolizei, Kriminalpolizeistelle Litzmannstadt, Tgb. Nr. 1069/40/KD.6, to the Regierungspräsidenten Litzmannstadt, November 12, 1940, p. 12.

6. Jugendamt Teschen to Landesjugendamt, O/S, “Antrag auf Einweisung eines Jugendlichen polnischen Volkstums in das Polen-Jugendverwahrlager Litzmannstadt (Johann Polek),” reproduced in Józef Witkowski, *Hitlerowski obóz koncentracyjny dla małoletnich w Łodzi* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich Wydawnictwo, 1975), Doc. 268; and Apolonia Beda testimony, reproduced at Lernen aus der Geschichte, “Memento. Das Kinderkonzentrationslager in Litzmannstadt,” [www.holocaust-education.de](http://www.holocaust-education.de).

7. Auschwitz mug shot of Maria Orlicka in Witkowski, *Hitlerowski obóz koncentracyjny dla małoletnich w Łodzi*, photograph 218.

8. Łódź Tageschronik entry for November 24, 1942, RG 15.083 M, APL, *Przełożony Starzeństwa Żydów w Getcie Łódzkie*, Reel 253, sygn. 1081, p. 623.

9. Łódź Tageschronik entry for May 10, 1944, *ibid.*, Reel 254, sygn. 1087, p. 270.

10. "Organisations- und Stellenplan des Polen-Jugendverwahrlager in Litzmannstadt dem Stande vom 1.1.1943," AK-IPN, sygn. 1059z/OŁ/43, cited in Witkowski, *Hitlerowski obóz koncentracyjny dla małoletnich w Łodzi*, p. 40.

11. USHMMPA, 200.7035 Litzmannstadt (Jugendschutzlager), WS # 00849; also Tadeusz Raźniewski, *Chcę żyć* (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Łódź, 1971), p. 120.

12. RMdI, Schnellbrief, IV J I 76/42, December 3, 1942, Betr. "Unterbringung fremdvölkischer insbesondere polnischer Minderjähriger," pp. 141–142, reproduced in Roman Hrabar, Zofia Tokarz, and Jacek E. Wilczur, *The Fate of Polish Children during the Last War*, trans. Bogdan Buczkowski and Lech Petrowicz (Warsaw: Interpress, 1981), n.p.

13. For the circulars, Reichstatthalter im Warthegau Gauselbstverwaltung, Gaujugendamt, Aktz. III.b.B.VI/13, Rundschreiben an sämtliche Jugendämter des Reichsgaus Wartheland, Betr.: "Unterbringung polnischer Jugendlichen im Polen-Jugendverwahrlager in Litzmannstadt," December 6, 1942, RG-05.008M/7/36/25-27; for a questionnaire, Staatliche Kriminalpolizei Kriminalpolizeileitstelle, Antrag auf Einweisung eines Jugendlichen polnischen Volkstums in das Polen-Jugendverwahrlager Litzmannstadt," *ibid.*, p. 31; for the age-limit reduction, Landesjugendamt, O/S, Rundschreiben, 18.1.43, Betr.: "Unterbringung fremdvölkischer, insbesondere polnischer Minderjähriger hier: Einweisung in das Polen-Jugendverwahrlager Litzmannstadt," in Witkowski, *Hitlerowski obóz koncentracyjny dla małoletnich w Łodzi*, Doc. 267; for four-year olds, see the list in *ibid.*, p. 319, based upon IPN, sygn. 1057z/OŁ/43, and Woj. Archiwum Państwowe w Bydgoszczy (WAP-By), Akt. UWZ, sygn. 130, Doc. 1.

14. See the medical treatment statistics provided in Witkowski, *Hitlerowski obóz koncentracyjny dla małoletnich w Łodzi*, pp. 140–146, from IPN, sygn. 1056z/OŁ/42; Łódź Tageschronik entry for November 24, 1942, RG 15.083 M, Reel 253, sygn. 1081, p. 623.

15. USHMMPA, 200.7035 WS # 00844, 00845, 00848, 00849, 15002, 15006, 17362.

16. Aleksandra R. testimony, reproduced at Lernen aus der Geschichte, "Memento. Das Kinderkonzentrationslager in Litzmannstadt," [www.holocaust-education.de](http://www.holocaust-education.de).

17. RMI, Schnellbrief, IV J I 76/42, December 3, 1942, Betr. "Unterbringung fremdvölkischer insbesondere polnischer Minderjähriger," p. 142, reproduced in Hrabar, Tokarz, and Wilczur, *The Fate of Polish Children during the Last War*, n.p.

18. USHMMPA, 200.7035 WS # 02378.

19. Regina Kibilska testimony reproduced at Lernen aus der Geschichte, "Memento. Das Kinderkonzentrationslager in Litzmannstadt," [www.holocaust-education.de](http://www.holocaust-education.de).

20. Hospitalization, disease incidence, and mortality statistics calculated from figures reproduced in Witkowski, *Hitlerowski obóz koncentracyjny dla małoletnich w Łodzi*, pp. 140–146, citing IPN, sygn. 1056z/OŁ/42; see also Ehrlich to RKPA, March 30, 1944, Betr.: "Monatsbericht über den San.-Dienst," reproduced in *ibid.*, Doc. 295–296.

21. Łódź Tageschronik entries for December 21, 24, 28, 1943, January 20–21, March 2, 6, 1944, RG 15.083 M, Reel 253, sygn. 1085, pp. 577, 583, 590; Reel 254, sygn. 1087, pp. 48, 155, 162; see also Lucjan Dobroszycki, ed., *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto, 1941–1944*, trans. Richard Lurie et al. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 420–421.

22. Quoted in ITS, *Vorläufigen Verzeichnis der Konzentrationslager und deren Aussenkommandos sowie anderer Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS in Deutschland und den besetzten Gebieten* (Arolsen, 1969), 2:513; for photographs of children at Tübingen, USHMMPA, 200.7035 WS # 51212.

23. Beda and Janina Ruta-Koperkiewicz testimonies reproduced at Lernen aus der Geschichte, "Memento. Das Kinderkonzentrationslager in Litzmannstadt," [www.holocaust-education.de](http://www.holocaust-education.de); see also Raźniewski, *Chcę żyć*, pp. 129–130.

24. *TWC*, 5:160, 166.

## YOUTH PROTECTION CAMP MORINGEN

In the autumn of 1940, at the initiative of Chief of the Security Police and the SD Reinhard Heydrich, a concentration camp for male youths between the ages of 16 and 21 was opened in the buildings of the state workhouse (*Landeswerkhaus*) in Moringen near Göttingen. The first youths were interned in August after having been classified by state institutions for youth, the Reichskriminalpolizei, and welfare practitioners for closed corrective training as "burdensome hereditary criminals" (*erblich kriminell belastet*) or "ethically and morally degenerate" (*sittlich und moralisch verwahrlost*).

The *Jugendkonzentrationslager* in Moringen was the first of the so-called youth protection camps (*Jugendschutzlager*), which were generally welcomed by the social welfare authorities. Formerly the site of an early Nazi men's camp in 1933 and an early women's camp from 1933 to 1938, the Moringen Jugendschutzlager was administratively and conceptually related to similar camps established in 1942 for females at Uckermark and for Poles at Litzmannstadt (Łódź). The Reich Criminal Police Office (Reichskriminalpolizeiamt, RKPA) confined male youths to Moringen after studying their files. Applications to send such youths to the camp were initially made by the State Youth Offices and later by the Criminal Police (Kripo), by the Hitler Youth leadership, and by the protective courts and other judicial authorities. The applications constantly referred to asocial behavior or criminal tendencies. The overwhelming majority were said to be incapable of "readmission to the national community" (*Wiedereingliederung in die Volksgemeinschaft*). The terms used to justify admission to the camps were deliberately vague and allowed the punishment of any type of behavior that deviated from the norm, as well as allowing the expanded persecution of youths who hitherto had not been seized.

Under the command of SS-Sturmbannführer und Kriminalrat Karl Dieter, the guards from the SS-Totenkopf (Death's Head), and "trainers" (*Erziebern*) from the Waffen-SS, the Moringen youths were subjected to military drill, euphemistically termed "community training" (*Gemeinschaftserziehung*). The stated aim was character education, focusing on cleanliness, order, punctuality, discipline, and above all, work.

The camp organization corresponded to that established for concentration camps for adults. The inmates were divided into various blocks, each of which was supervised by an SS



Blockführer, as well as block elders and camp elders, who were chosen from among those interned. These prisoner-functionaries had a similar function to Kapos in the large concentration camps. Operating at the behest of the SS, they reported infringements against camp regulations and ensured that the orders of the camp personnel were carried out.

Everyday life in the camp was planned to the minute. During the summer, the day began at 5:15 A.M. and in winter at 5:45 A.M. The hard physical labor lasted for more than 10 hours; the SS Erzieher permanently controlled, supervised, and committed arbitrary acts of violence against the prisoners. The slightest infringement of the rules, such as a mistake while making beds (*Bettenbauen*), alleged loafing during work, and many other infringements led to draconian punishments. Authorized and unauthorized punishments included the withdrawal of mail privileges; the order to stand while eating; the withholding of meals; sleeping on a “hard bed” (*Harte Lager*—removal of the mattress so that the prisoner slept on the wooden boards); standing at attention; performing penal exercises (often to the point of total physical collapse); placement under arrest (with only bread and water, with a full meal every third day); and being beaten with a cudgel.

At the end of 1941, the Criminal-Biological Institute of the Security Police (Kriminalbiologische Institut der Sicherheitspolizei, KBI), whose tasks included the observation of “community alien youths” (*jugendliche Gemeinschaftsfremde*), was incorporated into the RKPA. It was headed by Dr. Robert Ritter, who promptly established a department of KBI inside the Moringen youth concentration camp. He used the camp to continue his studies, begun in the 1930s, to develop a preventive “racial hygienic campaign against criminals,” which amounted to experiments and selections conducted on the youths based on pseudoscientific criminal and hereditary theories. A letter from the RKPA dated June 24, 1942, to the Moringen and Uckermark youth concentration camps as well as to the Ravensbrück women’s concentration camp defined the purpose of the youth concentration camp as follows: “[to] examine the inmates for criminal-biological traits, to support those who can still be members of the community so that they can take their place in the national community while holding those who are uneducable until their final accommodation elsewhere, while using their labor.”<sup>1</sup> This “final accommodation elsewhere” (*endgültigen anderweitigen Unterbringung*) could mean deportation and murder in one of the death camps, the fate of 21 Sinti (Gypsies) on March 24, 1943.

Ritter developed a classification system to examine and sort the youths into different “human types” (*Menschentypen*): the youths were divided among various blocks based upon their genealogical, moral, and medical characteristics. At Moringen, the newly admitted inmates were allocated to the so-called observation block (*Beobachtungsblock*, or B-block). Held for six months until a final “determination” by Ritter or his assistant of many years, Eva Justin, they were allocated to a block depending upon KBI’s expectation of success in their training and the resultant social prognosis. The prisoners

were dispatched to the blocks for incompetents (*Untauglichen*, U-block), troublemakers (*Störer*, S-block), total failures (*Dauerversager*, D-block), occasional failures (*Gelegenheitsversager*, G-block), questionably educable (*fraglich Erziehungsfähigen*, F-block), educable (*Erziehungsfähigen*, E-block), and the political opponents, Stapo-block (*Staatspolizei*, or ST-block).

The Stapo-block was strictly separated from the others. It held youths who had been classified by the police authorities as political opponents, including foreign youths from countries such as Norway and Luxembourg, partisans from Slovenia, and members of Hamburg’s Swing Youth. The prisoners were mostly admitted to this block on the basis of “protective custody” orders issued by the Gestapo. They were regarded by the police authorities as extremely dangerous to the community. Consequently, they were subjected to an especially strict training and security regime.

The fate of the youths depended on the blocks to which they were allocated. The blocks determined the inmates’ everyday life and formed the basis for their later transfer to the Reichsarbeitsdienst (Reich Labor Service, RAD) and Wehrmacht units or, if there was a negative assessment, to the asylums or to death camps.

Ritter’s criminal and hereditary biological assessment had severe consequences for those who survived the physical and psychological terror of the camp. Many of the youths interned in Moringen were forcibly sterilized at the request of the criminal biologists.

The center point of everyday life in the camp was the ceaseless exploitation of the inmates’ labor with completely inadequate sustenance or medical care. For breakfast there was a little bread with jam and a cup of ersatz coffee. At midday and in the evening, the meal was mostly a thin watery soup with cabbage, potatoes, or beets. Meat was a rarity.

Initially, the inmates’ sustenance was restricted to the minimum necessary to maintain their work strength. Later it did not even suffice for this. As a consequence of malnutrition, at least four youths died, with the result being that the SS-Lagerarzt was forced to demand an improvement in April 1942; otherwise, there would be more deaths. However, the food situation changed so little that illnesses, hunger, and malnutrition remained the inmates’ constant companions.

The daily 10 hours’ forced labor regimen was regarded by the detaining authorities as a particularly valuable education method for the growing boys, even though it imposed the most difficult physical travails, monotony, and permanent threat of punishment. The youths were deployed in labor detachments both inside and outside the Moringen camp. In the camp itself, there were a number of workshops such as a saddlery, a weaving mill, a knitting mill, and machines to glue paper bags, as well as tailor, bookbinding, and paint shops. Some of the prisoners worked under SS supervision and for piece wages offered by the companies Götting Leineweber GmbH, Papiersackfabrik Alfred Rockenfeller, and Jute-Spinnerei und Bindfarbenfabrik August Greve KG. They manufactured overalls, sheets, and hand towels; glued to-

gether cement bags; sorted string; and produced cartridge holders and other armaments products for the Wehrmacht. Other inmates worked on farms in the area and at harvest time were sent to work in the sugar mill at Nörten-Hardenberg.

The majority of the youths worked in labor detachments that were especially notorious for their physical work. They dug trenches to lay cables for the Reichspost, worked on the nearby Leine River to regulate its flow, and on the run carried 50-kilogram (110-pound) cement bags for hours for the Portland Cementfabrik Hardegsen AG. The SS used other prisoners in quarries or on construction sites for the Reichsautobahn and the Reichsbahn.

The SS extracted the most profit from the youths when they worked in armaments industries, which paid bonus and wages to the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA). The prisoners never received their wages or bonuses. Inmates from the Moringen camp worked as slaves in the Heeresmunitionsanstalt (Muna), a former salt mine situated about 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) from the camp in Volpriehausen and in the workshops of the Piller company, which opened a branch factory in Moringen on October 1, 1942, with the express purpose of using the camp's labor. According to historian Hans Hesse, the Moringen workhouse director, Hugo Krack, while performing a wartime assignment, informed Piller of the youth camp's labor sources.<sup>2</sup>

Before its dissolution on April 9, 1945, when the U.S. Army marched into Moringen, around 1,500 male youths passed through the camp. At least 56 youths died in the camp as a result of the inhuman living conditions or were shot while working in the labor detachments or while trying to escape. To this number should be added those who contracted tuberculosis and were transferred to the tuberculosis institute at Benninghausen, where many of them died. Others were transferred to the death camps or the asylums, where they fell victim to systematic mass murder and euthanasia measures. Even when the remaining prisoners were sent on the death marches, they were murdered by the SS guards when they could go no further due to exhaustion and illness. One can assume that at least 10 percent of the inmates in the youth concentration camp died while in camp or as a result of the period spent in the camp.

**SOURCES** The following secondary sources contain information on Moringen: Martin Guse, *„Wir hatten noch gar nicht angefangen zu leben“: Eine Ausstellung zu den Jugend-Konzentrationslagern Moringen und Uckermark 1940–1945*, 4th ed. (Moringen, 2001); Diana Dorusz, *Tod durch Erziehung? Eine Klasse forscht zum Thema Jugend-KZ* (Berlin, 1996); Martin Guse and Andreas Kohrs, “Die ‘Bewahrung’ Jugendlicher im NS-Staat: Ausgrenzung und Internierung am Beispiel der Jugendkonzentrationslager Moringen und Uckermark,” (Diplomarbeit, Fachhochschule Hildesheim, 1985); Martin Guse, Andreas Kohrs, and Friedhelm Vahsen, “Das Jugendlager Moringen—ein Jugendkonzentrationslager,” in *Soziale Arbeit und Faschismus: Volkspflege und Pädagogik im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Hans-Uwe Otto and Heinz Sünker (Bielefeld,

1986), pp. 321–344; Martin Guse, “Der Kleine, der hat sehr leiden müssen . . . ‘Zeugen Jehovas im Jugend-KZ Moringen,’” in *„Am mutigsten waren immer wieder die Zeugen Jehovas“: Verfolgung und Widerstand der Zeugen Jehovas im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Hans Hesse (Bremen, 1998), pp. 102–120; Michael Hepp, “Vorhof zur Hölle: Mädchen im ‘Jugendschutzlager’ Uckermark,” in Hesse, *„Am mutigsten waren immer wieder die Zeugen Jehovas“*, pp. 239–272; Heinrich Muth, “Das ‘Jugendschutzlager’ Moringen,” *DaHe* 5 (1989); Manuela Neugebauer, *Der Weg in das Jugendschutzlager Moringen: Eine entwicklungsgeschichtliche Analyse nationalsozialistischer Jugendpolitik* (Mönchengladbach, 1997); Hannah Vogt, *Moringen: Männerlager, Frauenlager, Jugendschutzlager*, ed. Gesellschaft für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit Göttingen e.V. (Göttingen, 1982). On Hugo Krack's relationship with Piller and the Moringen Jugendschutzlager, see Hans Hesse, *Das Frauen KZ-Moringen: 1933–1938* (Moringen, 2002). On the “Swing Youths,” see Detlef J.K. Peukert, *Volksgenossen und Gemeinschaftsfremde* (Cologne, 1982). On the Moringen memorial, see Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, ed., *Gedenkstätten für die Opfer der Nationalsozialismus, Eine Dokumentation*, vol. 1, Baden-Württemberg, Bayern, Bremen, Hamburg, Hessen, Niedersachsen, Nordrhein-Westfalen, Rheinland-Pfalz, Saarland, Schleswig-Holstein (Bonn, 1999), pp. 437–440. On the history of the workhouse, see Cornelia Meyer, *Das Werkhaus Moringen: Die Disziplinierung gesellschaftlicher Randgruppen in einer Arbeitsanstalt (1871–1944)* (Moringen, 2004).

As cited by Hesse and Neugebauer, the most important primary sources for the Moringen youth camp may be found in NHStA-H, which holds the denazification files of workhouse director Hugo Krack (Nds. 171 Hildesheim No. 39367) and SS guard Karl Römer (Nds. Hildesheim, No. 20705), as well as records relating to the camp's administration (Hann. 158 Moringen 38/83, Nos. 1, 2, 4; Hann. 158 Moringen 84/82, No. 1. In an appendix, Neugebauer, *Der Weg in das Jugendschutzlager Moringen*, pp. 177–199, reproduces relevant RSHA, RKPA, and other police documents dealing with youth detention.

Jürgen Harder and Joseph Robert White  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. Quoted in Martin Guse and Andreas Kohrs, “Die ‘Bewahrung’ Jugendlicher im NS-Staat: Ausgrenzung und Internierung am Beispiel der Jugendkonzentrationslager Moringen und Uckermark” (Diplomarbeit, Fachhochschule Hildesheim, 1985), p. 173; original found in BA-K, NS 4 RA 1.

2. NHStA-H, Nds. Hann. 158 Moringen 38/83, No. 4, p. 239, cited in Hans Hesse, *Das Frauen KZ-Moringen: 1933–1938* (Moringen, 2002), p. 99.

## YOUTH PROTECTION CAMP UCKERMARK

Intended to hold young women ages 16 to 19, and later women up to age 21, the Uckermark youth protection camp (*Jugendschutzlager*) opened as the first concentration camp for young females in June 1942. Since the Moringen Jugendschutzlager

opened in August 1940, the SS had urged leading officials in the Reichskriminalpolizeiamt (RKPA) to establish a comparable site for females. Like Moringen and the Polen-Jugendverwahrlager Litzmannstadt, the Kriminalpolizei (Criminal Police) directed Uckermark, but its forced labor fell under the jurisdiction of the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL) in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WHVA).<sup>1</sup> Like Moringen, Uckermark's inmates, called "pupils" (*Zöglinge*), were classified as criminals due to sexual promiscuity, membership in the "Swing Youth" (*Swing-Jugend*), relationships with prisoners of war (POWs) or "non-Aryans," refusal to work in arms production, or political opposition. There were also inmates whom the Nazis deemed "racially inferior," such as Jews and Gypsies (Sinti and Roma). Many *Zöglinge* were dispatched to Uckermark from "asylums" and juvenile institutions. Some prisoners were Slovenian.<sup>2</sup>

In mid-May 1942, the SS-Kriminalrätin Lotte Toberentz became Uckermark's commandant, with staff drawn from Ravensbrück. Initially, Uckermark had only 2 accommodation barracks, one for *Zöglinge* and the other for female "educators." Male prisoners from Ravensbrück completed a new barrack before the arrival of each additional transport. The first group of prisoners consisted of about 10 females. By August 1942 there were four blocks for approximately 200 *Zöglinge*. By early 1945, there were around 17 barracks holding 1,200 prisoners.

The new arrivals were sent first to Ravensbrück, not Uckermark, where they underwent a demeaning admission procedure. Stripped naked, they surrendered personal belongings, and their hair was shorn. Following a cold shower, they were examined by SS doctors, fingerprinted, photographed, issued prisoner clothing, and introduced to camp procedures. A few days after this "introduction," the young girls were transferred to Uckermark.

As in Moringen, the admission criteria were based upon the obscure criminal-biological theories of Dr. Robert Ritter and his assistant, Dr. Eva Justin, of the Kriminalbiologische Institute (KBI). KBI ascertained the young prisoners' alleged "criminal propensities" and "inherited inferiority" and correspondingly assigned them to different blocks after six months' observation. Although Uckermark's block system was not as elaborate as Moringen's, each block had its own corresponding "educational" methods. Comparatively few were admitted to the higher, "educable" blocks, while most were dispatched to the lower and middle blocks for the "questionably educable" or "hopeless" *Zöglinge*. A special block for Gestapo prisoners and partisans' children was isolated from the others.

According to Commandant Toberentz, an essential reason for the differentiated treatment of female juveniles concerned their alleged proclivity for sexual promiscuity. This assessment about the female asocials' special "nature" reflected welfare administrators' attitudes dating back to Imperial Germany, when *Zöglinge* were consigned to workhouses for "unseemly" behavior. Euphemistically, the authorities, such

as Paul Werner from RKPA, described youth forced labor as fundamentally educational.

Constant torment and hard labor marked daily life. The day began at 5:00 A.M. After a cold shower and clad in underwear, the prisoners went barefoot to "early sport," regardless of season. After dressing, they made their beds, which consisted of straw sacks and simple blankets. The female block leaders and Toberentz inspected the blocks, punishing the disorderly. A simple breakfast and roll call preceded the work assignments.

Under constant SS supervision, the girls generally worked between 10 and 12 hours. If they collapsed or did not reach the daily work quotas, they were punished for sabotaging work. One labor detachment in Uckermark was used for moor cultivation, terrible work that resulted in psychological and physical exhaustion. Many prisoners brought in the harvest at neighboring manors and farms. Others worked in armament firms, such as Siemens, which had opened branches in Ravensbrück and at Uckermark. The Jugendschutzlager had a tailor shop and a workshop; the latter made dolls and toys for the children of fallen SS men. Especially difficult was *Holzmachen*, where 16-year-olds dragged felled trees to the camp, which were then cut into smaller segments.

Conducted back to camp, all *Zöglinge* assembled for evening roll call. Supper consisted of a piece of bread with spreadable cheese. Twice a week there was sausage or soup. The soup was a thick brew with cabbage or beets but rarely contained meat. The meals were totally inadequate for growing youngsters, with the result that the prisoners soon wasted away. After eating there was an hour of sport, cleaning, or roll call. Completely exhausted, the *Zöglinge* were permitted to shower and sleep. But even during the night there was no peace, as Toberentz made nightly inspections and collectively punished the blocks at the slightest opportunity.

The prescribed punishments were warnings, food deprivation, arrest, postal bans, and the withholding of privileges. The *Zöglinge* were also forced to do hours-long military drill. Pursuant to Heinrich Himmler's order, the camp rules forbade the beating of females, but the *Zöglinge* nevertheless suffered blows from male and female SS. A daily torment was the absolute talking ban. Under threat of severe punishment, the inmates were not allowed to talk when eating, working, or at night. Recaptured escapees were harshly punished. Former prisoners reported that vicious dogs were set upon escapees. One *Zögling* was mauled on the calf, and another's nose was torn to pieces.

The poor food, heavy labor, and inadequate clothing caused severe illnesses. In winter, the inmates were given only a scarf for protection, not pullovers or gloves. Working in primitive wooden shoes wounded their feet. The sick and injured were sent to the Ravensbrück infirmary, which had a police doctor and two prisoner nurses. This facility's minimal aim was to return the *Zöglinge* for labor. Toward the end of 1943, Uckermark obtained an infirmary, but its medical standards were also poor. Although cases of forc-



ible sterilization have not yet come to light, it can be assumed that because Uckermark was run similarly to Moringen that the authorities' negative assessment resulted in sterilization.

Based upon Ritter's and Justin's decisions, some Zöglinge were murdered at concentration camps such as Auschwitz, Dachau, Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, or Ravensbrück. Others were sent to "asylums," where they were murdered as part of the "euthanasia" program.

In June 1944, Uckermark's dissolution began with the opening of the Dallgow-Döberitz transit camp, which was led by Uckermark staff. Of its first transferees, 49 girls were deployed in an armaments firm. Another 58 worked in homes in Uckermark's immediate vicinity; 22 Zöglinge described as "pathologically degenerate" were sent to an asylum, and another 71 youths to Ravensbrück.

In January 1945, the RKPA urged Uckermark's accelerated dissolution because the SS needed the barracks for evacuated concentration camp prisoners. Four Uckermark barracks were separated from the rest for 20 underage political Zöglinge. In the emptied portion of Uckermark, under the command of Ruth Clausius from Ravensbrück, approximately 4,000 weakened female evacuees were murdered or died. The killing methods included strychnine poisoning, starvation, and gassing.<sup>3</sup> On April 20, 1945, Commandant Toberentz fled before advancing Allied troops with the remainder of the Zöglinge. On April 30, the Red Army liberated Ravensbrück and Uckermark.

Postwar trials scarcely touched the Uckermark camp personnel. In the Ravensbrück III Trial at the Hamburg Curio-Haus, April 14–26, 1948, the British acquitted Toberentz of involvement in the murder of "Allied nationals" but condemned Clausius to death.<sup>4</sup> During the 1950s and 1960s, the West German judicial authorities did not categorize Jugendschutzlager detention to be a National Socialist crime.

**SOURCES** Information on Uckermark may be found in the following published sources: Martin Guse, *"Wir hatten noch gar nicht angefangen zu leben": Eine Ausstellung zu den Jugend-Konzentrationslagern Moringen und Uckermark 1940–1945*, 4th ed. (Moringen, 2001); Martin Guse and Andreas Kohrs, "Zur Entpädagogisierung der Jugendfürsorge in den Jahren 1922 bis 1945," in *Soziale Arbeit und Faschismus*, ed. Hans-Uwe Otto and Heinz Sunker (Frankfurt am Main, 1989), p. 234; Guse and Kohrs, "Die 'Bewahrung' Jugendlicher im NS-Staat: Ausgrenzung und Internierung am Beispiel der Jugend-

konzentrationslager Moringen und Uckermark" (Diplomarbeit, Fachhochschule Hildesheim, 1985); Hans Hesse and Jürgen Harder, *"Und wenn ich lebenslang in einem KZ bleiben müsste": Die Zeuginnen Jebovas in den Frauenkonzentrationslagern Moringen, Lichtenburg und Ravensbrück* (Essen, 2001); Michael Hepp, "Vorhof zur Hölle: Mädchen im 'Jugendschutzlager' Uckermark," in *Opfer und Täterinnen: Frauenbiographien des Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Angelika Ebbinghaus (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), pp. 239–272; the exhibit catalog by Viola Klarenbach, *"Wir Durften Ja Nicht Sprechen. Sobald Man Kontakt Suchte mit Irgendjemandem Hagelte es Strafen": Das ehemalige Konzentrationslager für Mädchen und junge Frauen und spätere Vernichtungslager Uckermark* (Berlin, 1998); Katja Limbächer, Maike Merten, and Bettina Pfefferle, eds., *Das Mädchenkonzentrationslager Uckermark* (Münster, 2000).

Primary sources for the Jugendschutzlager Uckermark begin with documentation in BA-DH (KL/Hafta/Sammlung Nr. 25/Uckermark). On the relationship between Uckermark and WVHA camps, see Nuremberg document R-129, reproduced in *TWC*, vol. 5. Portions of the Ravensbrück Trial III (also called the Uckermark Trial) testimony are reproduced in Ebbinghaus, pp. 191–216, and are based upon PRO, WO 235/516. Fragmentary records of this proceeding are also available in USHMMA, RG 59.016 M Acc. 2001.114, PRO, WO 235/516, JAG Office War Crimes Case Files, 1945–1953, Reel 19. Extensive interviews with former Slovenian Zöglinge of Uckermark are reproduced in Limbächer, Merten, and Pfefferle, eds., *Das Mädchenkonzentrationslager Uckermark*.

Jürgen Harder and Joseph Robert White  
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

## NOTES

1. R-129, Pohl to Himmler, April 3, 1942, *TWC*, 5: 298.
2. Interviews with Stephanie Burger-Kelih, Anni Kupper, Stanka Krajnc Simoneti, Ljubica Kuhta, Tilčka Repnik, and Anni Ogris, September 16, 1999, reproduced in Katja Limbächer, Maike Merten, and Bettina Pfefferle, eds., *Das Mädchenkonzentrationslager Uckermark* (Münster, 2000), pp. 110–120.
3. Affidavit of Ruth Clausius, Ravensbrück III Trial, PRO, WO 235 / 516, reproduced in Angelika Ebbinghaus, ed., *Opfer und Täterinnen: Frauenbiographien des Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1996), Doc. 7, p. 292.
4. Quotation in Request for Concurrence in Confirmation of Death Sentence, Ruth Clausius (9); and handwritten defendants list, in Ravensbrück III Trial (n.p.)—both copied in USHMMA, RG 59.016 M Acc. 2001.114, Reel 19.



## A NOTE ON THE RECENTLY OPENED INTERNATIONAL TRACING SERVICE DOCUMENTATION

Until August 2007, the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen, Germany, remained the largest closed documentation center on the persecution of Jews, forced laborers, prisoners of war (POWs), and displaced persons (DPs) of many nations. With the Bonn Treaty's ratification by eleven signatory governments in 1955, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) assumed custody of tens of millions of pages of German documents from the Nazi camps, mostly captured by the Western Allied armies, and DP documents created by Allied and nongovernmental relief agencies for the dual purposes of tracing victims' relatives and documenting persecutees. Despite many entreaties, Holocaust survivors' descendants and researchers were denied access to these collections for decades. Spearheaded by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), particularly its director, Sara J. Bloomfield, and the director of its Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies (CAHS), Paul A. Shapiro, the signatories amended the Bonn Treaty in 2006, granting access to its collections and providing for one archive in each member country to receive the documentation in digital form. The designated repositories include USHMM in Washington, D.C., Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, and the Institute of National Memory in Warsaw.<sup>1</sup>

Just over one month after the five-thousand-page manuscript of this volume was mailed to Indiana University Press, the Museum received the first installment of records from the newly opened ITS collections. The first batch consisted of eighteen million digitized pages on six hard drives. Comprised of Incarceration (*Inhaftierung*) documents, it encompassed Nazi concentration camps, German prisons, civilian internment camps under Wehrmacht administration, some camps administered by other Axis countries, and Gestapo transport lists. In November 2007, the ITS transferred the digitized Central Name Index (CNI) to the Museum. Consisting of card files, the CNI supplies abbreviated references to specific incarceration, forced labor, or DP documents about individual persecutees, giving file (*Ordner*) and page (*Seite*) numbers. To search the CNI's approximately seventeen-and-a-half million names, software makes possible multilingual, phonetic searches. Subsequent collections in process of digitization are Wartime (*Kriegszeit*) documents on Nazi Germany's millions of foreign workers; Postwar documents (on DPs and refugees); and General Documents, the latter consisting of "nonpersonal" documents (*Sachdokumente*; a discrete collection of historical documents including maps, camp plans, some survivor testimonies, and a

40,000-page survey of forced labor and POW camps in Germany by city and county); and millions of pages of Tracing/Documentation (T/D) files arising from the investigation of individual persecutees. As active files, T/D cases less than twenty-five years old are not available to researchers. To expedite searches, in the summer of 2007 the Center translated the ITS Inventory (*Inventar*). The Inventory was originally a compilation of Excel spreadsheets listing collections by camp, numbers of pages and names in a collection; whether the collection consists of originals, copies, original copies, or a combination, and less frequently a collection's provenance. It is now searchable in English and German on USHMM's Web site.<sup>2</sup>

The historic opening of the ITS collections came too late for use in the print edition of this volume, but the collections will prove invaluable for future volumes of this encyclopedia, in particular those on Wehrmacht camps (Volume III), German police camps (Volume V), and forced labor camps (Volume VI). This postscript is intended to sketch how ITS holdings may advance Holocaust research, specifically by reviewing the Incarceration documents and briefly surveying the findings of the first research workshop at Bad Arolsen.

The most important original material in the Incarceration documents is located in the "pre-1955" holdings. For example, the U.S. Army captured the Buchenwald collection virtually intact and transferred it to the U.S. Zone's Tracing Service shortly after 1945. Although the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) copied certain files submitted into evidence at the Dachau war crimes trials, the majority of documents were not copied before their transfer to the ITS' predecessor organizations before 1955. The Inventory describes the Buchenwald collections as "Property of U.S. Army on Loan to ITS." The small Mittelbau collection is also replete with originals. Other sizable original collections stem from the Neuengamme concentration camp and *Strafgefangenenlager* (penal prisoners' camp) Papenburg. From 1934 to 1945, most Papenburg camps belonged to the Reich Justice Ministry. Although their provenance is "not evident" (*nicht ersichtlich*), British forces liberated Papenburg and Neuengamme.<sup>3</sup> The "Service Watson" collection reproduces ICRC documentation, including 1,739 pages of lists of Red Cross parcel recipients in the Nazi concentration camps. The number of receipts exceeds 96,000. These and related documents furnish additional evidence about the prisoners freed in Operation Bernadotte, Swedish Count Folke Bernadotte's negotiated release of mostly Scandinavian and some

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Jewish prisoners from several concentration camps in March and April 1945. The ITS collections also contain many copies of documents amassed from German, Polish, Belgian, and French archives after 1955. Inescapably, there is also some overlap between ITS holdings and the USHMM and NARA collections.<sup>4</sup>

The Buchenwald holdings are particularly rich. As a central artery of the Inspectorate of Concentration Camps (IKL), Buchenwald routed tens of thousands of prisoners to far-flung camps throughout the war, with admissions from (*Zugängen*) and departures to (*Abgängen*) Arbeitsdorf, Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Dachau, Flossenbürg, Herzogenbusch (Vught), Lublin (Majdanek), Mauthausen, Mittelbau (Dora), Natzweiler (Struthof), Neuengamme, Ravensbrück, Riga-Kaiserwald, Sachsenhausen, and Wewelsburg (Niederhagen). Aside from admission and departure lists, there are separate “envelopes” (files) about individual prisoners. For Buchenwald, there are nearly 1.4 million pages of original documents for male prisoners, and approximately 180,000 pages of original documents for female prisoners.<sup>5</sup>

The Buchenwald collections contain many files concerning unusual or privileged prisoner groups, such as recaptured escapees and common criminals (green triangles). In the spring of 1944, Buchenwald issued a list of prisoners bearing “escape markings” (*Fluchtpunkte*). Emblazoning a red bull’s-eye on the chest and back of the prisoner’s uniform, to facilitate being shot in the case of re-escape, this practice was an additional dimension of the color-coded triangle system indicating reason(s) for arrest. A separate document in the Fluchtpunkt file directed individual block elders to the presence of recaptured escapees on their block.<sup>6</sup>

After an alleged escape attempt on August 6, 1943, prisoner Kurt A. bore the Fluchtpunkte. Originally categorized a “Mischling First Degree” after arrival at Buchenwald on July 29, 1943, Kurt A. was subsequently reclassified a Jew. Unlike other prisoners removed from the list for labor redeployment, he remained on the July 27, 1944, list. His prisoner envelope revealed coded SS language dealing with escapees: “DIKAL!” (*Darf in kein anderes Lager!* Not Permitted in Any Other Camp!). The card also reproduced the red bull’s-eye in color. Not mentioned in Kurt A.’s envelope was his November 1944 removal from the Fluchtpunkt list and transfer to a Buchenwald subcamp, a fact established in his T/D file. His prisoner envelope included responses to the U.S. Military Government for Germany (OMGUS) questionnaire for former concentration camp inmates. Asked about the reason for his arrest, Kurt A. or an interpreter on his behalf responded in English, “Because I am a Jew.”<sup>7</sup>

The Buchenwald files furnish considerable insight into the green triangle prisoners. Classified “career criminals” (*Berufsverbrecher*, BV), their behavior often manifested the darker hues of Primo Levi’s “gray zone.”<sup>8</sup> After 1945, some members of this group, openly favored in the prisoners’

“self-administration” as block elders and Kapos, were tried as war criminals or lynched by liberated prisoners. Those held under “temporary preventive custody” (*befristete Vorbeugungshaft*, also BV) or “police security arrest” (*polizeiliche Sicherungsverwahrung*, PSV) most often did not share their experiences. Much of what is known about them comes from other detainees, especially their victims. The Buchenwald prisoner envelopes thus furnish a window for learning more about them and their functions within the camp system. For example, in 1943 the Buchenwald administration listed “volunteers” for the Dirlewanger formation, a notorious Waffen-SS unit composed mainly of former German concentration camp prisoners deployed against partisans (in reality, against unarmed civilians). Because the list indicates arrest categories, it is possible to search for green triangle prisoners’ envelopes.<sup>9</sup>

Arrested in Dortmund on February 9, 1938, for an alleged theft, Wilhelm B. was admitted to Buchenwald the next day and issued prisoner number 2666. On November 29, 1938, he was transferred to the new concentration camp at Mauthausen, holding prisoner number 940. Subsequently he was dispatched to Dachau and from there on September 30, 1940, to Sachsenhausen. With the establishment of the Neuengamme and Arbeitsdorf concentration camps, which were jointly administered under successive commandants Martin Weiss and Wilhelm Schitli, Wilhelm B. was sent first to Neuengamme and then Arbeitsdorf. In Arbeitsdorf he had prisoner number 99. When Arbeitsdorf closed in early October 1942, he came full circle, reentering Buchenwald with the new prisoner number 1836. Volunteering for the Dirlewanger formation, he was dispatched on June 11, 1943, from Buchenwald to Sachsenhausen, where Dirlewanger recruits were released from “protective custody.” It is not known whether he survived the war.<sup>10</sup>

Although the records do not describe his activities in the camps, the pattern of transfers into new camps, especially Arbeitsdorf, strongly suggests that Wilhelm B. was a prisoner-functionary. Described in the file as a mason or building worker, he was unemployed during the Depression years 1932 to 1934, held in “penal detention” (*Strafbast*) for an unspecified offense from January 9, 1934, to August 30, 1935, and worked for a Dortmund building company from 1935 to 1938. Shortly before arrest, he contributed 26 Reichsmarks (RM) to his health insurance provider for the first month of 1938. This seemingly obscure detail generated pages of documentation, because the SS at Buchenwald and Mauthausen deemed his case “not in order” (*nicht geordnet*), and obtained on his behalf a receipt (*Quittungskarte*) from the city of Dortmund.<sup>11</sup> The SS property custodians at Sachsenhausen, Neuengamme, Arbeitsdorf, and Buchenwald dutifully logged this receipt among his possessions after each transfer or had it forwarded from the previous camp, making it possible to follow Wilhelm B.’s path through the IKL system. This envelope also revealed information about perpetrators.





sexuality, especially forced prostitution, the experience of prisoner categories, and, more generally, the camps' and transports' social histories. After overcoming challenges in searching perhaps the most variegated ITS collection, the working group on Wartime documents discovered how to reconstruct a given city's or county's forced labor situation, such as Bad Arolsen in Kreis Waldeck or farms near Saarbrücken. Eastern workers' (*Ostarbeiters*) medical files from 1944 and 1945 revealed possible instances of "wild" euthanasia in Berlin hospitals. The group tasked with surveying Post-war documents noted that ITS holdings complemented, but did not supersede, the rich DP camp collections found elsewhere. The small group of "Hong Kong" files, which in part concern Central European émigrés who settled in Harbin, Manchuria, and who along with other national and religious minorities fled to Hong Kong after the 1949 Chinese Revolution, underscore that the ITS collections stand at the nexus of the crucial scholarly issues about twentieth-century Europe: the plight of refugees and human rights. Many DP cards reveal aid givers' stereotypes about Jewish DPs, while others indicate an attempt—in some cases successful—by Holocaust perpetrators to assume DP status for the purpose of evading justice.<sup>14</sup>

This brief survey only hints at the ITS collections' outstanding research potential. Better than any other set of archival collections, the ITS records speak to the totality of terror, abuse, and suffering inflicted on those regarded as "enemies of the Third Reich," and to the surviving victims' struggles to rebuild their lives after World War II. When combined with the detailed history of detention sites found in this encyclopedia, the ability to follow the lives of persons like prisoners Kurt A. and Wilhelm B. helps the researcher approach the day-to-day level of National Socialist persecution.

Joseph Robert White

## NOTES

1. The Associated Press has published a series of articles on the opening of the ITS; for a listing of these articles and USHMM press releases on the ITS, see <http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/its/>. Yad Vashem obtained copies of "non-personal" documents (*Sachdokumente*) in the 1950s. Since 1996, Bad Arolsen has permitted researcher access to the same collection, but the bulk of its collections remained off limits.

2. For the Inventory, see <http://resources.ushmm.org/itsinventory/>.

3. Quotation found in the ITS *Inventar* and the USHMM Inventory.

4. This summary of holdings is based upon the ITS *Inventar* (unpublished Excel spreadsheets on CD-Rom, nd).

5. Listed as 1.1.5.3, "Individual Documents Male Buchenwald," and 1.1.5.4, "Individual Documents Female Buchenwald." For the page counts of Buchenwald prisoners' files and for those of other camps, see International Tracing Service, *Catalogue of Records Held by the International Tracing Service of the Allied High Commission for Germany at Arolsen*, 4 vols. (Arolsen, 1954), Vol. I: *Concentration Camp Records; Miscellaneous Records of General or Historical Nature; Records on Unaccompanied Displaced Children*.

6. ITS Digitized Incarceration Collections, USHMM, Buchenwald GCC 2 / 202 IE / 7 Ord. 218, "Listen über Häftlinge mit 'Fluchtpunkten,'" pp. 2, 8 (quotation). Followed by a list of last names and prisoner numbers, the boilerplate reads: "Block Eldest! The following bearer(s) of escape markings is (are) found on your block" [*Blockältester! Folgender Fluchtpunktträger befindet sich auf Deinem Block*].

7. ITS Digitized Incarceration Collections, USHMM, 1.1.5.3, "Individual Documents Male Buchenwald," A., Kurt, pp. 5448862-5448876; Buchenwald GCC 2 / 202 IE / 7 Ord. 218, "Listen über Häftlinge mit 'Fluchtpunkten,'" p. 18 (verso). ITS, T/D file 275307, March 15, 1955.

8. Primo Levi, "The Gray Zone," in *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Summit Books, 1988).

9. ITS Digitized Incarceration Collections, USHMM, Buchenwald GCC 2/262 IIF/4 Ord. 421, "Listen über Häftlinge der Formation 'Dirlewanger,' 1943-1945," p. 3. On the Dirlewanger formation, see French MacLean, *Cruel Hunters: SS-Sonderkommando Dirlewanger; Hitler's Most Notorious Anti-Partisan Unit* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 1998); and Hans-Peter Klausch, *Antifaschisten in SS-Uniform: Schicksal und Widerstand der deutschen politischen KZ-Häftlinge, Zuchthaus- und Wehrmachtstrafgefangenen in der SS-Sonderformation Dirlewanger* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1993).

10. ITS Digitized Incarceration Collections, USHMM, 1.1.5.3, "Individual Documents Male Buchenwald," B., Wilhelm, pp. 5609049-5609077.

11. ITS Digitized Incarceration Collections, USHMM, 1.1.5.3, "Individual Documents Male Buchenwald," Mauthausen to Landesversicherungsanstalt Westfalen, March 17, 1939, p. 5609050.

12. Barnewald SSO summarized in French MacLean, *The Camp Men: The SS Officers Who Ran the Nazi Concentration Camp System* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 1999), p. 34.

13. US448 Case No. 000-50-5-9 (*USA v. Josias Prince zu Waldeck, et al.*), August 14, 1947.

14. This synopsis is based upon the author's notes taken at the group presentations at Bad Arolsen, Germany, on June 24, 2008.



# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

14f13	Code name for “euthanasia” in IKL camps
1999	<i>1999: Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts</i>
A4	Aggregat 4 (code name for the V-2 rocket)
AAC-C	L'Archives des Anciens Combattants (Veterans' Archives), Caen, France
AADN-S	L'Amicale des Anciens Déportés de Neu-Stassfurt (Association of Former Deportees of Neu-Stassfurt)
AAK	Archiv der Akademie der Künste (Archive of the Academy of Art), Berlin
AAN	Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie (Archive of New Documents), Warsaw
ABA	Armeebekleidungsamt (Army Clothing Office)
A-BASF	Archiv der BASF, Ludwigshafen
ABI	August-Bebel-Institut (August Bebel Institute), Berlin
AbKdo	Arbeitskommando (work detail)
ABL/LPD-N/O	Archiv der Bayerischen Landespolizei/Landespolizeidirektion Niederbayern/Oberpfalz (Archive of the Bavarian State Police/State Police Directorate Lower Bavaria/Upper Pfalz)
A-BMdl	Archiv des Bundesministeriums des Innern (Archive of the Federal Ministry of the Interior), Vienna
ABR	Arbeitskreis Berliner Regionalmuseen (Working Group of Berlin Regional Museums)
ABSS	<i>Amtsblatt der Stadt Steyr</i>
ABZ	<i>Aschaffenburg Zeitung</i>
ACCC	Archives Copenhagen City Court
ACCS	L'Archives de camp de concentration Struthof (Natzweiler) (Archives of the Struthof (Natzweiler) Concentration Camp), France
ACNR	L'Archives de Conseils national de la Résistance (Archives of the National Council of the Resistance), Paris
ADGB	Allgemeiner Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (German Trade Union Association)
ADIRN	Association des Déportées et Internées Résistantes, Nanterre (Association of Deportees and Resistance Internees, Nanterre), France
AdsD-FES	Archiv der sozialen Demokratie der Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Archive of Social Democracy of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation), Bonn
ADW-B	Archiv des Diakonischen Werkes (Archive of the Deaconite Works), Berlin
AE	Arbeitserziehungshäftling(e) (work education or discipline prisoner(s))
AEG	Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (German General Electric Co.)
AEG-FKU	AEG Friedrich-Karl-Ufer (AEG Friedrich Karl Ufer)
AEL	Arbeitserziehungslager (work education or discipline camp)
AFA	Akkumulatoren Fabrik AG (Battery Manufacturing, Inc.)
AFL	<i>Anzeiger für das Fürstentum Lübeck</i>
AFP	Agence France Presse
AG	Aktiengesellschaft (public corporation)
AG-B	Archiv Gedenkstätte Buchenwald (Archives of the Buchenwald Memorial)
AG-BB	Archiv Gedenkstätte Bergen-Belsen (Archives of the Bergen-Belsen Memorial)
AG-D	Archiv Gedenkstätte Dachau (Archive of the Dachau Memorial)

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## 1540 ABBREVIATIONS

AG-Dr	Archiv des Arbeitskreises Stadtgeschichte e.V., Gedenk- und Dokumentationsstätte KZ Drütte (Archives of the Working Group of City History Association, Memorial and Documentation Site of the Drütte Concentration Camp)
AGe-A-B	Archiv der Gemeinde Asbach-Bäumenheim (Archive of the Asbach-Bäumenheim Township)
AGe-Bi	Archiv der Gemeinde Bisingen (Archive of the Bisingen Township)
AGe-Fe	Archiv der Gemeinde Feldafing (Archive of the Feldafing Township)
AGe-Nie	Archiv der Gemeinde Niederorschel (Archive of the Niederorschel Township)
AGe-Rd	Archiv der Gemeinde Rohrdorf (Archive of the Rohrdorf Township)
AGe-StG	Archiv der Gemeinde St. Gilgen (Archive of the St. Gilgen Township)
AGe-Sü	Archiv der Gemeinde Südbrokmesland (Archive of the Südbrokmesland Township)
AGe-USZ	Archiv der Gemeinde Unterschwarzach (Archive of the Unterschwarzach Township)
AG-F	Archiv Gedenkstätte Flossenbürg (Archive of the Flossenbürg Memorial)
AGK	Archiwum Główniej Komisji (Main Commission Archives; also IPN)
AG-L	Archiv Gedenkstätte Lichtenburg (Archive of the Lichtenburg Memorial)
AG-LZ/H	Archiv Gedenkstätte Langenstein-Zwieberge in Halberstadt (Archive of the Langenstein-Zwieberge Memorial in Halberstadt)
AG-M	Archiv Gedenkstätte Mauthausen (Archive of the Mauthausen Memorial)
AG-MD	Archiv Gedenkstätte Mittelbau-Dora (Archive of the Mittelbaul-Dora Memorial)
AG-NG	Archiv Gedenkstätte Neuengamme (Archive of the Neuengamme Memorial)
AG-N-S	Archiv Gedenkstätte Natzweiler-Struthof (Archive of the Natzweiler-Struthof Memorial)
AG-R	Archiv Gedenkstätte Ravensbrück (Archive of the Ravensbrück Memorial)
AG-S	Archiv Gedenkstätte Sachsenhausen (Archive of the Sachsenhausen Memorial)
AgSSüHR	Arbeitsgemeinschaft Spurensuche in der Südharzregion (Working Community of the Tracing Service in the Southern Harz Region)
AG-T	Archiv Gedenkstätte Theresienstadt (Terezín) (Archive of the Theresienstadt (Terezín) Memorial)
AG-W	Archiv Gedenkstätte Wöbbelin (Archive of the Wöbbelin Memorial)
AH	Amtshauptmannschaft (Administrative District Offices)
AHFW	Archiv der Henschel-Flugzeug-Werke GmbH (Archive of the Henschel Aircraft Works, Ltd.), Kassel
AHI-Bau	Allgemeine Hoch- und Ingenieurbau (General Building and Civil Engineering)
A-HkBr	Archiv der Handelskammer Bremen (Archives of the Bremen Chamber of Commerce)
AHM-K	Archiv des Heimatmuseums Köpenick (Archive of the Köpenick Hometown Museum)
AHM-O	Archiv des Heimatmuseums Oederan (Archive of the Oederan Hometown Museum)
AI	Archiwum Ikonograficzne (Iconographic Archive), Sztutowo, Poland
AIeTW-B	Archiv des Interessenverbandes ehemaliger Teilnehmer am antifaschistischen Widerstand, Verfolgter des Naziregimes und Hinterbliebener (Archives of the Association of Former Participants in the Anti-Fascist Resistance, Persecutees of the Nazi Regime, and Surviving Dependents), Berlin
AIZ	<i>Arbeiter-Illustrierte-Zeitung</i>
AIZ	Archiwum Instytutu Zachodniego (Archives of the Western Institute), Poznań
AJJDC	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (aka “Joint”)
AK	Armia Krajowa (Polish Home Army)
AK-IPN	Archiwum Główniej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu – Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (Main Commission Archives – Polish Institute of National Memory), Warsaw
AK-IPN Gd	Archiwum Główniej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu –

	Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (Main Commission Archives – Polish Institute of National Memory), Gdańsk
AK-IPN Kr	Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu – Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej, Kraków (Main Commission Archives–Polish Institute of National Memory, Kraków)
AK-IPN Op	Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu – Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej, Opole (Main Commission Archives–Polish Institute of National Memory, Opole)
AK-IPN WR	Archiwum Głównej Komisji Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu – Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej, Wrocław (Main Commission Archives–Polish Institute of National Memory, Wrocław)
AKM-WN	Archiv des Kreismuseums Wewelsburg-Niederhagen (Archive of the Wewelsburg-Niederhagen District Museum)
AKö	Körber-Archiv (Körber Archives), Hamburg
AKr-A-Sch	Archiv des Kreises Aue-Schwarzenberg (Archive of Aue-Schwarzenberg District)
AKr-Bal	Archiv des Kreises Balingen (Archive of Balingen District)
AKr-C	Archiv des Landkreises Celle (Archive of Celle County)
AKr-EW	Archiv des Kreises Eberswalde (Archive of the Eberswalde District)
AKr-MAB	Archiv des Kreises Marienberg (Archive of the Marienberg District)
AKr-N	Archiv des Kreises Nordhausen (Archive of the Nordhausen District)
AKr-RM	Archiv des Landkreises Rems-Murr (Archive of Rems-Murr County)
AKr-SH	Archiv des Landkreises Schwäbisch-Hall (Archive of Schwäbisch-Hall County)
AKr-TUT	Archiv des Kreises Tuttlingen (Archive of the Tuttlingen District)
AL	Arbeitslager (work camp)
ALIM	Archiv des Landesvereins für Innere Mission in Schleswig-Holstein (Archive of the State Association for the Inner Mission in Schleswig-Holstein), Rickling
<i>Allgä</i>	<i>Der Allgäuer</i>
ALR-LWL	Archiv des Landratsamtes Ludwigslust (Archive of the Office of the Rural District Administrator, Ludwigslust)
ALSOS	Code name for the US search for nuclear weapons research in Germany (from the Greek for “grove”)
ALVR	Archiv des Landschaftsverbandes Rheinland (Archive of the Rhineland Landscape Association)
ALVW-L	Archiv des Landschaftsverbandes Westfalen-Lippe (Archive of the Westfalen-Lippe Landscape Association)
ALWH	Archiv des Landeswohlfahrtsverbandes Hessen (Archive of the State Welfare Association, Hessen)
AM-BN-G	Archiv des Museums der Burg Neustadt Glewe (Archive of the Burg Neustadt Glewe Museum)
AMC	American Military Court
AMGR	Archiwum Muzeum Gross-Rosen (Gross-Rosen Museum Archives), Rogoźnica, Poland
AMRCCT-L	Association pour la Mémoire et la Reconnaissance du Camp de Concentration Thil-Longwy (Archive for the Memory and Recognition of the Thil-Longwy Concentration Camp), France
AMS	Archiwum Muzeum Stutthof (Archives of the Stutthof Museum), Sztutowo, Poland
<i>Ams</i>	<i>Acta medica scandinavica</i>
AMSPE	L'Archives du Ministère de la Santé Publique et de l' Environnement (Archives of the Minister of the Public Health and the Environment), Brussels

## 1542 ABBREVIATIONS

AMvP	Archiv Ministerstva vnitra Praha (Archives of the Ministry of the Interior, Prague)
AN	L'Archives nationales de France (French National Archives), Paris (also ANFP)
ANA	Australian National Archives, Canberra
ANEI	Associazione Nazionale Ex Internati (National Association of Ex-Internees), Rome
ANFP	L'Archives nationales de France, Paris (also AN)
<i>Anb-A</i>	<i>Anhalter Anzeiger</i>
ANL	L'Archives nationales de Luxembourg (National Archives of Luxembourg)
AN-MACVG	L'Archives nationales – Ministère des anciens combattants et victimes de guerre (National Archives – Ministry of Veterans and Victims of War), Paris
<i>Antifa-Be-Os</i>	<i>Antifaschistische Beiträge aus Osnabrück</i>
AOC	L'Archives de l'Occupation française en Allemagne et en Autriche Colmar (Archives of the French Occupation in Germany and in Austria, Colmar), France
AOCZ	Archiv des Oberbergamtes (Archive of the Superior Mining Office), Clausthal-Zellerfeld
AOS	L'Amicale d'Oranienburg-Sachsenhausen (The Association of Oranienburg-Sachsenhausen)
A-Osta-H	Archiv des Oberstaatsanwalts (Archive of the Senior State Prosecutor), Hamburg
<i>AP</i>	<i>Affaires Politiques</i>
<i>ApAz</i>	<i>Après Auschwitz</i>
APCK	Archiwum Polskiego Czerwonego Krzyża (Archives of the Polish National Red Cross), Warsaw
AP Gd.	Archiwum Państwowe w Gdańsku (Gdańsk State Archives)
APK	Archiwum Państwowe w Krakowie (Kraków State Archives)
APKat	Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach (Katowice State Archives)
APL	Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie (Lublin State Archives)
APŁ	Archiwum Państwowe w Łodzi (Łódź State Archives)
APMM	Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na Majdanku (Archives of the State Museum at Majdanek)
APMO	Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum w Oświęcimie (Archives of the State Museum at Auschwitz-Birkenau)
APP	Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu (Poznań State Archives)
APR	Archiwum Państwowe w Radomiu (Radom State Archives)
APSz	Archiwum Państwowe w Szczecinie (Szczecin State Archives)
<i>APuZ</i>	<i>Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte</i>
<i>APZ-P</i>	<i>Aus Politik und Zeitgeschehen – Das Parlament</i>
A-RAG	Archiv der Rheinmetall AG (Archive [of the former] Rheinmetall-Borsig Inc.), Düsseldorf
<i>Aratora</i>	<i>Aratora: Zeitschrift des Vereins für Heimatkunde, Geschichte und Schutz von Artern e.V.</i>
Arb. Kdo	Arbeitskommando (work detail)
ASBUDO	Arkhiv SBU Donetskoyi oblasti (Archive of the Ukrainian State Security Service for the Donetsk Oblast')
<i>AschVZ</i>	<i>Aschaffenburg Volkszeitung</i>
<i>AschZ</i>	<i>Aschaffenburg Zeitung</i>
ASDAG	Asphalt und Dachdeckungsgesellschaft mbH (Asphalt and Roofing Company, Ltd.), Vienna
A-SDP	Archiv der Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, (Steyr-Daimler-Puch, Inc., Archives), Austria
<i>ASfM</i>	<i>Aufruf: Streitschrift für Menschenrechte</i>



ASM	Alderney Society and Museum, Channel Islands, UK
AS-M	Archiv Siemens-München (Siemens Archives, Munich)
Aso	Asozial(e) (“asocial(s)”)
ASR	Arbeitsscheue Reich (“Reich work shy”; synonym for “asocial”)
ASt-Ah	Archiv der Stadt Ahrensböck (Ahrensböck City Archives)
AStaLG-Au	Archiv der Staatsanwaltschaft bei dem Landgericht Aurich (Archive of the State Prosecutor for the Aurich State Court)
AStaLG-B	Archiv der Staatsanwaltschaft bei dem Landgericht Bochum (Archive of the State Prosecutor for the Bochum State Court)
AStaLG-H	Archiv der Staatsanwaltschaft bei dem Landgericht Hannover (Archive of the State Prosecutor for the Hannover State Court)
AStaLG-NF	Archiv der Staatsanwaltschaft bei dem Landgericht Nürnberg-Fürth (Archive of the State Prosecutor for the Nuremberg-Fürth State Court)
ASt-Amg	Archiv der Stadt Amberg (Amberg City Archives)
ASt-Ba	Archiv der Stadt Barth (Barth City Archives)
ASt-Bal	Archiv der Stadt Balingen (Balingen City Archives)
ASt-B-Fl	Archiv der Stadt Bad Friedrichshall (Bad Friedrichshall City Archives)
ASt-BG	Archiv der Stadt Bergisch Gladbach (Bergisch Gladbach City Archives)
ASt-BH	Archiv der Stadt Brandenburg an der Havel (Branderburg an der Havel City Archives)
ASt-Bl	Archiv der Stadt Blaichach (Blaichach City Archives)
ASt-B-Lan	Archiv der Stadt Bad Langensalza (Bad Langensalza City Archives)
ASt-Blb.	Archiv der Stadt Blankenburg (Blankenburg City Archives)
ASt-Boc	Archiv der Stadt Bochum (Bochum City Archives)
ASt-BrHa	Archiv der Stadt Bremerhaven (Bremerhaven City Archives)
ASt-Bur	Archiv der Stadt Burgau (Burgau City Archives)
ASt-BZ	Archiv der Stadt Bautzen (Bautzen City Archives)
ASt-Ctb	Archiv der Stadt Cottbus (Cottbus City Archives)
ASt-DU	Archiv der Stadt Duisburg (Duisburg City Archives)
ASt-Dü	Archiv der Stadt Düsseldorf (Düsseldorf City Archives)
ASt-Dud	Archiv der Duderstadt (Duderstadt City Archives)
ASt-Eu	Archiv der Stadt Eutin (Eutin City Archives)
ASt-Fg	Archiv der Stadt Freiberg (Freiberg City Archives)
ASt-Fn	Archiv der Stadt Friedrichshafen (Friedrichshafen City Archives)
ASt-Fr	Archiv der Stadt Freiburg (Freiburg City Archives)
ASt-Ge	Archiv der Stadt Gelsenkirchen (Gelsenkirchen City Archives)
ASt-Germ	Archiv der Stadt Germering (Germering City Archives)
ASt-Gl	Archiv der Stadt Glückstadt (Glückstadt City Archives)
ASt-H	Archiv der Stadt Hannover (Hannover City Archives)
ASt-HDH	Archiv der Stadt Heidenheim (Heidenheim City Archives)
ASt-Hen	Archiv der Stadt Hennigsdorf (Hennigsdorf City Archives)
ASt-Her	Archiv der Stadt Hersbruck (Hersbruck City Archives)
ASt-Hild	Archiv der Stadt Hildesheim (Hildesheim City Archives)
ASt-Hof	Archiv der Stadt Hof (Hof City Archives)
ASt-Hü	Archiv der Stadt Hürth (Hürth City Archives)
ASt-Kö	Archiv der Stadt Köln (Cologne City Archives)

## 1544 ABBREVIATIONS

ASt-KöW	Archiv der Stadt Königs Wusterhausen (Königs Wusterhausen City Archives)
AStKr-BG	Archiv der Stadt und des Kreises Bergisch-Gladbach (Archive of the City and District of Bergisch-Gladbach)
ASt-L	Archiv der Stadt Leipzig (Leipzig City Archives)
ASt-Lang	Archiv der Stadt Langenhagen (Langenhagen City Archives)
ASt-Ld	Archiv der Stadt Landau, Pfalz (Landau Pfalz City Archives)
ASt-Lht	Archiv der Stadt Landshut (Landshut City Archives)
ASt-Li	Archiv der Stadt Lindau (Lindau City Archives)
ASt-Lip	Archiv der Stadt Lippstadt (Lippstadt City Archives)
ASt-Ln	Archiv der Stadt Linz (Linz City Archives), Austria
ASt-Lsn	Archiv der Stadt Leisnig (Leisnig City Archives)
ASt-M	Archiv der Stadt München (Munich City Archives)
ASt-MCW	Archiv der Stadt Malchow (Malchow City Archives)
ASt-Me	Archiv der Stadtverwaltung Meuselwitz (Archive of the Meuselwitz City Administration)
ASt-Mer	Archiv der Stadt Merseburg (Merseburg City Archives)
ASt-Mkg	Archiv der Stadt Markkleeberg (Markkleeberg City Archives)
ASt-MÜ	Archiv der Stadt Mühlendorf (Mühlendorf City Archives)
ASt-Mühlh	Archiv der Stadt Mühlhausen (Mühlhausen City Archives)
ASt-N	Archiv der Stadt Nürnberg (Nuremberg City Archives)
ASt-Ne/Co	Archiv der Stadt Neustadt bei Coburg (Neustadt bei Coburg City Archives)
ASt-N-F	Archiv der Stadt Nürnberg-Fürth (Nuremberg-Fürth City Archives)
ASt-No	Archiv der Stadt Norderstedt (Norderstedt City Archives)
ASt-Ns	Archiv der Stadt Nossen (Nossen City Archives)
ASt-NZ	Archiv der Stadt Neustrelitz (Neustrelitz City Archives)
ASt-OG	Archiv der Stadt Offenburg (Offenburg City Archives)
ASt-Ol	Archiv der Stadt Oldenburg Oldenburg City Archives)
ASt-Os	Archiv der Stadt Osnabrück (Osnabrück City Archives)
ASt-Pi	Archiv der Stadt Pirna (Pirna City Archives)
ASt-Pl	Archiv der Stadt Plauen (Plauen City Archives)
ASt-Pre	Archiv der Stadt Prettin (Prettin City Archives)
ASt-Put	Archiv der Stadt Putten (Putten City Archives)
ASt-R	Archiv der Stadt Regensburg (Regensburg City Archives)
ASt-RDG	Archiv der Stadt Ribnitz-Damgarten (Ribnitz-Damgarten City Archives)
ASt-Ros	Archiv der Stadt Rostock (Rostock City Archives)
ASt-Salz	Archiv der Stadt Salzgitter (Salzgitter City Archives)
ASt-Sch	Archiv der Stadt Schlieben (Schlieben City Archives)
ASt-Schw	Archiv der Stadt Schwechat (Schwechat City Archives)
ASt-Slzw	Archiv der Stadt Salzwedel (Salzwedel City Archives)
ASt-So	Archiv der Stadt Soest (Soest City Archives)
ASt-Sty	Archiv der Stadt Steyr (Steyr City Archives), Austria
ASt-Va/E	Archiv der Stadt Vaihingen an der Enz (Vaihingen an der Enz City Archives)
ASt-W	Archiv der Stadt Wuppertal (Wuppertal City Archives)
ASt-Wb	Archiv der Stadt Warburg (Warburg City Archives)
ASt-Wi	Archiv der Stadt Witten (Witten City Archives)
ASt-Wien	Archiv der Stadt Wien (Vienna City Archives), Austria

ASt-Wies	Archiv der Stadt Wiesbaden (Wiesbaden City Archives)
ASt-Wil	Archiv der Stadt Wilhelmshaven (Wilhelmshaven City Archives)
ASt-WOB	Archiv der Stadt Wolfsburg (Wolfsburg City Archives)
ASt-Wsf	Archiv der Stadt Weissenfels (Weissenfels City Archives)
ASt-ZI	Archiv der Stadt Zittau (Zittau City Archives)
ASt-ZP	Archiv der Stadt Zschopau (Zschopau City Archives)
ASt-Zwbr	Archiv der Stadt Zweibrücken (Zweibrücken City Archives)
ASVG-B	L'archive du Service des Victimes de la Guerre (Archives of the Service of War Victims), Brussels
ATG	Allgemeine Transportanlagen GmbH (General Transport Systems, Ltd.), Leipzig-Schöna
AUB-ISG	Archiv der Universität Bremen, Institut für Sozialgeschichte (Archives of the University of Bremen, Institute for Social History)
<i>Aufbau</i>	<i>Aufbau: Nachrichtenblatt des German-Jewish Club, Inc.</i>
<i>AuGF-MHL</i>	<i>Archiv- und Geschichtsforschung, Mühlhausen</i>
<i>AugsA</i>	<i>Augsburger Allgemeine</i>
<i>AUW</i>	<i>Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis</i>
AVB-StFA	Archivverbund Bautzen/Staatsfilialarchiv (Bautzen Archival Network/State Branch Archive)
A-VEB-S	Archiv des VEB-Synthese (Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Synthesis), Schwarzheide
AVVN-BdA	Archiv der Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes-Bund der Antifaschisten (Archive of the Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime – League of Anti-Fascists)
AVVN-D	Archiv der Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes-Dortmund (Archive of the Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime-Dortmund)
AVVN-K	Archiv der Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes-Köln (Archive of the Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime-Cologne)
AZA	Ausländische Zivilarbeiter (foreign civilian worker)
AŽIH	Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego (Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute) Warsaw
AZR	Arbeitszwang Reich (Reich forced labor)
BA	Bundesarchiv (German Federal Archives)
BA-B	Bundesarchiv Berlin (German Federal Archives in Berlin) (includes former BDC)
BA-BL	Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde (German Federal Archives in Berlin-Lichterfelde)
BA-DH	Bundesarchiv Aussenstelle Dahlwitz-Hoppegarten (German Federal Archives, External Branch Dahlwitz-Hoppegarten)
<i>BADRDE</i>	<i>Bulletin de l'Amicale des Déportés et de la Résistance de Dora-Ellrich</i>
BA-K	Bundesarchiv Koblenz (German Federal Archives, Koblenz)
BA-L	Bundesarchiv Aussenstelle Ludwigsburg (German Federal Archives, External Branch Ludwigsburg)
Baltöl	Baltische Öl GmbH (Baltic Oil Ltd.)
<i>BAM</i>	<i>Bulletin de l'Amicale de Mauthausen</i>
BA-MA	Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv (Federal Military Archives), Freiburg
<i>BaNZ</i>	<i>Basler National-Zeitung</i>
BAOR	British Army of the Rhine
BA-P	Bundesarchiv-Abteilung Potsdam (Federal Archives-Potsdam Branch)

## 1546 ABBREVIATIONS

BAR	Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv (Swiss Federal Archives), Bern
BASF	Badische Anilin und Sodafabrik (Baden Anilin and Soda Manufacturing)
Ba-VEB-BH	Betriebsarchiv VEB Barkas (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Small Vans and Busses), Hainichen
Ba-VEB-Bm-KMS	Betriebsarchiv VEB Buchungsmaschinenwerk Karl-Marx-Stadt (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Accounting Machines), Leipzig
Ba-VEB-Bü-SHD	Betriebsarchiv VEB Bürstenfabrik (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Brush Manufacturing), Schönheide
Ba-VEB-FV	Betriebsarchiv VEB Feinspinnerei (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Fine Spinning Mills), Venusberg
Ba-VEB-HR	Betriebsarchiv VEB Hydraulik (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Hydraulics), Rochlitz
Ba-VEB-Mü-DZ	Betriebsarchiv VEB Mühlenbau (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Mill Construction), Dresden-Zschachwitz
Ba-VEB-PG	Betriebsarchiv VEB Gardinen (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Curtain Fabric), Plauner
Ba-VEB-S-Z	Betriebsarchiv VEB Sachsenring (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Automobile Manufacturing), Zwickau
Ba-VEB-Ts-Fl	Betriebsarchiv VEB Texturseide (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Textured Silk), Flöha
Ba-VEB-Vmb-D	Betriebsarchiv VEB Verpackungsmaschinenbau (Firm Archive of the Nationally Owned Enterprise for Packing Machine Manufacture), Dresden
B-B	Bergen-Belsen
Bbde	SS-Baubrigade (Construction Brigade, see also SS-BB)
B.Ch.	Batalionów Chłopskich (Polish Peasant Battalion)
BCL	Brooklyn College Library, New York
BDC	Berlin Document Center (now BA-B and at NARA)
BDCPF	Berlin Document Center Personnel File (also SS Officer file, SSO)
BdE	Befehlshaber der Ersatzarmee (Commander-in-Chief of the Replacement Army)
BdO	Befehlshaber der Ordnungspolizei (Commander of the Order Police)
BdS	Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei (Commander of the Security Police and SD)
<i>Be-Nbb-Hg</i>	<i>Beiträge zur Neckarbischofsheimer Heimatsgeschichte</i>
<i>BeStG</i>	<i>Beiträge zur Stadtgeschichte</i>
BFA	Bundesfilmarchiv (German Federal Film Archives), Berlin
<i>BFW</i>	<i>Bulletin für Faschismus und Weltkriegsforschung</i>
BG	Bezirksgericht (District Court, GDR)
<i>BGKBZHwP</i>	<i>Biuletyn Główniej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce</i>
BgA-Fg	Bergarchiv Freiberg (Freiberg Mine Archive)
BGH	Bundesgerichtshof (West German Federal Court)
<i>BGBL</i>	<i>Bundesgesetzblatt</i>
<i>BGNSVND</i>	<i>Beiträge zur Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Verfolgung in Norddeutschland</i>
<i>BHSKN</i>	<i>Beiträge zur Heimatkunde aus Stadt und Kreis Nordhausen</i>
BHStA-(M)	Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv München (Bavarian Main State Archives, Munich)
BHStA-(N)	Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Nürnberg (Bavarian Main State Archives, Nuremberg)
<i>BKRTN</i>	<i>Biuletyn Kwartalny Radosmkiego Towarzystwa Naukowego</i>
BLH	Beth Lohamei Hagettaot (Archive of the Ghetto Fighters House; also GFH), Israel



BLHA	Brandenburgisches Landeshauptarchiv (State Main Archive of Brandenburg; citational variations include BLHA-(B), Berlin, and BLHA-(P), Potsdam; the archive includes ZSA-P), Potsdam
BLHBH	<i>Biuletyn Historyczny Łęborskiego Bractwa Historycznego</i>
BLZ-BPA	Bayerische Landeszentrale für politische Bildungsarbeit (Bavarian Central Office for Political Education Work)
BlzL	<i>Blätter zum Land</i>
BM	<i>Berliner Morgenpost</i>
BMDI	Bundesministerium des Innern, Wien (Federal Ministry of the Interior, Vienna)
BMW	Bayerische Motoren Werke (Bavarian Motor Works)
Bn	Battalion
BNZ	<i>Bremer Nationalsozialistische Zeitung</i>
BoA	<i>Bochumer Anzeiger</i>
BPA	Bezirksamt Pankow Archiv (Pankow District Office Archive)
BPASED-B(O)	Bezirksparteiarchiv der SED, Berlin (Ost) (District Party Archive of the Socialist Unity Party, East Berlin)
BPB	Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Federal Central Office for Political Education)
Brabag	Braunkohle-Benzin AG (Brown Coal Gasoline Inc.)
BrA-K	Brabag Archiv-Köln (Brabag Archive, Cologne)
BrAnz	<i>Brandenburger Anzeiger</i>
BrN	<i>Bremer Nachrichten</i>
BŚ-DM	<i>Biuletyn Świebodzice-Dzieje Miasta</i>
BStU	Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit der ehemaligen DDR (Federal Commissioner for the Documents of the Ministry of State Security of the Former GDR)
BStU-H(S)	Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Aussenstelle Halle (Saale) (Federal Commissioner for the Documents of the Ministry of State Security of the Former GDR Halle an der Saale)
BsWuSg	<i>Beiträge zur südwestlichen Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte</i>
BT	<i>Bamberger Tagblatt</i>
BTS	Belgian Tracing Service
Bu	Buchenwald (archival abbreviation)
BuH	<i>Buchenwald Heft</i>
Büssing NAG	Büssing Vereinigte Neue-Automobil-Gesellschaft AG (Büssing United New Automobile Company Corp.)
BV	<i>Bamberger Volksblatt</i>
BV	Berufsverbrecher (career criminal) or Befristete Vorbeugungshaft (temporary preventive custody)
BVEBMZ	<i>Betriebszeitung des VEB Motorradwerk Zschopau</i>
BVP	Bayerische Volkspartei (Bavarian People's Party)
BWF	<i>Bulletin für Weltkriegs- und Faschismusforschung</i>
BZ	<i>Berliner Zeitung</i>
BzFdd	<i>Beiträge zur Fachdidaktik</i>
BŻIH	<i>Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego</i>
CAFSSRF	Central Archives of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation, Moscow

## 1548 ABBREVIATIONS

CAHJP	Central Archive for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem
CAHS	Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, USHMM, Washington, DC
CChIdK	Centr Chranenija Istoriko-Dokumental'nych Kollekcij Moscow (Center for the Preservation of Historical Documentary Collections), Moscow
CCKdo	Concentration Camp Kommando (ITS abbreviation)
CCP	<i>Catalogue of Camps and Prisons</i> (ITS)
CDJC	Centre de documentation juive contemporaine (Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation), Paris
CEGESOMA	Centre des Recherches et d'Etudes Historiques de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale (Center of Research and Historical Studies of the Second World War), Brussels
CEH	<i>Contemporary European History</i>
CeHe	<i>Celler Hefte</i>
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CGT	Confédération Générale du Travail (General Confederation of Labor)
CHP	Centre historique (Historical Center), Paris
CIC	Civilian Internment Camp (Allied term)
CICR	Comité internationale de la Croix-Rouge (International Committee of the Red Cross; also ICRC)
CIOS	Combined Intelligence Objectives Sub-Committee
CJH	Center for Jewish History, New York
CJN	<i>Canadian Jewish News</i>
CNI	Central Name Index (ITS)
CoNZ	<i>Coburger Nationalzeitung</i>
CoV	<i>Coburger Volksblatt</i>
CWC	Civilian Workers Camps (ITS abbreviation)
D	Office group designation for IKL in the SS-WVHA, usually followed by a Roman numeral indicating office (such as D II, Prisoner Labor Allocation)
DA	<i>Der Alemanne</i>
DAA/DK	District Archive of Aabenraa, Denmark
DAF	Deutsche Arbeitsfront (German Labor Front)
DAI-FO	Derzhavnyi arkhiv Ivano-Frankivs'koi oblasti (State Archive of the Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast')
DAG	Dynamit Nobel AG
DaHe	<i>Dachauer Hefte</i>
DAKO	Derzhavnyi arkhiv Kirovograds'koi oblasti (State Archive of the Kirovograd Oblast'), Ukraine
DALO	Derzhavnyi arkhiv L'vivs'koi oblasti (State Archive of the L'viv Oblast'), Ukraine
DAN	<i>Der Angriff</i>
DanVorp	<i>Danziger Vorposten</i>
DARO	Derzhavnyi arkhiv Rivnens'koi oblasti (State Archive of the Rivne Oblast'), Ukraine
DATO	Derzhavnyi arkhiv Ternopols'koi oblasti (State Archive of the Ternopol Oblast'), Ukraine
DAVINO	Derzhavnyi arkhiv Vinnyts'koi oblasti (State Archive of the Vinnitsia Oblast'), Ukraine
DAVO	Derzhavnyi arkhiv Volyn'skoi oblasti (State Archive of the Volyn' Oblast'), Ukraine
DAW	Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke GmbH (German Equipment Works, Ltd)
DAZO	Derzhavnyi arkhiv Zhytomys'koi oblasti (State Archive of the Zhytomyr Oblast'), Ukraine

<i>DB</i>	<i>Dziennik Bałtycki</i>
DB	Daimler-Benz
DBHG	Deutsche Bergwerks- und Hüttenbau Gesellschaft (German Mining and Metallurgical Company)
DCAG-UA	DaimlerChrysler AG, Unternehmenarchiv (Company Archive), Stuttgart
DDP	Deutsche Demokratische Partei (German Democratic Party)
DDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik (German Democratic Republic; also GDR)
<i>DDR-Justiz-NS-V</i>	<i>DDR-Justiz und NS-Verbrechen: Die deutschen Strafverfahren wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen</i>
<i>Dé</i>	<i>Le Déporté</i>
DEF	Deutsche Emailwarenfabrik – Email- und Metallwaren aller Art (German Enamel Factory – Enamel and Metal Wares of All Types)
DEFA	Deutsche Film AG (East German Film Corp.)
<i>DegGb</i>	<i>Deggendorfer Geschichtsblätter</i>
DEGOB	Deportáltakat Gondozó Országos Bizottság (National Committee for Attending Deportees), Budapest
Degussa	Deutsche Gold- und Silber-Scheideanstalt (German Gold and Silver Separation Establishment)
<i>Deg-Z</i>	<i>Deggendorfer Zeitung</i>
Demag	Deutsche Maschinenfabrik AG (German Machine Factory Corp.)
<i>Dem-Gesch</i>	<i>Demokratische Geschichte</i>
<i>dem-ges</i>	<i>demokratische-gesundheit</i>
Deschimag	Deutsche Schiff- und Maschinenbau AG (German Ship and Machine Construction Co.)
DESt	Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke GmbH (German Earth and Stone Works, Ltd.)
DE-TE-WE	Deutsche Telefonwerke und Kabelindustrie AG (German Telephone and Cable Industry Corp.)
Deurag-Nerag	Gewerkschaft Deutsche Erdöl- Neue Erdöl Raffinerie Aktiengesellschaft (Union of the German Petroleum-New Petroleum Refinery Corporation)
DEW	Deutsche Eisenwerke AG (German Iron Works Corp.)
<i>DF</i>	<i>Deutsche Freiheit</i>
<i>DFü</i>	<i>Der Führer</i>
<i>DGA</i>	<i>Der Gegen-Angriff</i>
DGB	Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (German Confederation of Trade Unions)
DGS-KZ-A	Dokumentationsstätte Goldbacher Stollen und KZ Aufkirch e.V. (Documentation Site of the Goldbach Tunnels and Aufkirch Concentration Camp, Registered Association)
<i>DH</i>	<i>Daily Herald</i>
DIKAL!	Darf in kein anderes Lager! (Not Permitted in Any Other Camp!; an abbreviation used in Buchenwald prisoner files to designate flight risks or dangerous prisoners)
<i>DiM</i>	<i>Dokumenty i materiały</i> , 3 vols. (Łódź, 1946)
<i>DingA</i>	<i>Dingolfinger Anzeiger</i>
DIWAG	Deutsche Industrie-Werke AG (German Industrial Works Corp.)
DIZ	Dokumentations- und Informationszentrum (Documentation and Information Center)
DIZ-EL	Dokumentations- und Informationszentrum Emslandlager (Documentation and Information Center, Emsland Camps)
DIZ-OK	Dokumentations- und Informationszentrum Oberer Kuhberg (Documentation and Information Center, Oberer Kuhberg)

## 1550 ABBREVIATIONS

DIZ-St	Dokumentations- und Informationszentrum Stadtallendorf (Documentation and Information Center, Stadtallendorf)
DIZ-T	Dokumentations- und Informationszentrum Torgau (Documentation and Information Center, Torgau)
<i>Df</i>	<i>Deutsche Justiz: Rechtspflege und Rechtspolitik</i>
DKK	Deutsche Kühl- und Kraftmaschinen (German Cooling and Power Machines)
DKP	Deutsche Kommunistische Partei (German Communist Party in the Federal Republic of Germany, founded in 1968)
DKW	Dampf Kraft Wagen (Steam-driven car, a German automobile firm)
DLV	Deutscher Luftsportverband (German Air Sport League)
DM	Deutsche Mark (FRG currency until 2001)
DMM	Deutsches Museum München (German Museum, Munich)
DMW	Deutsche Munitionswerke (German Munitions Works)
DNA	Danish National Archive
DNVP	Deutschnationale Volkspartei (German National People's Party)
<i>DNW</i>	<i>Die neue Weltbühne</i>
DOB	Date of birth
doc.	document
DÖLF	Deutsche Ölschieferforschungsgesellschaft (German Oil Shale Research Association)
DN	Dokumentenhaus Neuengamme (Neuengamme Documentation Center)
<i>Don-K-Ing</i>	<i>Donau-Kurier Ingolstadt</i>
DÖW	Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes (Documentation Archives of the Austrian Resistance), Vienna
DP	Displaced Person(s)
DR	Deutsche Reichsbahn (German National Railway)
<i>DRbPf</i>	<i>Der Rheinpfälzer</i>
DRK	Deutsches Rotes Kreuz (German Red Cross)
DRM-BK	Deutsch-Russisches Museum (German-Russian Museum), Berlin-Karlshorst
<i>DrVZ</i>	<i>Dresdner Volkszeitung</i>
DSC	Deutsche Sprengchemie GmbH (German Gunpowder Chemical Industry, Ltd.)
DSP	Deutsche Staatspartei (German State Party)
<i>dt</i>	<i>die tat</i>
DTM	Deutsche Technikmuseum (German Technical Museum), Berlin
DTM-AEG-A	Deutsche Technikmuseum, AEG-Archive (Archive of the German General Electric Company, AEG)
<i>Düfb</i>	<i>Düsseldorfer Jahrbuch</i>
DVA	Deutsche Versuchsanstalt für Ernährung und Verpflegung GmbH (German Experimental Institute for Nutrition and Provisions, Ltd.)
DVP	Deutsche Volkspartei (German People's Party)
<i>DVZ</i>	<i>Deutsche Volkszeitung</i>
DWB	Deutsche Wirtschaftsbetriebe (German Business Enterprises)
DWH	Deutsche Wohnungshilfswerk (German Housing Relief Service)
DZOK	Dokumentationszentrum Oberer Kuhberg, KZ Gedenkstätte (Oberer Kuhberg Documentation Center, Concentration Camp Memorial)
<i>DzP</i>	<i>Dziennik Polski</i>



ECPAD	Établissement de Communication et de Production audiovisuelle de la Défense (Defense Establishment of Audiovisual Communications and Productions), Paris
<i>EDR</i>	<i>Edenkobener Rundschau</i>
EF	Eiserne Front (Iron Front)
<i>EfHb</i>	<i>Eichsfelder Heimatbeft</i>
Eh-DDR-ZSA	Ehemalige DDR Zentrales Staatsarchiv (Central State Archives of the former German Democratic Republic, now BA-B)
EHM	Eesti Ajaloomuuseum (Estonian Historical Museum), Tallinn
<i>EI</i>	<i>An End to Intolerance</i>
<i>EfHKNg</i>	<i>Eberswalder Jahrbuch für Heimat-, Kultur- und Naturgeschichte</i>
<i>EKr</i>	<i>Echo Krakowa</i>
Elmag	Elsässische Maschinenbau GmbH (Alsatian Machine Construction Ltd.)
E-Polen	Eindeutschungsfähige-Polen (Germanizable Poles)
<i>ErzHei</i>	<i>Erzgebirgische Heimatblätter</i>
ESTA	Eesti Riigiarhiiv (Estonian State Archive), Tallinn
ETOUSA	European Theater of Operations, United States Army
e.V.	eingetragener Verein (Registered Association)
EVO	Energie-Versorgung Oberschlesien (Upper Silesian Energy Supply Co.)
<i>EZ</i>	<i>Ems-Zeitung</i>
<i>F</i>	<i>Freiheit</i>
<i>Fa</i>	<i>Fakty</i>
FAD	Freiwilliger Arbeitsdienst (Volunteer Labor Service)
FAL	Frauenarbeitslager (Women's labor camp)
<i>FASz</i>	<i>Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung</i>
FAU	Frontarbeitenunternehmen (Front Work Operation)
F-B-I	Fritz-Bauer-Institut, Frankfurt am Main
FCRA	Friends Committee for Refugees and Aliens
FDGB	Freier Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbund (Free German Trade Union Federation)
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Friedrich Ebert Foundation), Bonn
FGNS-H	Forschungsstelle für die Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus (Research Office for the History of National Socialism), Hamburg
FHA	Führungshauptamt (SS-Leadership Main Office)
FHLA-(L)	Friends House Library and Archives, London
FHQ	Führerhauptquartier (Führer Headquarters)
Fi	Fieseler aircraft or V-weapon prefix
<i>Fig</i>	<i>Le Figaro</i>
FIR	Fédération Internationale des Résistants (International Federation of Resisters)
FKM	Finow Kupfer- und Messingwerke AG (Finow Copper and Brass Works, Inc.)
FLS	F.L. Smidth & Co., Copenhagen (and archives)
FMAS-(S)	Foreign Ministry Archives of Sweden, Stockholm
FM-C	Frihedsmuseet-Copenhagen (Museum of the Danish Resistance, Copenhagen)
<i>FR</i>	<i>Frankfurter Rundschau</i>
<i>FräV</i>	<i>Fränkischens Volksblatt</i>
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany

## 1552 ABBREVIATIONS

<i>F-S</i>	<i>Folks-Sztyme</i>
FS	Fernschreiben (telegram)
FSB	Federalnaya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti (Federal Security Bureau)
FSS	Field Security Section (British military term)
FSW	Fritz-Sauckel-Werk (Gustloff Weimar; an armaments firm)
FTP	Franc-Tireur Partisan (Partisan irregulars)
<i>FüA</i>	<i>Fürther Anzeiger</i>
FVA	Fortunoff Video Archive of Holocaust Testimonies, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut
Fw	Focke Wulf
FWM	Flugzeugwerke Mielec (Mielec Aircraft Works)
<i>FZ</i>	<i>Frankfurter Zeitung</i>
FZH	Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte (Research Office for Contemporary History; formerly FGNS-H), Hamburg
GAGO	Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv grodnenskoï oblasti (State Archives of the Grodno Oblast'), Belarus
GAGOMO	Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv gomeľ'skoï oblasti (State Archives of the Gomel' Oblast'), Belarus
GAMINO	Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Minskoi oblasti (State Archive of the Minsk Oblast'), Belarus
GAMO	Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Mogilyovskoi oblasti (State Archive of the Mogilev Oblast'), Belarus
GAPO	Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Pskovskoi oblasti v Pskov (State Archives of the Pskov Oblast' in Pskov), Russia
GARF	Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv rossiiskoi federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow
GASBU	Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Sluzhby Bezopasnosti Ukraïny, Kyïv (State Archive of the Ukrainian Security Service, Kiev)
GASBU-Dn	GASBU-Dnepropetrovsk (State Archive of the Ukrainian Security Service, Dnepropetrovsk)
GASBU-Do	GASBU-Donets'k (State Archive of the Ukrainian Security Service, Donets'k)
GASBU-L	GASBU-L'viv (State Archive of the Ukrainian Security Service, L'viv)
GAZJ	Geschichtsarchiv der Zeugen Jehovas (Jehovah's Witnesses' History Archive), Selters, Taunus
GBA	Generalbevollmächtigter für den Arbeitseinsatz (General Plenipotentiary for Labor Allocation)
<i>GBrz</i>	<i>Gazeta Brzeska</i>
GCC	German Concentration Camp (ITS abbreviation)
GDR	German Democratic Republic (also DDR)
GDW-B	Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand (German Resistance Memorial Site), Berlin
GeBeChem	Generalbevollmächtigter Chemie (General Plenipotentiary for Chemistry in the Four-Year Plan)
<i>GeRu</i>	<i>Gedenkstätten-Rundbrief</i>
<i>Gesch-r.</i>	<i>Geschichte regional</i>
Gestapa	Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt (Secret State Police Office)
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei (Secret State Police)
<i>GF</i>	<i>Glückstädter Fortuna</i>

GFH	Ghetto Fighters' House (Beit Lohamei Hagettaot, BLH), Israel
GG	Generalgouvernement (General Government)
GK	Generalkommissar (General Commissar)
GKBZHWp	Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce (Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes in Poland; now IPN)
GLA-K	Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe (General Regional Archive in Karlsruhe)
GmbH	Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung (Limited Liability Company)
GMS	Gedenkstätte und Museum Sachsenhausen (Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum)
GOKBZHWP	Główne i Okręgowe Komisje Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce (Main and District Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes in Poland)
GPO	Generalplan Ost (General Plan East)
<i>Gq</i>	<i>Geschichte quer</i>
<i>GrHe</i>	<i>Greizer Heimatbote</i>
GSR	<i>German Studies Review</i>
Gsta.	Generalstaatsanwaltschaft (Prosecutor General, DDR)
GStAPK	Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Historical State Archives of the Prussian Cultural Estate), Berlin
<i>GuG</i>	<i>Geschichte und Gesellschaft</i>
GUG	Gesellschaft für Unternehmensgeschichte (Society for Business History)
<i>GuR</i>	<i>Geschichte und Region</i>
GWM	<i>Gewerkschaftliche Monatshefte</i>
GZ	<i>Das Goldene Zeitalter</i>
HA	Hilfsarbeiter (unskilled worker)
HAFHDCB	Hungarian Auschwitz Foundation, Holocaust Documentation Center, Budapest
HAK	Historisches Archiv Krupp (Krupp Historical Archives), Essen
<i>Ham.</i>	<i>Hamelika</i>
<i>HaNa</i>	<i>Hallische Nachrichten</i>
Hanomag	Hannoversche Maschinenbau AG (Hannover Machine Works Inc.)
<i>Harfb</i>	<i>Harburger Jahrbuch</i>
HASAG	Hugo Schneider AG (Hugo Schneider Corp.)
HAStK	Historisches Archiv der Stadt Köln (Historical Archive of the City of Cologne)
HAStK-P	Archiv der Stadt Köln-Aussenstelle Porz (Cologne City Archive, Porz External Branch)
<i>HaT</i>	<i>Haller Tagblatt</i>
HBA	Heeresbekleidungsamt (Army Clothing Office)
HBS	Heeresbaustelle (Army Construction Office)
<i>HD</i>	<i>Heimat Dortmund</i>
HDEC	Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Inc., North Miami, FL
<i>HdGw</i>	<i>Hefte der Geschichtswerkstatt</i>
<i>HE</i>	<i>Havelländisches Echo</i>
He	Heinkel aircraft prefix
HEDIA-Schuhfabrik	Herman Diamant-Schuhfabrik (Herman Diamant Shoe Factory)
Heeresmuna	Heeresmunitionsanstalt (Army Munitions Facility)
<i>Hém</i>	<i>Hémecbt</i>

## 1554 ABBREVIATIONS

<i>HeuBo</i>	<i>Heuberg Boten</i>
HEW	Hamburgische Elektrizitätswerke AG (Hamburg Electrical Power Co.)
<i>HfBL</i>	<i>Heimatbuch für Bergische Land</i>
HFW	Henschel-Flugzeug-Werke (Henschel Aircraft Work)
HGS	<i>Holocaust and Genocide Studies</i>
HHB	Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten (SS-Main Office for Budget and Buildings)
<i>HHFb</i>	<i>Hamburger Fremdenblatt</i>
<i>HHNa</i>	<i>Hamburger Nachrichten</i>
HHStA-(M)	Hessisches Hauptstaatsarchiv (Hessian Main State Archives), Marburg
HHStA-(W)	Hessisches Hauptstaatsarchiv (Hessian Main State Archives), Wiesbaden
<i>HHTb</i>	<i>Hamburger Tageblatt</i>
<i>b-IM</i>	<i>“heute” – Information und Meinung</i>
<i>HiHe</i>	<i>Historische Heimatblätter</i>
Hipo	Hilfspolizei (Auxiliary Police)
Hist. Abt.	Historische Abteilung (Historical Section of ITS)
<i>Hist Gd</i>	<i>Historia Gdańska</i>
Hiwi	Hilfswilliger (Volunteer auxiliary)
HJMA	Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives, Budapest (also MZML)
<i>H7SL</i>	<i>Historisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Linz</i>
<i>HkfKrP</i>	<i>Heimatkalendar für den Kreis Prenzlau</i>
HKP	Heereskraftfahrzeugpark (Army Vehicle Repair Park)
HM	Hängemappe (Hanging Map; ITS abbreviation)
HM-F	Heimatismuseum Falkensee (Homeland Museum)
HMSO	His/Her Majesty's Stationery Office
<i>HoCu</i>	<i>Holsteinischer Courier</i>
HQ	Headquarters
HSSPF	Höherer-SS und Polizeiführer (Higher-SS and Police Leader)
HStA-D	Hessisches Staatsarchiv (Hessian State Archive), Darmstadt
HStA-M	Hessisches Staatsarchiv (Hessian State Archive), Marburg
HStA-St	Hauptstaatsarchiv (Main State Archive), Stuttgart
HTO	Haupttreuhandstelle Ost (Main Trustee Office East)
<i>Htv</i>	<i>Hatikvah</i>
<i>HV</i>	<i>Hessische Volkswacht</i>
<i>HvA</i>	<i>Hefte von Auschwitz</i>
HVA-P	Heeresversuchsanstalt Peenemünde (Army Experimental Institution Peenemünde)
HVM	Heeresverpflegungsamt-Magazin (Army Provisions Office – Magazine)
HWL	Hauptwirtschaftslager (Main Supply Camp) or Holzwolleleichtbauplatte (Pressboard building slab)
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDO	Institut für Deutsche Ostarbeit (Institute for German East Work), Kraców
IfWSg	Institut für Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte, Universität Graz (Institute for Economic and Social History, Graz University), Austria
IfZ	Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Institute for Contemporary History), Munich
IfZ-UW	Institut für Zeitgeschichte-Universität Wien (Institute for Contemporary History, Vienna University)



IGA/ZPA-B	Institut für die Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung/Zentrales Parteiarchiv (Institute for the History of the Labor Movement/Central Party Archives), Berlin
IG Farben	Interessengemeinschaft Farbenindustrie AG (Community of Interests, Dye Industry, Inc.)
IISG	International Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (International Institute for Social History), Amsterdam
IKL	Inspektion der Konzentrationslager (Inspectorate of Concentration Camps)
ILKB	Internationale Lagerkomitees des KZ Buchenwald (International Camp Committee of the Buchenwald Concentration Camp)
IMI	Italienische Militärinternierte (Italian Military Internee)
IMO	Internationale Militärorganisation (International Military Organization, the Buchenwald resistance group)
<i>Implosion</i>	<i>Implosion: Biotechnische Nachrichten</i>
IMT	International Military Tribunal
<i>InBe</i>	<i>Interkulturelle Beiträge</i>
IPN	Instytut Pamięci Narodowej (Polish Institute for National Memory) Warsaw (formerly GKBZHwP)
<i>ISKDW</i>	<i>Informationen: Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand</i>
IS-O	Instytut śląsk-Opole (Silesian Institute-Opole)
ITS	International Tracing Service, Bad Arolsen, Germany
<i>IWK</i>	<i>Internationale Wissenschaftliche Korrespondenz der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung</i>
IWM	Imperial War Museum, London
IWMA	Imperial War Museum Archives, London
<i>IWMR</i>	<i>Imperial War Museum Review</i>
<i>JA</i>	<i>Journal l'Alsace</i>
JAG	Judge Advocate General
<i>JBLS</i>	<i>Jahrbuch des Bodenseekreises Leben am See</i>
<i>JDÖW</i>	<i>Jahrbuch des Dokumentationsarchivs des Österreichischen Widerstandes</i>
<i>JfEbG</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Eisenbahngeschichte</i>
JFM	Junkers Flugzeug- und Motorenwerk AG (Junkers Aircraft and Motor Works Company, Inc.)
<i>JfSchG</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für die Schleswigsche Geest</i>
<i>JfW</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte</i>
<i>JGR</i>	<i>Journal of Genocide Research</i>
<i>JHVCT</i>	<i>Jahrbuch des Historischen Vereins für den Chiemgau zu Traunstein</i>
Ju	Junkers aircraft prefix
Julag	Judenlager (Jewish camp)
<i>JuNS-V</i>	Fritz Bauer, et al. ed., <i>Justiz und NS-Verbrechen: Sammlung deutsche Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen, 1945–1966</i> 22 vols. (Amsterdam, 1968–2008).
<i>JWDLG</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für westdeutsche Landesgeschichte</i>
<i>JWg</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte</i>
K	Aktion Kugel (Killing operation, lit. “Bullet”)
<i>KaGb</i>	<i>Kaufbeurer Geschichtsblätter</i>
<i>KäJP</i>	<i>Kärntner Jahrbuch für Politik</i>
KALAG	Kabel und Leitungswerke AG (Cable and Conductor Works, Inc.)
KaN-AHm	Kulturamt Neukölln Archiv des Heimatmuseums (Neukölln Culture Office, Archive of the Local Museum)

## 1556 ABBREVIATIONS

KA-SG-Amst	Kulturamt der Stadtgemeinde (Culture Office of the Town Community), Amstetten
KBI	Kriminalbiologisches Institut der Sicherheitspolizei (Criminal-Biological Institute of the Security Police)
KdAW-DDR	Komitee der antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik (Committee of Anti-Fascist Resistance Fighters in the German Democratic Republic)
KdF	Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy)
KdG	Kommandeur der Gendarmerie (Commander of the Gendarmerie)
KdO	Kommandeur der Ordnungspolizei (Commanding Officer of the Order Police)
KdS	Kommandeur der Sicherheitspolizei und SD (Commanding Officer of the Security Police and SD)
KG	Kommanditgesellschaft (Limited Partnership)
KG AK	Kwaterna Główna Armia Krajowa (Polish Home Army Headquarters)
KGB	Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (Committee on State Security in the USSR; successor to NKVD)
Kgf.	Kriegsgefangene (POW)
KGL	Kriegsgefangenenlager (POW camp)
KH	Kreishauptmannschaft (district civilian administration)
KL	Konzentrationslager (concentration camp)
KLM	Konzentrationslager Mauthausen (Mauthausen concentration camp)
KM-WN	Kreismuseum (District Museum) Wewelsburg-Niederhagen
KöRS	<i>Kölnische Rundschau</i>
KöSa	<i>Kölner Stadtanzeiger</i>
KÖU	Kohle-Öl-Union (Coal Oil Union Company)
KPAW	Katholisches Pfarrarchiv Wewelsburg (Catholic Priests' Archive, Wewelsburg)
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (German Communist Party)
KPO	Kommunistische Partei-Opposition (German Communist Party Opposition)
KPÖ	Kommunistische Partei Österreichs (Austrian Communist Party)
Kripo	Kriminalpolizei (Criminal Police)
KTB	Kriegstagebuch (War Diary)
KTL	Kraftfahrtechnische Lehranstalt der Waffen-SS (Motor Vehicle Technical Institute of the Waffen-SS)
Kul.	<i>Kulisy</i>
KWK	Kabelwerk Krakau (Cable Works Kraków)
KWO	Kabelwerk Oberspree (Cable Works Oberspree)
KZ	Konzentrationslager (concentration camp)
K.z.b.V.	Kommando z.b.V. (Special Duty Detachment)
KZuHaftaBu	Konzentrationslager und Haftarchiv Buchenwald (Buchenwald Concentration Camp and Detention Archives; available at THStA-W)
KZZW	Kurmärkische Zellwolle und Zellulose AG (Kurmark Rayon and Cellulose, Inc.)
LA-B	Landesarchiv (State Archive) Berlin
LA-B-BPA-SED	Landesarchiv Berlin Bezirksparteiarchiv SED (Berlin State Archive, District Party Archive, Socialist Unity Party)
LA-B-W	Landesarchiv (State Archive) Baden-Württemberg
LAG	Luftfahrtanlagen GmbH (Aviation Facilities, Ltd.)
L'Al	<i>L'Alsace</i>

LA-NRW-SPDet	Landesarchiv NRW Staats-und Personenstandsarchiv Detmold (North Rhine-Westphalia State Archives, State and Personal Status Archive, Detmold)
<i>LAnz</i>	<i>Lägerdorfer Anzeiger</i>
LASA-DO	Landesarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt-Aussenstelle Dessau-Oranienbaum (Saxony-Anhalt State Archives, External Branch, Dessau-Oranienbaum)
LA-Sch-H	Landesarchiv (State Archive), Schleswig-Holstein
LA-Sp	Landesarchiv (State Archive), Speyer
LAVM-Br	Landesvermessungsamt Brandenburg (State Measuring Office, Brandenburg)
LC	Library of Congress
LCVA	Lietuvos centrinių valstybės archyvas (Lithuanian Central State Archive), Vilnius
<i>LdAnz</i>	<i>Landauer Anzeiger</i>
LEM	Lippstadt Eisen-und Metallwerken (Lippstadt Iron and Metal Works)
<i>LFP</i>	<i>Lübecker Freie Presse</i>
LG	Landgericht (State Court)
LG-Bo	Landgericht Bochum (State Court, Bochum)
LG-Co	Landgericht Coburg (State Court, Coburg)
LG-Mü	Landgericht München (Munich State Court Coburg: with Roman numeral designating particular court)
<i>Lg-Ur</i>	<i>Landesgeschichte im Unterricht</i>
LGW	Luftfahrtgerätewerk Hakenfelde GmbH (Aircraft Equipment Works Hakenfelde, Ltd.)
LG-ZRS	Landgericht für Zivilrechtssachen, Wien (Regional Court for Civil Law Matters, Vienna)
LHRP-Ko	Landeshauptarchiv Rheinland-Pfalz Koblenz (Rhineland-Pfalz Main State Archives, Koblenz)
LHSA-Ma	Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt Magdeburg (Sachsen-Anhalt Main State Archives, Magdeburg)
LHSA-Me	Landeshauptarchiv Sachsen-Anhalt Merseburg (Sachsen-Anhalt Main State Archives, Merseburg)
<i>Lib Ged</i>	<i>Libri Gedanensis: The Yearbook of the Polish Academy of Sciences</i>
LKA	Landeskriminalamt (State Criminal Office)
LKA-B-W	Landeskriminalamt (State Criminal Office) Baden-Württemberg
LKA-N-W	Landeskriminalamt (State Criminal Office) Nordrhein-Westfalen
LMRD	Luxembourg Musée de la Résistance et de la Déportation (Luxembourg Museum of the Resistance and Deportation), Besançon
<i>LNP</i>	<i>Landauer Neue Presse</i>
<i>LP</i>	<i>Lippstadt Patriot</i>
LPB-BW	Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, Baden-Württemberg (State Central Office for Political Education, Baden-Württemberg)
LPPC/MSW	Leopold Page Photographic Collection, Museen der Stadt Wien (Vienna City Museum)
<i>Lp-pkd</i>	<i>Lnářský průmysl – příspěvky k dějinám</i>
<i>LR</i>	<i>Lausitzer Rundschau</i>
<i>LR-GR</i>	<i>Lausitzer Rundschau-Gubener Rundschau</i>
Ls	Luftschutz (air protection)
<i>LübFP</i>	<i>Lübecker Freie Presse</i>
<i>LübN</i>	<i>Lübecker Nachrichten</i>

## 1558 ABBREVIATIONS

Lufag	Luftfahrtgeräte GmbH or Luftfahrtgerätegesellschaft (Aviation Equipment Ltd. or Aviation Equipment Company)
<i>LüHe</i>	<i>Lübbener Heimatkalender</i>
LUS	Lund University, Sweden, MSS Department
LVermA	Landesvermessungsamt (State Measuring Office)
LVVA	Latvijas Valsts Vestures arhivs (Latvian State Historical Archives), Riga
LYA	Lietuvos ypatingasis archyvas (Lithuanian Special Archive), Vilnius
<i>LZ</i>	<i>Landauer Zeitung</i>
LZF	Archiv der Luftschiffbau Zeppelin (Archive of Zeppelin Airship Construction), Friedrichshafen
MA	Moreshet Archives, Israel
MACVG	Ministère des anciens combattants et victimes de guerre (Ministry of Veterans and War Victims), France
<i>MAZ</i>	<i>Märkische Allgemeine Zeitung</i>
MA-M	Mannesmann-Archiv, Mülheim an der Ruhr (includes Archives of Mannesmannröhren-Werke GmbH, Mannesmann Tube Works, Ltd.)
MAN AG	Maschinenfabrik Augsburg-Nürnberg AG (Augsburg-Nuremberg Machine Manufacturing Company)
MBAG-A	Mercedes-Benz AG Archiv (Mercedes-Benz Company Archive), Stuttgart
<i>MC</i>	<i>Miscellanea curiensia: Beiträge zur Geschichte und Kultur Nordoberfrankens und angrenzender Regionen</i>
<i>MDÖW</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Dokumentationsarchives des Österreichischen Widerstandes</i>
MdR	Mitglied des Reichstags (Member of the Reichstag)
Me	Messerschmitt aircraft prefix
MEL	Museum und Dokumentationszentrum "Juden im Lettland" (Museum and Documentation Center, "Jews in Latvia"), Riga
<i>MeM</i>	<i>Melker Mitteilungen</i>
Messap	Deutsche Messapparate GmbH (German Measuring Apparatus, Ltd.)
MfAA	Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten, Sachsen (Ministry for Foreign Matters, Saxony)
MfS	Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (Ministry for State Security of the GDR)
<i>MG</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian</i>
MG-131	Maschinengewehr-131 (Machine Gun-131)
<i>MGb</i>	<i>Mainzer Geschichtsblätter</i>
MGR	Mahn- und Gedenkstätte Ravensbrück (Ravensbrück Remembrance and Memorial Site)
MHG	Museum für Hamburgische Geschichte (Museum for Hamburg History)
MIAG	Mühlenbau- und Industrieaktiengesellschaft (Mill and Industry Co.)
<i>MiGe</i>	<i>Militärgeschichte</i> (GDR)
MIMO	Mitteldeutsche Motorenwerke (Central German Motor Works), Taucha
<i>MittelZ</i>	<i>Mittelbayerische Zeitung</i>
<i>MIZ</i>	<i>Münchner Illustrierte Zeitung</i>
<i>MJDfG</i>	<i>Menora: Jahrbuch für deutsch-jüdische Geschichte</i>
MK-103	Maschinenkanone-103 (Machine Cannon-103)
MLHSN	Mecklenburgisches Landeshauptarchiv (Mecklenburg Main State Archives), Schwerin
<i>MM</i>	<i>Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen</i>
MMB	Modern Military Branch (NARA)



<i>MMer</i>	<i>Münchner Merkur</i>
MNH	Maschinenfabrik Niedersachsen (Lower Saxon Machinery Factory), Hannover
MNN	<i>Münchner Neueste Nachrichten</i>
MNZ	<i>Mitteldeutsche Nationalzeitung</i>
MP	<i>Münchner Post</i>
MPW	Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego, Oddział Muzeum Historycznego (Museum of the Warsaw Uprising, Museum Historical Branch), Warsaw
MSS	manuscript
MUGP	<i>Mitteilungen des Uckermärkischen Geschichtsvereins zu Prenzlau e.V.</i>
MWF	Metallwarenfabrik (Metalware Manufacturing)
MWN	Mechanische Werkstätten GmbH Neubrandenburg (Neubrandenburg Mechanical Repairs, Ltd.)
MZML	Magyar Zsidó Múzeum és Levéltár (Hungarian Jewish Museum and Archives, also HJMA)
NAG	Nationale-Automobil-Gesellschaft AG (National Automobile Company)
NAL	Nicht aus dem Lager (Not to leave the camp)
NAN	National Archief Nederlandse (National Archives of the Netherlands), Den Haag
Napola	Nationalpolitische Erziehungsanstalt (Institution(s) of National-Political Education)
NARA	United States National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (formerly NARS, National Archives and Records Service, and NARUS, National Archives of the United States)
NARAG	Nationale Radiatoren AG (National Radiators, Inc.)
NARB	Natsional'n'yi arkhiv Respubliki Belarus' (National Archive of the Republic of Belarus), Minsk
<i>NaZag</i>	<i>Nad Zagożdżonką</i> (Pionki)
NB	<i>Northheimer Beobachter</i>
<i>NbStPVK</i>	<i>Nachrichtenblatt der Staatlichen Polizeiverwaltung Köln</i>
NBZ	<i>Nordbayerische Zeitung</i>
NCA	<i>Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression</i> , 8 Vols. Washington, DC, 1946.
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
NCR	National-Krupp-Registrierkassen GmbH (National Krupp Cash Registers, Ltd.)
n.d.	No date
ND	<i>Neues Deutschland</i>
N-Doc.	Nuremberg Document
<i>NdtRu</i>	<i>Norddeutsche Rundschau</i>
<i>NÉd</i>	<i>Notes et Études documentaires</i>
NFWSL	<i>Neue Freiburger Wochenzeitung für Stadt und Land</i>
NG	<i>Nowiny Gliwickie</i>
NG	Nuremberg Government (Nuremberg Prosecution Document prefix)
NGA	<i>Neuer Görlitzer Anzeiger</i>
NHStA-H	Niedersächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv (Lower Saxon Main State Archives), Hannover
NI	Nuremberg Industrialist (Nuremberg document prefix)
NID	Nuremberg Industrialist-Dresdner Bank (Nuremberg document prefix)
NIK	Nuremberg Industrialist-Krupp (Nuremberg document prefix)
NIO	Nobel Institute Oslo
NIOD	Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (Netherlands Institute for War Documentation; formerly RIOD)

## 1560 ABBREVIATIONS

NKF	Neue Kühler- und Flugzeugteile-Fabriken (New Cooling and Aircraft Parts Factory)
NKVD	Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, Soviet police predecessor of the KGB)
NL	Nachlass (literary estate)
NLStA-S	Niedersächsisches Landesarchiv-Staatsarchiv Stade (Lower Saxon State Archives—Stade State Archives)
NMT	Nuremberg Military Tribunals
NN	Nacht-und-Nebel (“Night and Fog” prisoners)
NO	Nuremberg Organization (Nuremberg document prefix)
NOKW	Nuremberg OKW (Nuremberg Armed Forces High Command, document prefix)
n.p.	No place/No page
<i>NPC</i>	<i>Neue Presse (Coburg)</i>
NRW	Nordrhein-Westfalen (North Rhine-Westphalia)
NS	Nationalsozialismus/Nationalsozialistische (National Socialism or National Socialist)
NSBO	Nationalsozialistische Betriebszellenorganisation (National Socialist Factory Cells Organization)
NSDAP	Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National Socialist German Workers' Party, or Nazi Party)
NS-Dok	NS-Dokumentationszentrum der Stadt Köln (National Socialist Documentation Center, City of Cologne)
NSF	Nationalsozialistische Frauenschaft (National Socialist Women's Association)
NSKK	Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrerkorps (National Socialist Motorist Corps)
<i>NSLO</i>	<i>Nachrichten für Stadt und Land in Oldenburg</i>
NStA-Ol	Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv (Lower Saxon State Archives), Oldenburg
NStA-Os	Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv (Lower Saxon State Archives), Osnabrück
NStA-Wf	Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv (Lower Saxon State Archives), Wolfenbüttel
NSU	Neckarsulm Motorenwerke AG (Neckarsulm Motor Works Corp.)
<i>NSZR</i>	<i>NSZ Rheinfront</i>
<i>NT</i>	<i>Neustädter Tagblatt</i>
NV	<i>Neuer Vorwärts</i>
NWHStA-(D)	Nordrhein-Westfälisches Hauptstaatsarchiv (North Rhine-Westphalian Main State Archives), Düsseldorf
NWHStA-(D) ZA-K	NWHStA-(D), Zweigarchiv Kalkum (Kalkum Branch Archives)
NWStA-(De)	Nordrhein-Westfälisches Staatsarchiv (North Rhine-Westphalian State Archives), Dettmold
NWStA-M	Nordrhein-Westfälisches Staatsarchiv (North Rhine-Westphalian State Archives), Münster
<i>NYT</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>NZ</i>	<i>Norddeutsche Zeitung</i>
<i>ObEr</i>	<i>Oberallgäuer Erzähler</i>
<i>OBGZ</i>	<i>Oranienburger Generalanzeiger</i>
OBL	Oberbauleitung (Senior Construction Administration)
OD	Ordnungsdienst (Jewish ghetto police)
o.D.	ohne Datum (no date)

Oflag	Offizierslager (Officers' POW Camp)
<i>OfVZ</i>	<i>Oberfränkische Volkszeitung</i>
ÖGZ	Österreichische Gesellschaft für Zeitgeschichte (Austrian society for Contemporary History), Vienna
OHG	Offene Handelsgesellschaft (General Business Partnership)
OHPRIHS-CUNY	Oral History Project of the Rosenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies, City University of New York
OKBZH	Okręgowej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich (Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes)
OKBZHW	Okręgowej Komisji Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Wrocławiu (Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite Crimes in Wrocław)
OKBZNwK	Okręgowa Komisja Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Krakowie (Main Commission for the Investigation of Hitlerite crimes in Kraków)
OKH	Oberkommando des Heeres (Army High Command)
OKL	Oberkommando der Luftwaffe (Air Force High Command)
OKM	Oberkommando der Marine (Naval High Command)
OKŚZpNP	Oddział Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu w Gdańsku (District Department of the Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish People, Gdańsk)
OKW	Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (Armed Forces High Command)
OL	Oberlausitz (region of Saxony)
OLG	Oberlandesgericht (German Court of Appeals)
OLS	Ordner der Lagergemeinschaft Sachsenhausen (Files of the Sachsenhausen Camp Community)
<i>OlTZ</i>	<i>Oberlausitzer Tageszeitung</i>
ÖMAG	Österreichische Alpine Montan-Gesellschaft (Austrian Alpine Mountains Society)
OMGUS	Office of the Military Government for Germany, United States
Oö.La	Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv (Upper Austrian State Archives), Linz
OPG	Oberparteigericht (Nazi Party Court of Appeals)
Ord.	Ordner (file)
Orpo	Ordnungspolizei (Order Police)
<i>Ortenau</i>	<i>Die Ortenau</i>
O/S	Oberschlesien (Upper Silesia)
Osmag	Oberschlesische Maschinen- und Waggonfabrik AG (Upper Silesian Machine and Wagon Manufacturing, Inc.)
<i>OsnT</i>	<i>Osnabrücker Tagblatt</i>
OSta.	Oberstaatsanwaltschaft (Senior Prosecutor)
<i>Ostf-M</i>	<i>Ostfriesland-Magazin</i>
Osti	Ostindustrie GmbH (East Industries, Ltd.)
OSZ	<i>Oldenburgische Staatszeitung</i>
OT	Organisation Todt (Todt Organization)
ÖTV	Gewerkschaft Öffentliche Dienste, Transport und Verkehr (Public Service, Transport and Traffic Union)
OUG	Okręgowy Urząd Górniczy (District Mining Office)
<i>OVV</i>	<i>Oldenburgische Volkszeitung in Vechta</i>
<i>OVZ</i>	<i>Oldenburgische Volkszeitung</i>

## 1562 ABBREVIATIONS

OZ	<i>Osnabrücker Zeitung</i>
PAAA	Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (Political Archive of the German Foreign Office), Berlin
PD	Personnes Déplacées (displaced persons)
PDA	Polizeiliches Durchgangslager Amersfoort (Police Transit Camp Amersfoort)
PDN	<i>Polish Daily News</i>
PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (Party of Democratic Socialism)
PiKb	<i>Pinneberger Kreisblatt</i>
PIZ	Polski Instytut źródłowy (Polish Research Institute), Lund
PL	<i>Przegląd Lekarski</i>
Plt-Ib	<i>Plattlinger Isarboten</i>
PMA	Porzellanmanufaktur Allach (Porcellan Manufacturer, Allach)
PMW-BZW	Polskiej Misji Wojskowej, Biuro do Spraw Zbrodni Wojennych (Polish Army Mission Collection-War Crimes Office)
POB	Place of Birth
Polin	<i>Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry</i>
Pom	<i>Pomerania</i>
PoT	<i>Potsdamer Tageszeitung</i>
POW	Prisoner of War
PPR	Polska Partia Robotnicza (Polish Workers' Party)
PPS	Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (Polish Socialist Party)
Pra.	<i>Prawo</i>
PrMdi	Preussisches Innenministerium (Prussian Ministry of the Interior)
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew, Great Britain (now British National Archives); in U.S. Army: Public Relations Officer
PS	Paris-Storey (Nuremberg document prefix)
PSV	Polizeiliche Sicherungsverwahrung (Police security custody)
PT	<i>Pariser Tagblatt</i>
PZ	<i>Pommersche Zeitung</i>
RAA	Regionale Arbeitsstellen für Ausländerfragen, Jugendzeit und Schule e.V. (Regional Work Sites for Foreigner Questions, Adolescence, and Schools, Registered Association)
RAB	Reichsautobahn (German National Freeway)
RABF	Reichsamt für Bodenforschung (Reich Office for Soil Research)
RaBl	<i>Ravensbrückblätter</i>
RAD	Reichsarbeitsdienst (Reich Labor Service)
RAG	Ratsarchiv Görlitz (Görlitz Council Archives)
RaHashb	<i>Ramat Hasharon</i>
RAM	Reichsaussenministerium (Reich Foreign Ministry)
Rappel	<i>Rappel: Zeitschrift der luxemburgischen politischen Häftlinge und Deportierten</i>
RAW	Reichsbahnausbesserungswerk (German National Railway Repair Works)
RA-ZMLF	Regional Archives of Zealand, Moen and Lolland-Falster
RB	Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold (Reich Flag Black-Red-Gold)
RBBd	Reichsbahnbaudirektion (German National Railway Construction Directorate)
RBD	Reichsbahndirektion (German National Railway Directorate)
rept	Report



<i>RF</i>	<i>Rote Fabne</i>
RFKB	Rotfrontkämpferbund (League of Red Front Fighters)
RFSS	Reichsführer-SS (Reich Leader of the SS)
RGASPI	Rossiyskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial'no-politicheskoy istorii (Russian State Archive of Social-Political History)
<i>RGBI</i>	<i>Reichsgesetzblatt</i>
RGI	Reichsgruppe Industrie (Reich Group Industry)
RGVA	Rossiyskii gosudarstvennyi voenn'yi arkhiv (Russian State Military Archive, Moscow (former Special [osobyi] Archive)
<i>Rb-BKal</i>	<i>Rheinische-Bergischer Kalendar</i>
RHD	Rote Hilfe Deutschlands (Red Aid Germany)
<i>RbZ</i>	<i>Rheinische Zeitung</i>
RIOD	Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (Imperial Institute for War Documentation, now NIOD), Amsterdam
RKFDV	Reichskommissariat für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums (Reich Commissariat for the Strengthening of Germanism)
RKO	Reichskommissariat Ostland (Reich Commissariat of the Eastern Territories)
RKPA	Riechskriminalpolizeiamt (Reich Criminal Police Office)
RLM	Reichsluftfahrtsministerium (Reich Air Ministry)
RM	Reichsmark
<i>RmbIV</i>	<i>Reichsministerialblatt für die Innere Verwaltung</i>
RMdI	Reichsministerium des Innern (Reich Ministry of the Interior)
RMfBM	Reichsministerium für Bewaffnung und Munition (Reich Ministry for Armaments and Munitions; predecessor to RMfRK)
RMfRK	Reichsministerium für Rüstungs- und Kriegsproduktion (Reich Ministry for Armaments and War Production; successor to RMfBM)
RMJ	Reichsministerium der Justiz (Reich Justice Ministry)
RMO	Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete (Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories)
<i>Rocz Gd</i>	<i>Rocznik Gdynski</i>
<i>RonsZ</i>	<i>Ronsdorfer Zeitung</i>
<i>RPWA</i>	<i>Rundschau über Politik, Wirtschaft und Arbeiterbewegung</i>
<i>RR</i>	<i>The Red Raider</i>
<i>RrbK</i>	<i>Rechtsrheinische Köln</i>
RSHA	Reichssicherheitshauptamt (SS-Reich Security Main Office)
RTKIDNI	Rossiiskii tsentr khraneniiai izucheniia dokumentov noveishei istorii (Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Contemporary History), Moscow
RU	Rückkehr unerwünscht (Return undesirable)
RüKo	Rüstungskommission (Armaments Commission)
RuSHA	Rasse-und Siedlungshauptamt (SS-Race and Settlement Main Office)
RV	Reichsvereinigung Eisen (Reich Iron Association)
RWA	Reichsamt für Wirtschaftsausbau (Reich Office for Economic Development)
RWHG	Reichswerke "Hermann Göring" (Reich Works "Hermann Göring")
RWM	Reichswirtschaftsministerium (Reich Economics Ministry)
<i>RZC</i>	<i>Rhein-Zeitung Cochem</i>

SA	Sturmabteilung (Storm Detachment, Storm Troopers)
<i>Sachor</i>	<i>Sachor: Beiträge zur jüdischen Geschichte und Gedenkstättenarbeit in Rheinland-Pfalz</i>
<i>SächsZ</i>	<i>Sächsische Zeitung</i>
<i>SäHe</i>	<i>Sächsische Heimatblätter</i>
<i>SalzN</i>	<i>Salzburger Nachrichten</i>
S&H	Siemens & Halske AG
SAP	Sozialistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands (Socialist Workers' Party of Germany)
SAPMO-DDR	Stiftung Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR (Foundation of Party and Mass Organizations of the GDR)
SAW	Sonderabteilung Wehrmacht (Special Detachment Wehrmacht)
SB	Sonderbehandlung (special treatment; Nazi euphemism most commonly used for murder)
SBG	Stiftung Brandenburgische Gedenkstätten (Foundation of Brandenburg Memorial Sites)
SBGSSS	<i>Sonnenstein: Beiträge zur Geschichte des Sonnensteins und der Sächsischen Schweiz</i>
SBU	Sluzhba Bespeky Ukrayiny (State Security Service of Ukraine)
SBZ	Sowjetische Besatzungszone (Soviet Occupation Zone)
<i>SchH</i>	<i>Schulheft</i>
<i>SchK</i>	<i>Das schwarze Korps</i>
Schupo	Schutzpolizei (Municipal Police)
<i>Schw ANach</i>	<i>Schwechater Archivnachrichten: Informationen aus dem historischen Archiv der Stadt Schwechat</i>
<i>SchwH</i>	<i>Schwäbische Heimat</i>
<i>SchwLZ</i>	<i>Schwäbische Landeszeitung</i>
SD	Sicherheitsdienst (SS Security Service)
<i>Sd'A</i>	<i>Saisons d'Alsace</i>
SDA-L	Statni oblastni archiv v Litoměřicích (State Regional Archive Litoměřice, Czech Republic)
SDG	Sanitätsdienstgrad (SS medical orderly)
SDP	Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (Socialist Unity Party of Germany)
SEK	Sondereinsatzkommando (Special Deployment Command)
<i>SFiZH</i>	<i>Studia nad Faszyzmem i Zbrodniami Hitlerowskimi</i>
S.G.L.v.D.	Symbolische Grossloge von Deutschland (Symbolic Grand Lodge of Germany)
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces
SHD	Schutzhilfsdienst (Auxiliary Police)
<i>SHKS</i>	<i>Schriftenreihe für Heimatforschung Kreis Senftenberg</i>
SHSt-A-B	Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv- Aussenstelle Bautzen (Saxon Main State Archives, External Branch Bautzen)
SHStA-(C)	Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv- Aussenstelle Chemnitz (Saxon Main State Archives- External Branch Chemnitz)
SHStA-(D)	Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv (Saxon Main State Archives), Dresden
<i>SHZ</i>	<i>Schleswig-Holsteinische Landeszeitung</i>
Sipo	Sicherheitspolizei (Security Police)
SK	Sonderkommando (Special Detachment)
SKDW	Studienkreis Deutscher Widerstand (German Resistance Study Group)
SKG	Siemens-Kabel-Gemeinschaft (Siemens Cable Community)

<i>SkbS</i>	<i>Śląski kwartalnik historyczny "Sobótka"</i>
<i>SKTb</i>	<i>Segeberger Kreis-und Tageblatt</i>
SKW	Stickstoff- und Kali-Werke (Nitrogen and Potash Works), Trostberg
SLA	Salzburger Landesarchiv (Salzburg State Archives)
SMAD	Sowjetische Militäradministration in Deutschland (Soviet Military Administration in Germany)
SM-Cd	Stadtmuseum Colditz (Colditz City Museum)
SM-E	Stadtmuseum Eisenhüttenstadt (Eisenhüttenstadt City Museum)
<i>MSK</i>	<i>Statistische Mitteilungen der Stadt Köln</i>
SOE	Special Operations Executive
<i>SoeZe</i>	<i>Soester Zeitschrift</i>
SOGd	Sąd Okręgowy w Gdańsku (Gdańsk District Court)
SOkA-B	Státní okresní archiv v Benešově (State District Archive of Benešově), Czech Republic
SOkA-CvK	Státní okresní archiv Chomutov v Kadani (State District Archive of Chomutov, Kadan), Czech Republic
SOkA-D	Státní okresní archiv Děčín (State District Archives of Děčín), Czech Republic
SOkA-KV	Státní okresní archiv Karlovy Vary (State District Archive of Karlovy Vary), Czech Republic
SpkA	Spruchkammer Akte (Chamber Verdict File)
SOKr	Sąd Okręgowy w Krakowie (Kraków District Court)
<i>SonA</i>	<i>Sonnenburger Anzeiger</i>
Sopade	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands Exil (German Social Democratic Party in Exile)
SOT	Sąd Okręgowy w Toruniu (Torun District Court)
<i>SOWI</i>	<i>Sozialwissenschaftliche Informationen</i>
<i>Spai-Sc</i>	<i>Spaichinger Stadtchronik</i>
SPD	Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
SPÖ	Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs (Social Democratic Party of Austria)
SS	Schutzstaffel (Protective Corps)
SS-BB	SS-Baubrigade (SS-Construction Brigade)
SS-Bbde	see SS-BB
SSB-PK	Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz (State Library in Berlin, Prussian Cultural Estate)
SS-EBB	SS-Eisenbahnbaubrigade (Railroad Construction Brigade)
SSK Gd	Specjalny Sąd Karny w Gdańsku (Gdańsk Special Criminal Court)
SSKT	Specjalny Sąd Karny w Toruniu (Torun Special Criminal Court)
SSO	SS-Offiziersakte (SS officer file)
SSPF	SS-und Polizeiführer (SS-and Police Leader)
<i>Śśn</i>	<i>Studia śląskie seria nowa</i>
SStA-L	Sächsisches Staatsarchiv (Saxon State Archives), Leipzig
SSVT	SS-Verfügungstruppen (SS-Special Disposal Troops)
SSW	Siemens-Schuckert-Werke (Siemens-Schuckert Works)
SS-WVHA	SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt (SS-Business Administration Main Office)
Sta.	Staatsanwaltschaft (State Prosecutor's Office)
StA-Augs	Staatsarchiv Augsburg (Augsburg State Archives)

<i>St. Ald</i>	<i>St. Aldegund</i>
StA-B	Staatsarchiv Basel (Basel State Archives)
StA-Br	Staatsarchiv Bremen (Bremen State Archives)
StA-C	Staatsarchiv Coburg (Coburg State Archives)
StA-Ch	Staatsarchiv Chemnitz (Chemnitz State Archives)
StA-HH	Staatsarchiv der Freien und Hansestadt Hamburg (State Archives of the Free and Hanseatic City Hamburg)
StA-KBS	Staatsarchiv Kanton Basel-Stadt (State Archives of the Canton City of Basel)
StA-L	Staatsarchiv Ludwigsburg (Ludwigsburg State Archives)
Stalag	Stammlager (Main POW Camp)
StA-Lg	Staatsarchiv Leipzig (Leipzig State Archives)
StaLG	Staatsanwaltschaft beim Landesgericht (State Prosecutor with the State Court)
StA-Lh	Staatsarchiv Landshut (Landshut State Archives)
Sta. Mü	Staatsanwaltschaft München (State Prosecutor's Office Munich) (with Roman numeral designating the court)
StA-N	Staatsarchiv Nürnberg (Nuremberg State Archives)
Stapo	Staatspolizei (State Police)
StA-S	Staatsarchiv Sigmaring (Sigmaring State Archives)
StA-SG	Staatsarchiv Salzgitter (Salzgitter State Archives)
Stasi	Staatssicherheit (State Security, GDR)
StA-Wü	Staatsarchiv Würzburg (Würzburg State Archives)
<i>StBü</i>	<i>Stettiner Bürgerbrief</i>
<i>StegL-A</i>	<i>Steglitzer Lokal-Anzeiger</i>
StFvMHL	Städtische Friedhofsverwaltung Mühlhausen (Mühlhausen City Cemetery Administration)
Sti-A-StLam	Stiftsarchiv St. Lambrecht (St. Lambrecht Abbey Archives), Austria
Stm.-MöWa	Stadtmuseum Mörfelden-Walldorf (Mörfelden-Walldorf City Museum)
<i>STP</i>	<i>Schlesische Tagespost</i>
STUAG	Strassenbauunternehmen AG (Street Construction Enterprises, Inc.)
<i>StutZ</i>	<i>Stuttgarter Zeitung</i>
<i>StZeMu</i>	<i>Stutthof: Zeszyty Muzeum</i>
SÚA	Státní ústřední archiv (State Central Archives), Prague
SuA-M	Sudetendeutsches Archiv e.V., München (Sudeten German Archives, Registered Association, Munich)
Subag	Sudetenländische Bergbau AG (Sudetenland Mining, Inc.)
<i>SudA</i>	<i>Sudhoffs Archiv: Zeitschrift für Wissenschaftsgeschichte</i>
<i>SüdS</i>	<i>Süddeutsche Sonntagspost</i>
Sutag	Sudetenländische Treibstoffwerke AG (Sudetenland Fuel Works, Inc.)
SV	Sicherheitsverwahrung ("Security Custody")
SVG	Service des Victimes de la Guerre (Service of War Victims), Brussels
SWGd	Sąd Wojewódzki w Gdańsku (Gdańsk Regional Court)
SWOl	Sąd Wojewódzki w Olsztynie (Olsztyn Regional Court)
SWSz	Sąd Wojewódzki w Szczecinie (Szczecin Regional Court)
SWW	Sąd Wojewódzki w Warszawie (Warsaw Regional Court)
SWWr	Sąd Wojewódzki w Wrocławiu (Wrocław Regional Court)
sygn.	sygnatura (Polish archival catalog reference)



SZ	<i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i>
TARA-KU	The Aerial Reconnaissance Archives-Keele University
Tbc	Tuberculosis
<i>Tel</i>	<i>Telecran</i>
Texted	Textil und Lederverwertung mbH (Textile and Leather Utilization, Ltd.)
THStA-G	Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar Aussenstelle Greiz (Thuringian Main State Archives, External Branch Greiz)
THStA-W	Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Weimar (Thuringian Main State Archives)
<i>TiHe</i>	<i>Tiroler Heimatblätter</i>
<i>TL</i>	<i>Terežinské listy</i>
TLB	Thüringer Landbund (Thuringian Farmers' Alliance)
<i>T-Lo</i>	<i>Times-London</i>
TMWC	International Military Tribunal, <i>Trial of the Major War Criminals</i> , 42 vols. (Nuremberg, 1947–1949)
<i>Tog</i>	<i>Together</i>
<i>Trib</i>	<i>Tribüna</i>
Trokofa	Trockenkonservenfabrik (dried vegetable factory)
<i>Tr-Vo</i>	<i>Trierischer Volksfreund</i>
<i>Try-Odr</i>	<i>Trybuna Odrzańska</i>
TsAKGBRB	Tsentrāl'nyi arkhiv KGB Respubliki Belarus' v Minske (Central Archives of the KGB, Republic of Belarus', Minsk)
<i>TSD</i>	<i>Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente</i>
TsDAHOU	Tsentrāl'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv hromads'kykh ob'yednan' Ukrainy (Central State Archive of Ukrainian Social Associations)
TsDAVO	Tsentrāl'nyi derzhavnyi arkhiv vyshchykh orhaniv vldy ta Upravlinnia Ukraïny (Central State Archive of Higher Organs of Government and Administration of Ukraine), Kiev
TsGAMORF	Tsentrāl'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv ministerstva oborony rossiiskoi federatsii (Central State Archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation), Podolsk
TStA-A	Thüringisches Staatsarchiv (Thuringian State Archives), Altenburg
TStA-Go	Thüringisches Staatsarchiv (Thuringian State Archives), Gotha
TStA-M	Thüringisches Staatsarchiv (Thuringian State Archives), Meiningen
TStA-R	Thüringisches Staatsarchiv (Thuringian State Archives), Rudolstadt
TV	Totenkopfverbände (Death's Head Units)
<i>TWC</i>	<i>Trials of War Criminals before the Nürnberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10, Nuernberg, October 1946-April 1949</i> , 15 vols. (Washington, 1949–1953).
TWL	Truppenwirtschaftslager der Waffen-SS (Waffen-SS supply camp)
TWL-Langfür	Truppenwirtschaftslager der Waffen-SS (Waffen-SS Supply Camp), Danzig-Langführ
<i>Tyg Pł</i>	<i>Tygodnik Płocki</i>
UdSSR	Union der Sozialistischen Sowjetrepubliken (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, USSR)
Ufa	Universum Film AG
<i>ULA</i>	<i>Ulmer Lokalanzeiger</i>
Ulap	Universum-Landesausstellungspark (Universum State Exhibition Park)
ULJ-A	Archives of the Union of Lithuanian Jews, Tel Aviv
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

## 1568 ABBREVIATIONS

UNWCC	United Nations War Crimes Commission
URF	Union für Recht und Freiheit (Union for Justice and Liberty)
URO	United Restitution Organization
USAREUR	United States Army Europe
USAF	United States Air Force
USAFHRA	United States Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, AL
USFET	United States Forces European Theater
USHMC	United States Holocaust Memorial Council
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC
USHMMA	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC
USHMMPA	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Photographic Archives, Washington, DC
USMT	United States Military Tribunal
USSBS	United States Strategic Bombing Survey
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (aka Soviet Union, or UdSSR)
UWZ	Umwandererzentralstelle (Central Transfer Office)
<i>V</i>	<i>Vorwärts</i>
V-1/V-2	Vergeltungswaffe- (Vengeance weapon, also A4)
VAW	Vereinigte Aluminium-Werke (United Aluminum Works)
<i>VB</i>	<i>Völkischer Beobachter</i>
<i>VBal</i>	<i>Ventas Balss</i>
VDM	Vereinigte Deutsche Metallwerke (United German Metal Works)
VdN	Verfolgte des Naziregimes (Persecutee of the Nazi Regime)
VDO	Vereinigte Deuta OTA (United German Tachometer Works, Otto Schulze Autometer Werke)
VEB	Volkseigener Betrieb (nationally owned enterprise; GDR term)
VEB-RFT-Wg	VEB Rundfunk Fernmelde-Technik, Fernmeldewerk Werk (Nationally Owned Enterprise, Radio Telecommunications Technology, Telecommunications Work) Wolkenburg
VEF	Valsts Elektrotehniska Fabrika (Valsts Electrotechnical Factory), Riga
<i>VfZ</i>	<i>Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte</i>
VHAP	Vojensky historicky archiv Praha (Military Historical Archive, Prague)
VHF	Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation
VHU	Vojesty Historicky Ustav (Military History Institute), Prague
<i>VHV Ndb</i>	<i>Verhandlungen des historischen Vereins für Niederbayern</i>
VJP	Vierjahresplan (Nazi Four-Year Plan)
VKA	Vereinigte Kletter-Abteilung (United Climbing Detachment)
VKS	Verlag kommunistischer und antifaschistischer Schriften (Publisher of Communist and Anti-Fascist Writings)
VLA-G	Vorpommersches Landesarchiv (Vorpommern State Archives), Greifswald
VOH	Vereinigte Oberschlesische Hüttenwerke AG (United Upper Silesian Metallurgical Works, Inc.)
Vomag	Vogtländische Maschinenfabrik AG (Vogtland Machine Factory, Inc.), Plauen
VOMI	Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (Ethnic German Central Office)
<i>VorVB</i>	<i>Vorarlberger Volksblatt</i>
<i>Vp</i>	<i>Volksparole</i>

<i>VRDA</i>	<i>Verein für Regionalgeschichte und Denkmalpflege Akanthus e.V.</i>
<i>VS</i>	<i>Volksstimme</i>
VSA	Verlag für Studium der Arbeiterbewegung (Publisher for Studies of the Workers' Movement)
<i>VSS</i>	<i>Volksstimme Saarbrücken</i>
VVN	Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes; or Vereinigung für die Verfolgten des Nazi-Regimes (Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime)
VVN-AH	Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes, Archiv Hamburg (Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime, Hamburg Archives)
VVN-B	Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes-Berlin (Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime, Berlin)
VVN-BdA	Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes-Bund der Antifaschisten (Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime, League of Anti-Fascists)
VVN-K	Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes-Köln (Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime, Cologne)
VW	Volkswagen ("People's Car")
VWA	Volkswagen Archiv, Wolfsburg
<i>VZ</i>	<i>Vossische Zeitung</i>
<i>VZfVd</i>	<i>Volkszeitung für Vogtland</i>
W	Wirtschaft (Business division within SS-WVHA, usually followed by Roman numeral designating the office, such as Amt W V, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries)
WAA-M	Westfälisches Archivamt (Westphalian Archives Office), Münster
<i>WalsZ</i>	<i>Walsroder Zeitung</i>
WAP-By	Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe we Bydgoszczy (Voivodeship State Archive in Bydgoszcz)
WAP-W	Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (Voivodeship State Archive in Wrocław)
WASAG	Westfälisch Anhaltinische Sprengstoff AG (Westphalian Anhalt Gunpowder, Inc.)
WASt	Wehrmachtsauskunftsstelle Berlin (Military Information Office in Berlin; now Deutsche Dienststelle, German Agency)
<i>Wb</i>	<i>Die Weltbühne</i>
<i>WdtB</i>	<i>Westdeutscher Beobachter</i>
WED	Wiedereindeutschungs-Programm (Re-Germanization Program)
<i>WeiTb</i>	<i>Weissenfels Tagesblatt</i>
<i>WeKu</i>	<i>Weser-Kurier</i>
<i>Welt</i>	<i>Die Welt</i>
Weserflug	Weser Flugzeugbau GmbH (Weser Aircraft Construction, Ltd.)
W-H	Württemberg-Hohenzollern
WHW	Winterhilfswerk (Winter Relief Campaign)
Wifo	Wirtschaftliche Forschungsgesellschaft mbH (Economic Research Co., Ltd.)
<i>WiL</i>	<i>Wir in Lengerich</i>
WL	Wiener Library
WLA	Wiener Library Archive
WMI	Westfälische Metallindustrie (Westphalian Metal Industry)
WN	<i>Westfälische Nachrichten</i>

## 1570 ABBREVIATIONS

WO	War Office
WP	<i>Westfalen Post</i>
WRB	War Refugee Board
WstP	<i>Westfalen-Post</i>
WU	wehrunwürdig (“unworthy of military service”)
WUMAG	Waggonbau- und Maschinenfabrik AG (Wagon Construction and Machine Manufacture Co.)
WüwHe	<i>Wüstewaltersdorfer Heimatbote</i>
WVHA	see SS-WVHA
WWII-I	<i>World War II Investigator</i> (UK)
WWA-D	Westfälisches Wirtschaftsarchiv (Westphalian Business Archives), Dortmund
WWB	<i>Wiener Weltbühne</i>
WWFg	Fernsprechgerät (telephone terminal; Siemens component)
Wwi Kdo	Wehrwirtschaftskommando (Armaments Economy Command)
WWM	Messgerät (meter; Siemens component)
WWR	Radiogeräte und Bauelemente (radio and building components; Siemens component)
WWT	Telegrafentechnik (telegraphic equipment; Siemens component)
Wyb	<i>Wybrzeże</i>
YAJS	<i>YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science</i>
YalMor	<i>Yalkut Moresbet</i>
YIVO	Yidisher visnshaftlekher institut (Yiddish Scientific Institute, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research)
YV	Yad Vashem
YVA	Archive of the National Institute for the Memory of the Victims of Nazism and Heroes of the Resistance, Yad Vashem, Israel
YVS	<i>Yad Vashem Studies</i>
Z	<i>Zeitgeschichte</i>
ZAL	Zwangsarbeitslager (Forced Labor Camp)
ZALfJ	Zwangsarbeitslager für Juden (Forced Labor Camp for Jews)
ZapKos	<i>Zapiski Koszalińskie</i>
ZAR-D	Zentralarchiv (Central Archives) der Rheinmetall AG-Düsseldorf
z.b.V.	zur besonderen Verwendung (Special or Temporary Duty)
ZBL	Zentralbauleitung der Waffen-SS (Central Construction Administration of the Waffen-SS)
ZBoWid	Związek Bojowników o Wolność i Demokrację (Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy), Warsaw
ZdL	Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen (Central Office for State Justice Administrations), Ludwigsburg (now BA-L)
Żegota	Rada Pomocy Żydom (Council for Aid to Jews)
“ZEH”	Gypsum factory, Schwindratzheim, Alsace, France
ZeMa	<i>Zeszyty Majdanka</i>
ZfA	Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung (Center for Research on Antisemitism), Berlin
ZfG	<i>Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft</i>
ZfSV	<i>Zeitschrift für Strafvollzug</i>



ZfU	<i>Zeitschrift für Unternehmensgeschichte</i>
ZfwLg	<i>Zeitschrift für württembergische Landesgeschichte</i>
ZG	<i>Zeszyty Głiwickie</i>
ZGS	Zeitgeschichtliche Sammlung (Contemporary History Collection)
ŽIH	Żydowski Instytut Historyczny (Jewish Historical Institute), Warsaw
ZLNW-K	Zentralstelle im Lande Nordrhein-Westfalen in Köln (Central Office in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia in Cologne; same as ZSSta-K)
ZLpB-H	Zentralnachweis der Landeszentrale für politische Bildung (Central Registry of Records of the State Central Office for Political Education), Hannover
ZO	<i>Zeszyty Oświęcimskie</i>
ZR-MM-V	<i>Zeitgeschichte Regional-Mitteilungen aus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern</i>
ZSA-P	Zentrales Staatsarchiv Potsdam (Potsdam Central State Archives, now BLHA-(P))
ZSHG	<i>Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Schleswig-Holsteinische Geschichte</i>
ZSSta-D	Zentralstelle für die Bearbeitung von NS-Massenverbrechen, Staatsanwaltschaft Dortmund (Central Office for the Processing of National Socialist Mass Crimes, Dortmund State Prosecutor)
ZSSta-K	Zentralstelle des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen für die Bearbeitung von NS-Verbrechen Konzentrationslagern, Staatsanwaltschaft Köln (Central Office of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia for the Processing of Crimes in Concentration Camps, Cologne State Prosecutor; same as ZLNW-K)
ZVJ	<i>Zeitschrift zum Verständnis des Judentums</i>
ZVWmE	<i>Zeitschrift des Vereins Widerstandsmuseums Ebensee</i>
ZWiL	<i>Za Wolność i Lud</i>



# LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

**Alfons Adam:** Flossenbürg/Eisenberg, Hertine, Holleischen, Krondorf-Sauerbrunn, Neurohlau

**Gebhard Aders:** Early/Porz (Hochkreuz)

**Gudrun Albrecht:** Gross-Rosen/Weisswasser

**Angelika Arenz-Morch:** Early/Osthofen

**Dietrich Banse:** Neuengamme/Salzwedel, Uelzen

**Helmut Bauer:** Sachsenhausen/Genshagen

**Charles-Claude Biedermann:** Buchenwald/Dornburg, Wansleben, Kauen/Schaulen; Krakau-Plaszow/Mielec, Zabłocie

**Franka Bindernagel:** Buchenwald/Böhlen, Magdeburg-Rothensee (*Brabag*), Tröglitz

**Ruth Bettina Birn:** Vaivara/Vaivara main, Aseri, Auvere, Ereda, Goldfields [Goldfeld], Jõhvi [Jewe], Kertowa and Putki, Kiviõli I and II, Klooga, Kuremäe, Lagedi, Narva, Pankewitza, Petseri, Sonda, Soski, Vaivara subcamp, Vivikonna [Werk IV Sillamäe]

**Peter Black:** Lublin-Majdanek/Trawniki

**Angela Borgstedt:** Early/Ankenbuck, Kislau

**Leslaw Braiter:** Gross-Rosen main

**Helmut Bräutigam:** Early/Berlin-Spandau; Sachsenhausen/Berlin-Spandau

**Hans Brenner:** Flossenbürg/Dresden (*Bernsdorf & Co.*), Dresden (*Universelle*), Flöha, Freiberg, Gröditz, Hainichen, Hohenstein-Ernstthal, Johannegeorgenstadt, Königstein, Lengenfeld, Mehltheuer, Mittweida, Mockethal-Zatzschke, Mülsen St. Micheln, Nossen-Rosswien, Oederan, Porsdorf, Rochlitz, Schönheide, Siegmar-Schönau, Venusberg, Wilischthal, Wolkenburg, Zschachwitz, Zschopau, Zwickau; Gross-Rosen/Bautzen, Gebhardsdorf, Gross-Koschen, Halbstadt, Kamenz, Mittelsteine, Morchenstern, Niesky/Brandhofen, Schlesiersee I, Zittau

**Fritz Brinkmann-Frisch:** Buchenwald/Allendorf

**Marc Buggeln:** Neuengamme/subcamp system, Alt-Garge, Braunschweig (*Büssing NAG*), Braunschweig (*SS-Reitschule*), Bremen-Blumenthal, Bremen-Farge, Bremen-Neuenland, Bremen-Osterort, Bremen-Schützenhof (*DESCHIMAG*), Hamburg-Steinwerder (*Blohm & Voss*), Schandelah, Vechele [Braunschweig/Vechele], Wilhelmshaven

**Oswald Burger:** Dachau/Überlingen

**Tobias Bütow:** Buchenwald/Böhlen, Magdeburg-Rothensee (*Brabag*), Tröglitz

**Grażyna Choptiany:** Gross-Rosen/Birnbäumel, Hirschberg (Arbeitskommando), Hirschberg (Arbeitslager), Hochweiler, Kurzbach, Nimptsch

**Kathrin Clausing:** Neuengamme/Hildesheim

**Hans de Vries:** all Herzogenbusch essays

**Martin Dean:** Lublin-Majdanek/Blizyn, Budzyn

**Christoph Dieckmann:** Kaunas main (with Evelyn Zegenhagen)

**Herbert Diercks:** Early/Fuhlsbüttel

**Barbara Distel:** Dachau main

**Gerhard Dorbritz:** Sachsenhausen/Belzig

**Bernward Dörner:** Early/Oranienburg

**Jean-Marc Dreyfus:** Natzweiler/Natzweiler main, Echterdingen, Hailfingen, Leonberg, Mannheim-Sandhofen, Neckarelz I and II, Neckargartach-Heilbronn, Oberehnheim, Schwäbisch Hall-Hessental, Vaihingen

**Irith Dublon-Knebel:** Ravensbrück/Malchow

**Christian Dürr:** Mauthausen/subcamp system, Leibnitz-Graz, Linz I, Linz II, Linz III, Passau I, Passau II, Peggau, Redl-Zipf, Schloss Lind, St. Lambrecht, Ternberg, Vöcklabruck, Wiener Neudorf, Wiener Neustadt, Wien-Floridsdorf, Wien-Hinterbrühl, Wien-Schönbrunn, Wien-Schwechat-Heidfeld, Wien-Schwechat "Santa,"

**Albrecht Eckhardt:** Early/Vechta

**Hans Ellger:** Neuengamme/Beendorf, Boizenburg, Bremen-Obernheide, Bremen-Uphusen, Bremen (*Hindenburgkaserne*), Hamburg-Eidelstedt, Hamburg-Geilenberg (Dessauer Ufer) (women), Hamburg-Langenhorn (Ochsenzoll), Hamburg-Neugraben, Hamburg-Sasel-Poppenbüttel, Hamburg-Tiefstack, Hamburg-Wandsbek, Hannover-Langenhagen, Hannover-Limmer, Horneburg, Wedel

**Stefanie Endlich:** Early/Lichtenburg; Sachsenhausen/Lehnitz

**Anita Farkas:** Mauthausen/Schloss Mittersill, Schloss Lannach

**Achim Fenner:** Dachau/Radolfzell

**Gabriel N. Finder:** Warschau main

**Karola Fings:** Buchenwald/Bensberg, Düsseldorf-Derendorf, Düsseldorf-Kalkum, Düsseldorf (*Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke*), Essen (*Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke*), Köln-Deutz, Köln-Niehl, Köln-Stadt; all SS-Baubrigaden essays

**Ulrich Fritz:** Flossenbürg/subcamp system,

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- Altenhammer, Aue, Brüx, Chemnitz, Dresden-Friedrichstadt (*RAW*) and Dresden (*Reichsbahn*), Dresden (*Behelfsheim*), Dresden (*SS-Pionier-Kaserne*), Dresden (*Zeiss-Ikon, Goehle-Werk*), Dresden (*Zeiss-Ikon, Werk Reick*), Grafenreuth, Meissen-Neuhirschstein, Plauen (*Horn GmbH*), Seifhennersdorf
- Thorsten Gajewi:** Neuengamme/Lübberstedt
- Christine Glauning:** Natzweiler/Bisingen, Dautmergen, Dormettingen, Gruppe "Wüste," Schömburg,
- Stefan Goch:** Buchenwald/Gelsenkirchen-Horst
- Anna Golembiecka:** Gross-Rosen/  
Breslau-Lissa, Breslau-Hundsfeld, Breslau I, Breslau II
- Renate Gruber-Lieblich:** Sachsenhausen/  
Wittenberg
- Peter Gstettner:** Mauthausen/Klagenfurt-Lendorf, Loiblpass
- Judith Hahn:** Ravensbrück/Hohenlychen
- Jürgen Harder:** Youth camps/introduction, Moringen, Uckermark
- Georg Häusler:** Gross-Rosen/Niesky
- Katja Hering:** Neuengamme/Hamburg-Fuhlsbüttel, Hamburg-Rothenburgsort
- Gerhard Hoch:** Neuengamme/Kaltenkirchen
- Alfred Hoffmann:** Dachau/Heidenheim; Natzweiler/Heidenheim
- Günther Högl:** Buchenwald/Dortmund, Schwerte-Ost
- Bernd Horstmann:** Bergen-Belsen/Bomlitz, Hambühren, Unterlüss
- Todd Huebner:** Flossenbürg main; Sachsenhausen main
- Thomas Irmer:** Auschwitz/Bobrek; Krakau-Plaszow/Kabelwerk Krakau; Riga/Riga-Strasdenhof; Sachsenhausen/Berlin-Lichterfelde, Glöwen, Hennigsdorf, Schwarzheide
- Emeryka Iwaszko:** Auschwitz/Brünn, Chelmek-Paprotnik, Janinagrube
- Stanisława Iwaszko:** Auschwitz/Fürstengrube, Günthergrube, Laurahütte
- Kirsten John-Stucke:** Wewelsburg main
- Alexander Jossifidis:** Ravensbrück/Grüneberg, Steinhöring; Sachsenhausen/Briesen, Genthin, Oranienburg (*Auer-Werke*), Oranienburg (*Heinkel-Werke*), Rathenow
- Petr Joza:** Flossenbürg/Rabstein
- Hermann Kaienburg:** Neuengamme/Neuengamme main, Wittenberge
- Markus Kienle:** Early/Gotteszell, Heuberg
- Willy Klawe:** Early/Wittmoor
- Aleksandra Kobielec:** Gross-Rosen/Brieg, Brünnlitz, Dyhernfurth I and II, Friedland
- Alfred Konieczny:** Gross-Rosen/Aslau, Bunzlau I and II, Landeshut
- Alexander Korb:** Sachsenhausen/Berlin-Neukölln, Berlin-Zehlendorf, Schönefeld
- Dietfrid Krause-Vilmar:** Early/Breitenau; Buchenwald/Kassel, Kassel-Druseltal
- Piotr Kruszynski:** Gross-Rosen/Riese complex overview and camps Erlenbusch, Falkenberg, Fürstenstein, Kaltwasser, Lärche, Märzbachtal, Wolfsberg
- Miroslav Kryl:** Gross-Rosen/Bausnitz, Bernsdorf, Gabersdorf, Ober Altstadt, Parschnitz, Schatzlar
- Helena Kubica:** Auschwitz/Babitz, Budy, Freudenthal, Harmense, Lichtewerden
- Wolfgang Kucera:** Dachau/Augsburg-Pfersee
- Gabriele Layer-Jung:** Sachsenhausen/Berlin-Niederschöneweide (*Pertrix*)
- Ralf Lechner:** Mauthausen/subcamp system, Bachmanning, Leibnitz-Graz, Linz I, Linz II, Linz III, Passau I, Passau II, Peggau, Redl-Zipf ("Schlier"), Schloss Lind, St. Lambrecht (men), St. Lambrecht (women), Ternberg, Vöcklabruck, Wiener Neudorf, Wiener Neustadt, Wien-Floridsdorf (w/Wien-Jedlese), Wien-Hinterbrühl, Wien-Schönbrunn, Wien-Schwechat-"Santa", Wien-Schwechat-Heidfeld
- Silvester Lechner:** Early/Ulm-Oberer Kuhberg
- Leokadia Lewandowska:** Gross-Rosen/Grünberg I and II, Neusalz, Schertendorf, Schlesiersee II
- Martin Litzinger:** Early/Bergkamen-Schönhausen
- Ursula Ludz:** Dachau/Feldafing
- Joachim Lund:** Vaivara/Port Kunda
- Mike MacQueen:** Stutthof main
- Aneta Małek:** Gross-Rosen/Freiburg in Schlesien, Gebhardsdorf, Geppersdorf, Hartmannsdorf, Zillerthal-Erdmannsdorf
- Angela Martin:** Sachsenhausen/Kleinmachnow
- Günter Matthes:** Sachsenhausen/Strausberg
- Irene Mayer:** Early/Berlin-Charlottenburg (Majkowski-Haus), Berlin-Köpenick, Berlin-Kreuzberg (Friedrichstrasse Nr. 234), Berlin-Kreuzberg (Hedemannstrasse), Berlin-Prenzlauer Berg (Wasserturm), Berlin-Tiergarten (Universum-Landesausstellungspark), Brandenburg a. d. Havel, Weissenfels; Ravensbrück/Ansbach
- Angelika Meyer:** Ravensbrück/Born, Comthurey, Feldberg, Hagenow, Klützw
- Hans-Jürgen Milling:** Neuengamme/Lengerich
- Joachim Neander:** Mittelbau/Grosswerther
- Michael Neufeld:** Mittelbau/Mittelbau main, Ellrich, Ellrich/Woffleben
- Kaspar Nürnberg:** Early/Sonnenburg



**Immo Opfermann:** Natzweiler/Erzingen, Frommern, Schörzingen  
**Marek Orski:** all Stutthof subcamp essays  
**Karin Orth:** Introduction to the SS-Business Administration Main Office Concentration Camps  
**Roland Otto:** Early/Leschwitz bei Görlitz; Gross-Rosen/Biesnitzer Grund  
**Johannes Paul:** Early/Bergisch Gladbach  
**Katarzyna Pawlak-Weiss:** Gross-Rosen/Grulich, Kratzau I and II, Mährisch Weisswasser, Ober-Hohenelbe, St. Georgenthal  
**Franciszek Piper:** Auschwitz/Auschwitz II-Birkenau main, subcamp system, Althammer, Blechhammer, Eintrachthütte, Neu-Dachs, Sosnowitz I and II, Trzebinia  
**Dieter Pohl:** Krakau-Plaszow main  
**Thomas Rahe:** Bergen-Belsen main  
**Edith Raim:** Dachau/Gendorf, Kaufering I-XI, Landsberg, Mühldorf  
**Dirk Riedel:** Dachau/St. Gilgen  
**Gernot Römer:** Dachau/Augsburg–Horgau, Augsburg (*Michelwerke*), Bad Oberdorf, Bäumenheim, Blaichach, Burgau, Gablingen, Haunstetten, Kaufbeuren, Kempten (*Helmuth Sachse KG*), Kottern/Fischen, Kottern-Weidach, Lauingen (I, II, and Birkackerhof), Neu-Ulm, Neuburg a.d. Donau, Oberstdorf-Birgsau, Riederloh, Schlachters  
**Heinrich Ross:** Ravensbrück/Retzow  
**Thomas Roth:** Early/Köln (Bonner Wall), Köln (“Klingelpütz”), Köln-Mozartstrasse  
**Andrea Rudorff:** Early/Breslau-Dürrgoy, Gollnow, Hammerstein, Stettin-Bredow  
**Martina Ruppert:** Early/Landau, Neustadt a.d. Haardt  
**Barbara Sawicka:** Gross-Rosen/Christianstadt, Fünfteichen, Grafenort, Sackisch, Treskau.  
**Danuta Sawicka:** Gross-Rosen/Bad Warmbrunn, Bolkenhain, Gräben, Kittlitztreben, Ludwigsdorf  
**Sabine Schalm:** Dachau/subcamp system, Dachau (*Entomologisches Institut der Waffen-SS*), Dachau (*Fleischwarenfabrik Wulfert*), Dachau (*Gut Pollnhof*), Dachau (*Präzifix GmbH*), München-Freimann (*Bartolith Werke*), München-Freimann (*Dyckerhoff u. Widmann*), München-Freimann (*SS-Standortverwaltung*), München-Giesing (*Agfa Kameraerwerke*), München-Oberföhring (*Bauleitung der Waffen-SS*), München-Riem (*OT, SS-Reit- und Fahrschule*), München-Schwabing (Schwester Pia), München-Sendling (*Architekt Bücklers*), München (*Bergmannschule*), München (*Bombensuchkommando*), München (*Chemische Werke*), München (*Ebrenгут*), München

(*Gärtnereibetrieb Nützl*), München (*Gestapo Wittelsbacher Palais*), München (*Grossschlachtereier Thoma*), München (*Höchlstrasse*), München (*Katastropheneinsatz*), München (*Königinstrasse*), München (*Lebensborn e.V.*), München (*Lodenfrey*), München (*Oberbürgermeister*), München (*Parteikanzlei*), München (*Reichsbahn*), München (*Reichsführer-SS*), München (*Reichsführer-SS-Adjutantur*), München (*Schubaus Meier*), München (*Sprengkommando*), München (*SS-Mannschaftshäuser*), München (*SS-Oberabschnitt Süd*) (Möhlstrasse), München (*SS-Standortkommandantur Bunkerbau*), München (*SS-Standortkommandantur Kabelbau*), Ulm (*Magirus-Deutz AG*)  
**Martin Schellenberg:** Buchenwald/Colditz, Flössberg, Meuselwitz, Schlieben  
**Kurt Schilde:** Early/Berlin (General-Pape-Strasse), Columbia-Haus  
**Florian Schmaltz:** Auschwitz III-Monowitz main  
**Alexander Schmidt:** Flossenbürg/Ansbach, Gundelsdorf (with Knellendorf), Happurg, Helmbrechts, Hersbruck, Hof-Moschendorf, Nürnberg (*Siemens-Schuckert Werke*), Nürnberg (*SS Kaserne*), Nürnberg/Eichstätt, Pottenstein  
**Christine Schmidt:** Buchenwald/Berga-Elster  
**Christine Schmidt van der Zanden:** Buchenwald/subcamp system, Abteroda (men), Abteroda (women), Annaburg, Apolda, Berstedt, Billroda, Bochum (*Eisen- und Hüttenwerke*), Braunschweig, Buttstedt, Dessau (*Dessauer Waggonfabrik*), Dessau (*Junkers-Flugzeug- und Motorenwerke*), Düsseldorf-Grafenberg, Düsseldorf (Kirchfeldstrasse), Eisenach, Gandersheim, Giessen, Goslar, Göttingen, Hadmersleben, Halberstadt: Langenstein-Zwieberg/Hecklingen, Langenstein-Zwieberge/Junkerswerke, Langenstein-Zwieberge/Magdeburg, Langenstein-Zwieberge/Malachit, and Langenstein-Zwieberge/Wernigerode; Halle, Jena, Kranichfeld, Lauenburg in Pommern, Leipzig-Thekla, Leopoldshall, Lichtenburg, Lützkendorf, Nordhausen, Oberndorf, Ohrdruf, Ohrdruf/Crawinkel, Ohrdruf/Espenfeld, Quedlinburg, Rothenburg, Saalfeld, Schönebeck (*Junkers-Flugzeug- und Motorenwerke AG*), Sennelager, Sonneberg-West, Stassfurt, Stassfurt (*Wälzer & Co*), Suhl, Tannenwald, Tannroda, Tonndorf, Unna, Weimar, Westeregeln, Witten-Annen; Neuengamme/Braunschweig (*Truppenwirtschaftslager*), Bremen (*Borgward-Werke*), Bremen-Vegesack, Darss-Wieck, Darss-Zingst, Düssin, Engerhufe, Goslar,

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- Rolf Schmolling:** Buchenwald/Neustadt bei Coburg; Flossenbürg/Falkenau, Graslitz, Plauen, Zwodau; Gross-Rosen/Niederoderwitz; Ravensbrück/Siemenslager Ravensbrück; Sachsenhausen/Berlin-Siemensstadt
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- Horst Thum:** Early/Hassenberg
- Reinhard Timm:** Ravensbrück/Prenzlau
- Dieter Vaupel:** Buchenwald/Hessisch-Lichtenau
- Jens-Christian Wagner:** Mittelbau/subcamp system, Artern, Ballenstedt (*Napola*), Blankenburg-Oesig, Blankenburg-Regenstein, Bleicherode, Gut Bischofferode, Harzungen, Ilfeld, Ilsenburg, Kelbra, Kleinbodungen, Kleinbodungen/Bischofferode-Eichsfeld, Kleinbodungen/Niedergebra, Nordhausen (*Boelcke-Kaserne*), Osterode-Freiheit, Osterode-Petershütte, Quedlinberg, Rossla, Rottleberode, Stempeda, Tettenborn, Trautenstein, Wickerode
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- Andreas Weigelt:** Sachsenhausen/subcamp system, Bad Saarow, Beerfelde, Berlin-Reinickendorf, Berlin (Friedrich-Krause-Ufer), Bernau, Biesenthal, Brandenburg (Havel), Dammsmühle, Döberitz, Drögen, Fallersleben, Fürstenberg, Fürstenwalde, Glau, Grünheide, Kolpin, Küstrin, Lieberose, Lübben, Neubrandenburg, Neuhammer, Niemegk, Potsdam-Babelsberg, Spreenhagen, Storkow, Trebnitz, Velten, Werder, Wulkow
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- Elizabeth White:** Lublin-Majdanek main
- Joseph Robert White:** Early/Introduction to the Early Camps, Alt Daber, Altenberg, Anrath bei Krefeld, Bamberg, Bautzen (Kupferhammer), Bayreuth (St. Georgen), Benninghausen, Berlin-Plötzensee, Bochum, Börgermoor, Börnicke, Colditz, Dresden-Mathildenstrasse, Düsseldorf (Ulmenstrasse), Erfurt, Esterwegen camps, Eutin, Glückstadt, Gräfenhainichen, Greater Nürnberg camps, Gumpertshof, Hainewalde, Hainichen, Halle (Merseburger und Paracel-

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- Magdalena Zajac:** Gross-Rosen/Bersdorf-Friedeberg, Liebau, Merzdorf, Waldenburg, Wiesau
- Evelyn Zegenhagen:** Buchenwald/Buchenwald main, Altenburg (men), Altenburg (women), Aschersleben (men), Aschersleben (women), Bad Salzung (*Heinrich Kalb*), Bad Salzung (*Ludwig Renntier*), Duderstadt, Elsnig, Langensalza, Leipzig-Schönau, Leipzig-Schönefeld HASAG (men), Leipzig-Schönefeld HASAG (women), Lippstadt (*Lippstädter Eisen- und Metallwerke*), Lippstadt (*Westfälische Metall-Industrie*), Magdeburg (Polte) (men), Magdeburg (Polte) (women), Markkleeberg, Mühlhausen (Gerätebau GmbH), Mühlhausen (*Mühlenwerke AG/Funkers*), Niederorschel, Penig, Plömnitz (men), Plömnitz (women), Raguhn, Sömmerda, Taucha (men), Taucha (women), Torgau, Weferlingen, Wernigerode, Wolfen; Dachau/Bad Ischl, Bad Tölz, Bayrischzell, Eching, Ellwangen, Eschelbach, Feldmoching, Fischbachau, Fischhorn, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germering, Halfing, Hallein, Hausham (men), Hausham (women), Innsbruck (*SS-Sonderlager*), Innsbruck I, Karlsfeld, Karlsfeld-Rothschwaige, Königssee, Landsberg (*Dynamit AG*) (men), Landsberg (*Dynamit AG*) (women), Landshut, Lochau, München-Allach (BMW), München-Allach (OT Bau), München-Allach (*Porzellanmanufaktur*), München-Allach (*SS-Arbeits- und Krankenlager*), München (*Leopoldstrasse*), Neufahrn, Neustift im Stubaital (Innsbruck II), Ottobern, Ötztal, Plansee (men), Plansee (women), Rosenheim, Salzburg (*Aufräumungskommando*), Salzburg (*Bombensuchkommando*), Salzburg (*Polizeidirektion*), Salzburg (*Schürich*), Salzburg (*Sprengkommando*), Saulgau, Schleissheim (*Aufräumungskommando*), Schleissheim (Berufsschule), Schloss Lind, Seehausen, St. Johann in Tirol, St. Wolfgang, Steinhöring, Stephanskirchen (BMW), Sudelfeld (*Luftwaffe*), Sudelfeld (*SS Berghaus und Hotel*), Thansau, Traunstein, Trostberg, Valepp (*Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei*), Zangberg; Flossenbürg/Ganacker, Kirchham, Obertraubling, Plattling, Regensburg, Saal a. d. Donau, Stulln; Gross-Rosen/subcamp system, Guben, Hirschberg/Buchwald-Hohenwiese, Langenbielau I and II, Peterswaldau; Hinzert/Hinzert main, Bad Nauheim, Cochem, Frankenthal-Mörsch, Gelnhausen, Hermeskeil, Homburg-Nord, Hoppstädten, Kirrberg, Langendiebach I and II, Mainz-Finthen, Mainz-Gustavsburg, Mainz-Ingelheimerau, Mainz-Weisenau, Merzhausen, Michelbach, Neubrücke, Rheinzabern, Seligenstadt, Trier (*Sicherungsstab*), Usingen, Uthlede, Vicht, Wächtersbach, Wiesbaden, Wiesbaden-Erbenheim, Wittlich a. d. Mosel, Zeltingen (Mosel); Kauen/Kauen main, Kauen-Alexoten, Kauen-Schanzen, Kazlu Ruda, Kedahnen, Koschedaren, Palemonas, Prawienischken; Krakau-Plaszow/Olcza near Zakopane, Wieliczka; Lublin-Majdanek/Lemberg, Lublin (*Alter Flughafen*) (men), Lublin (*Alter Flughafen*) (women), Poniatowa, Pulawy, Radom; Mauthausen/Amstetten (men), Amstetten II (women), Bretstein, Ebensee/Wels II, Eisenerz, Enns and Ennsdorf, Grein, Gunskirchen-Wels I, Hirtenberg, Lenzing, Melk, St. Ägyd am Neuwalde, St. Valentin, Steyr-Münchholz, Wien (*Saurerwerke*); Natzweiler/subcamp system, Audunle-Tiche, Bensheim-Auerbach, Calw, Cochem-Bruttig, Cochum-Treis, Darmstadt, Dernau a. d. Ahr, Ellwangen, Frankfurt a. Main,

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Unterschwarzach, Vaihingen/Unterriexingen, Walldorf, Wasseralfingen, Wesserling; Ravensbrück/subcamp system

**Bernd Joachim Zimmer:** Buchenwald/Arolsen

**Michael Zimmermann:** Early/Brauweiler; Buchenwald/Essen (Humboldtstrasse)

**Dieter Zühlke:** Buchenwald/Hardehausen



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## ABOUT THE EDITOR

Geoffrey P. Megargee, Applied Research Scholar with the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, received his B.A. from St. Lawrence University in 1981. Following stints as an army officer and in the business world, he went on to get his master's in European history from San José State University in 1989 and his Ph.D. in military history from the Ohio State University in 1998. He is the author of *Inside Hitler's High Command* (2000), which won a 2001 Distinguished Book Award from the Society for Military History and was a main selection of the History Book Club, and of *War of Annihilation: Combat and Genocide on the Eastern Front, 1941* (2006). He is a member of the historical advisory board for the National World War II Museum in New Orleans, and he writes and lectures on German military history, World War II, and the Holocaust.

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The index lists all names—internees, guards, Nazi officials, civilians, Allies, and all others—alphabetically by family name. Names, and spellings of names, sometimes vary, because of marriage, use of a pseudonym, or misspellings in the source documents. Although we have made efforts to make the listings as consistent as possible, a person may appear in different places in the index. No titles or ranks are included with the names in the index. Page numbers in italics refer to illustrations and their captions.

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This index lists organizations and entities, such as industrial firms, governmental agencies, political parties, educational institutions, private associations, and small businesses mentioned in the text. Camps and subcamps are not included here, but are included in the Places Index. Abbreviations are not indexed unless they are part of a larger name (e.g. AEG-Kabelwerk Oberspree). Please consult the List of Abbreviations for full names, which can then be found here. Page numbers in *italics* refer to illustrations and their captions.

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