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FLOSSENBURG SUBCAMP SYSTEM

The use of prisoners outside the Flossenbürg concentration camp was discussed early on in the development of the camp. From the beginning of the war, small groups of prisoners worked on farms, with skilled tradesmen, and with local authorities in and around Flossenbürg. The daily departure from the camp and evening return, however, came to an almost complete stop in 1942.

In February 1942, shortly after the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) was founded, the first Flossenbürg subcamp was established at Stulln. Almost 100 male prisoners worked until October of that year for the Vereinigten Flussspatgruben Stulln GmbH (United Fluorspat Mine Stulln) before being transferred to the SS-Pionierkaserne (Sappers Barracks) in Dresden. There, the prisoners had to work on construction sites for the Dresden Waffen-SS and the Police in Dresden and its surroundings. It remains uncertain, due to lack of source material, whether the Stulln subcamp was conceived as a pilot project between the SS and private industry.

Other subcamps were established by the end of 1943 solely for the SS. In organizations such as the SS-Nachrichten-Ausbildungsabteilung (Intelligence Training Unit) in Nürnberg, the SS-Kleiderkasse (Clothes Checkout) which had been transferred from Berlin-Lichterfelde to Schlackenwerth near Karlsbad, and in an SS-Bekleidungslager (Clothes Depot) in Grafenreuth (only 20 kilometers [over 12 miles] from Flossenbürg) but also in the SS’s own businesses such as the Porcelain Factory Bohemia at Neu-Rohlau and the mineral water producer Sudetenquell, for which prisoners worked in the Bohemian town of Krondorf constructing a well until 1944 there were between 20 and 150 prisoners each. Personal connections also played a role during this period in the establishment of subcamps, as in the SS-Teillazaret (Hospital) in Würzburg, where Dr. Werner Heyde practiced euthanasia, and in the Franconian town of Pottenstein, where concentration camp prisoners were made available for use by speleologist Hans Brand. The majority of these subcamps (by the end of 1943, there were 12 altogether) were small. Often skilled workers were deployed to them, and the percentage of German or German-speaking prisoners was relatively high. Proportionally, the number of prisoners in the subcamps increased during the course of 1943 from 9 percent in February (406 of a total of 4,290 prisoners) to 31 percent in July (1,511 of 4,869).1 What is noteworthy at this stage is the large number of subcamps located in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia or in the Sudetenland. Shortly after the occupation of Germany’s neighbor, the SS targeted and secured selected representative sites. The owners of these sites had lost them because the sites were “aryanized” or for some other reason. Many of the subcamps in this area were located in castles (for example, Schlackenwerth, Beneschau, Jungfernbreschan, and Eisenberg).

Only later the Flossenbürg prisoners were used in the weapons industry and then in Flossenbürg and not in the subcamps. From the summer of 1943, Messerschmitt produced fighters on the site of a Flossenbürg quarry. In December 1943, a subcamp was established in Johanngeorgenstadt for the Erla-Maschinenfabrik GmbH (Erla Machine Factory), which produced parts for the Me 109. Two other subcamps followed in August 1944 for the same company in Mülsen—St. Micheln and in Flöha. In all three instances, assembly was transferred from the main factory in Leipzig, which was threatened by bombing raids, to unused furniture and textile factories, after the company had already had experience with concentration camp prisoners from its work with two Buchenwald subcamps in the Leipzig area.

After the Armaments Ministry had finally taken responsibility for the allocation of prisoners, the Flossenbürg concentration camp began to establish a fast-growing network of subcamps in the second half of 1944, above all in South Saxony, North Bohemia, and North Bavaria. The main reason for this expansion was the fast increase in available prisoners: partly due to the deportation of Hungarian Jews beginning in the summer of 1944, and partly due to the new subcamp structure for female prisoners. From September 1, 1944, Flossenbürg was initially responsible for six subcamps with at least 2,816 female prisoners. The number of female prisoners increased steadily to November 1944 with large transports arriving from Auschwitz and Ravensbrück. Numbers increased to almost 10,000, the majority of whom were from Russia and Poland.

From the middle of 1944, many of the Flossenbürg subcamps were established in military industrial sites in former textile, consumer goods, and food production facilities. Some of these relocations were part of Armaments Ministry programs, the most well known of which was the establishment of the Jägerstab (Fighter Staff) to relocate aircraft production underground, a measure that later applied to armaments production generally. The Jägerstab was responsible for the establishment of the largest Flossenbürg subcamps in Hersbruck (B 7) and Leitmeritz (B 5), and other underground sites were planned and in some cases established for Weserflug in Rabe-stein, for Junkers in Lengenfeld (under the alias of Leng-Werke), and for Messerschmitt in Saal an der Donau. The work conditions on these building sites were extremely bad: there were not enough shelters, and the toilet facilities were completely inadequate for thousands of prisoners. Diseases, brutal treatment by the SS, and complete exploitation even for the simplest tasks resulted in astonishing death rates in these subcamps. In addition, countless foreign civilian forced laborers, German criminal prisoners, and prisoners of war (POWs) worked with the concentration camp prisoners on these gigantic construction projects, which resulted in
the establishment of subcamp complexes in Hersbruck and Leitmeritz.

Other large relocation efforts resulted in the transfer of the Berlin electronics firm C. Lorenz AG to Mittweida, of Osram to Plauen, Opta-Radio to Wolkenburg, Luftfahrtgerätewerk (Aircraft Instrument Factory) Hakenfelde to Zwo- dau and Graslitz, and Kabel- und Metallwerke (Cable and Metal Works) Neumeyer from Nürnberg to Helmbruch. In other instances the subcamps were established in existing operations, for example, in Nürnberg (Siemens-Schuckert Werke), in the area of Chemnitz (Astrawerke, Auto-Union), and in Dresden (Zeiss-Ikon, Universelle, MIAG Zschachwitz). The emphasis, concerning the number of prisoners and extension of the war, was on aircraft assembly and the production of ammunition, tank engines, and tanks, as well as on work in electrotechnical firms. In addition, the smaller subcamps, which were less important for the war effort, continued to exist, and new ones were established during 1944, for example, in Bayreuth, where the Institute for Physical Research was vainly trying to design a "seeing bomb," or in Schloss Jungfern Breschan near Prague, where prisoners did house and gardening work for Reinhard Heydrich’s widow.

The increasing number of subcamps resulted in widespread structural changes at Flossenbürg. For one thing, the proportion of prisoners based in the main camp and the subcamps was completely turned around: at the end of March 1944, 45 percent of the prisoners were held in the subcamps; by the end of May, it was 72 percent. While the number of prisoners in the main camp doubled, in the same time period the number of prisoners increased sixfold in the subcamps.

During the first half of 1944, 7 Flossenbürg subcamps were established; in the second half, 45. The main camp developed into a transit center for small and large prisoner transports that were directed to the subcamps via the main camp or were sent directly to the subcamps. Sick prisoners, those held under arrest or marked for execution, and prisoners who were considered likely to escape or who were destined for another assignment were mostly transferred back to the main camp at Flossenbürg. Women who became pregnant or ill were often sent to Ravensbrück. (It is not surprising that the responsible head of the Labor Deployment Department [Abteilung Arbeitszuteilung], SS-Hauptstrumführer Friedrich Becker, who signed most of the transport lists, was regarded by the Americans in the Dachau Flossenbürg Trials as the principal accused.)

The requirements for guards were increasingly met by Luftwaffe soldiers, ethnic German (Volksdeutsche) SS guards, or operational staff. Female operational staff was acquired for the women’s subcamps, and the staff was sent to training courses either at Ravensbrück or Flossenbürg/without leischen and then deployed as SS wardresses. The younger women had generally little motivation and often refused to work, were absent without leave, or reacted by treating the prisoners in a brutal manner. In August 1944, the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in the Protectorate, Obergruppenführer Karl-Hermann Frank, inspected the subcamps, punishment camps, and camps for ethnic German SS men in his area of command. His report following his inspections refers to serious problems with security; a lack of weapons for the guards; and even possible contact between the concentration camp prisoners, the POWs, and civilian forced laborers in the area.

For some subcamps, the administrative development of the prisoners’ employment was well documented. In the majority of cases, prisoners were probably assigned at the request of the companies, which could inform themselves about proper payment and other issues concerning the prisoners through training sessions at the Holleischen subcamp. The main camp commandant, Obersturmbannführer Koegel, clarified questions of prisoner accommodation and security in the preliminary negotiations. From 1944, however, one cannot speak of any plan governing the use of prisoners. As soon as the prisoners were available, a company could immediately accept or reject them—this meant initially, and often for the duration, improvised and totally inadequate accommodation in factory buildings and no adequate sanitation. Only in a few cases did the subcamps bring together the skilled tradesmen demanded by the companies. Some companies with influence were able to keep “their” prisoners—for example, the Polish and Czech Jews in the ghetto in Litzmannstadt (Łódź) used by the Deutsche Munitionswerke (German Munitions Works, DMW) were transferred via Auschwitz and Stutthof to the Flossenbürg subcamp at Dresden (Bensdorf).

The rapid increase in subcamps, the large prisoner transports, the increasingly fragile transport system, and war damage resulted in an ever more chaotic situation in the camp command from the second half of 1944 on. This is shown by the delayed, erroneous, or nonexistent reports on escape attempts, deaths, and so on, but also by the relief of commandants due to supposedly being too soft in regard to prisoners and in the search for staff who would pursue radical measures energetically. Only a few sources indicate that there were any attempts by the camp command to develop a more efficient subcamp system. Oberscharführer Erich von Berg stated after the war that he was posted in seven camps soon after their establishment for about three months in each to regulate their administrative affairs.

From the end of 1944, the Geilenberg Staff and the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German National Railways) also used Flossenbürg forced laborers. The Geilenberg Staff, which was established to rejuvenate the production of fuel following the devastating air raids on the hydrogenation works in May 1944, exploited the use of hundreds of concentration camp prisoners in the subcamps at Königstein, Porschdorf, and Mockethal-Zatzechke in the Sächsische Schweiz by relocating the factories underground. The Reichsbahn used several hundred prisoners in the Reichsbahnausbesserungswerk (German National Railways Repair Works, RAW) Dresden, after the RAW facilities in Regensburg were destroyed, as well as doing cleanup work for the railways in Ansbach. Three subcamps were established in February 1945 in Lower Bavaria at Kirchham, Ganacker, and Plattling, where more than 1,500
mostly Jewish prisoners had to do excavation work for airfields. From 1945, many subcamps served solely as reception stations for the increasing number of death marches arriving from Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen. In many places, especially Dresden, prisoners—who were typically locked into factory buildings during air raids—became victims of air attacks, but on the other hand, the raids gave prisoners the opportunity to escape. On March 1, 1945, there were 36,995 male and female prisoners registered in the Flossenbürg subcamps. The last strength reports from April 15, 1945, accounted for 9,000 prisoners in the main camp and 36,000 in the subcamps, including 14,600 women. In other words, 80 percent of the Flossenbürg prisoners were in the subcamps.

The Flossenbürg subcamps were dissolved between March and May, and most of the prisoners were evacuated. The prisoners from a few of the southwestern subcamps were driven to Johanngeorgenstadt. From there they set out on a death march over the Erzgebirge to the area around Tachau (Tachov). The Leitmeritz subcamp became the center of the Flossenbürg main camp operations in the final phase of the war. From the end of February, sick prisoners from subcamps in southern Saxony were transferred to Leitmeritz. Leitmeritz continued to function for two weeks as a place of mass death after the liberation of Flossenbürg on April 23 and the destination for death marches for many Flossenbürg subcamps until the Red Army entered the site on May 8. The prisoners were then given discharge papers by the local authorities and released. While some of the death marches have become well known, the death marches in north Bohemia, which are well documented in Czech sources, are relatively unknown. Several thousands of deaths are not documented in the official data of the Flossenbürg concentration camp.

There are few sources that confirm the use of prisoners outside the subcamps. Witnesses from Nossen stated that a few French prisoners from the subcamp there sometimes worked in a mechanic’s garage in the city. In other cases the files refer to the use of prisoners, but it remains a matter of dispute whether those sites should be regarded as self-standing subcamps. Many of the subcamps existed only on paper and to this day have been treated as being actual camps, for example, the Flossenbürg subcamps for Heinkel in Eger and the SS-Hauptamt at Plassenburg near Kulmbach, Giebelstadt, Teich wolframdsdorf, Münchberg, and Stambach. On the other hand, there are prisoner requests for information about places where there has been no research to determine whether or not there were subcamps in those locations. In light of the availability of sources (or lack thereof), it is difficult to determine the exact number of subcamps that were part of the Flossenbürg camp system.

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NOTES
2. BA, R 3/250–270 Relocation of the (at first exclusively) Berliner Elektroindustrie with relocation drawings and correspondence.
4. United States vs. Friedrich Becker et al., NARA, RG 338; 290/13/22/3; 000-50-46; Box 537.
5. ITS, Historical File 268 a: Reisebericht (Travel Report) SS-Obergruppenführer Frank, August 10/11, 1944.
6. See, for example, SHStA-(D), 11722, Zeiss Ikon AG, Nr. 319 Werksküchen.
7. BA, NS 4/FL: Demand for Wardresses, Guards and Revolvers for the Goehlewark Dresden Subcamp 20.02.45.
9. CEGESOMA, Brüssel, Microfilm 14368.
11. BA, NS 4/FL: List of Guards who on March 24, 1945, were ordered to the SS Labour Camp Arzberg/Oberfranken.
**ALTENHAMMER**

Altenerhamer is located 2 kilometers (1.4 miles) outside Flossenbürger and is a present-day administrative district of that town. Like Flossenbürger, Altenerhamer possessed several granite quarries. In January 1942, the management of one of these, the Ernst Stich Quarry, approached the command office of the Flossenbürger concentration camp both personally and in writing with the request “for a prisoner detachment to construct a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp for Soviet prisoners in the spring of 1942” in Altenerhamer. The request was denied on the grounds that there were not enough guards.

It was not until two and a half years later that Altenerhamer became the site of a Flossenbürger subcamp. In the course of the year 1944, two detachments were established for the manufacture of the Messerschmitt (Me) 109 fighter by means of production-line labor performed by prisoners. Both detachments initially marched to the production site from the main camp daily and returned in the evening. The midday rations were distributed in Altenerhamer.

Around the end of 1944 or the beginning of 1945, several hundred prisoners took up quarters in the factory buildings used by Messerschmitt. The Stich detachment, comprising some 60 prisoners, was accommodated in a building of the Stich Quarry that the company had been compelled to lease to Messerschmitt. The Ambos detachment, comprising some 500 prisoners, had its living quarters in an extremely large, flat-roofed building constructed in 1938 from granite blocks (60 meters long, 20 meters wide, and 11 meters high [about 197 by 66 by 36 feet]). The prisoners all worked in the same building, initially only during the day; beginning in February 1945, however, there was also a night shift.

The detachments and the subcamp were guarded by Luftwaffe soldiers who had been transferred to the SS. The last labor allocation list of April 13, 1945, refers to 8 guards for the Stich detachment and 20 for the Ambos detachment. The detachment leader was Ewald Reinhold Heerde. A Luftwaffe major was in charge of production. He was reputedly beaten to death by the prisoners at the end of the war.

There were differing accounts as to the prisoners’ living conditions in Altenerhamer. Altenerhamer was one of the few subcamps to be subjected to thorough consideration during several Dachau-Flossenbürger follow-up trials. The non-German witnesses, who made up the majority, not only described the living quarters, food, and treatment by the guards and the Kapos very precisely but also in a much more negative manner than the German and Austrian prisoners (including a few prisoner-functionaries) interrogated by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg 20 to 30 years later. According to Franz K., for example, who made a statement in 1967, there were—other than the “usual mistreatment”—no intentional prisoner homicides in Altenerhamer. Non-German prisoners, on the other hand, state that mistreatment by Kommandoführer Heerde and the Kapo Edmund Wissmann resulted in death in many cases. Heerde and Wissmann, who functioned as the detachment clerk, are alleged to have beaten prisoners for the slightest infraction, using their bare hands or rubber hoses, often as the result of complaints by civilian employees. The seriously injured and dead are said to have been transported back to the Flossenbürger main camp in the trucks that delivered the rations.

According to prisoner statements, the appalling hygienic conditions resulted in an outbreak of typhus in Altenerhamer in the spring of 1945. At times, the prisoners had no change of clothing for periods of up to six weeks, and their clothing was accordingly full of lice. In January and February, the prisoners were still taken in groups back to Flossenbürger for showers every Sunday. There, they were also permitted to cash in their bonuses at the canteen. The Luftwaffe major in charge of production put an end to this practice, however, citing the loss of man-hours. Within a few weeks, many prisoners allegedly died of typhus (some statements put the number at 200). The Altenerhamer files document only 45 deaths. It is quite certain that not all deaths were recorded in the chaos accompanying the camp’s dissolution. The food supply was just as disastrous, though possibly better than in the main camp. According to Henri Margraff, the prisoners received 150 grams (5.3 ounces) of bread in the morning; the midday rations were distributed at work, and in the evening the prisoners were given a piece of bread with a little sausage. The rations were delivered from the main camp. In isolated cases, prisoners have also stated that they received bread from civilian employees.

The daily work quota was supposedly six aircraft, but the witnesses have stated they also produced a variety of parts, including aircraft engines. At any rate, production was limited by the lack of skilled workers among the prisoners. The exchange of prisoners with the large Messerschmitt detachment in the main camp toward the end of the war came about too late to effect any positive results. On account of the close proximity of the two camps as well as the raging typhus epidemic, small groups of prisoners were frequently shunted back and forth between the main camp and the subcamp.

On March 1, 1945, there were 547 prisoners working in the Ambos detachment. Two days later that number reached its peak at 532. At the same time, there were 66 prisoners assigned to the Stich detachment. The last surviving strength report of April 13, 1945, refers to 419 prisoners. The 250 Polish prisoners, including some 100 Jews, made up the majority. The Altenerhamer prisoner population further comprised 150 Russians, 100 Czechs, 50 Germans, 40 Italians, and 40 Frenchmen, as well as prisoners from eight other countries.

Toward the end of the war, the Flossenbürger main camp continued to become overcrowded due to the frequent arrival of evacuation transports from other camps, several groups of between 30 and 40 prisoners were transferred to Altenerhamer—virtually a death sentence in light of the conditions there. On April 16, the Altenerhamer subcamp was dissolved, and the prisoners were transferred back to the main camp, where they were immediately quarantined. The majority of the German prisoners—and perhaps others as well—apparently remained...
at the evacuated camp, which was liberated by U.S. troops on April 21, 1945.

There was also a third Altenhammer detachment: More recent research has thrown light on the “scientific detachment” or “Research Institute.”9 At the request of the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in the General Government, SS-Obergruppenführer Wilhelm Koppe, a mathematicians’ detachment, a chemists’ detachment, and an engineers’ and inventors’ detachment were formed of Polish Jewish scientists at the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp. According to the Polish Jew Henry (Mordko) Orenstein, these research detachments consisted not only of specialists but also of numerous young men who responded to the call for scientists in order to avoid being murdered.10 They apparently passed the superficial scientific examinations and were allocated to various camps. The chemists’ detachment and the engineers’ and inventors’ detachment were transferred to Flossenbürg in mid-October due to the approach of the Red Army. Part of the inventors’ detachment returned to Kraków in mid-November 1944. The chemists—numbering 22 in April 1945—remained in Flossenbürg.

On behalf of the Naval High Command and the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Applied Chemistry and Electrochemistry, the chemists in Flossenbürg worked on a device called E O 2,11 which was presumably a gas-protection filter. The SS-Construction Administration in Flossenbürg planned an enclosed Scientific Experimentation Station on the road from Flossenbürg to Silberhütte. The facility was to comprise a transformer building and, within a walled-in area, a laboratory, living quarters, and a bomb shelter.12 These construction plans never reached realization. Instead, the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) applied for the construction of the buildings in Altenhammer. There, prisoners of the SS-Construction Administration erected barracks and carried out the necessary mason work.13 The last SS-Construction Administration labor allocation list, dated April 13, 1945, cites the number of prisoners working at the “Altenhammer Institute” at 23.

According to the report by Orenstein, his two brothers Fred and Felek Orenstein, members of the chemists’ detachment, were evacuated to Dachau in mid-April 1945. Felek Orenstein was injured during one of several air attacks and—along with 130 prisoners likewise no longer capable of marching—was shot to death by the SS. The remaining prisoners were liberated a few days later by U.S. troops.

It was presumably the existence of the Research Institute that led the American Alsos mission, a delegation of scientists led by physicist Samuel Goudsmit, to search for documents of this research in Flossenbürg.


Detailed witness statements on the circumstances in Altenhammer are to be found in the records of the Dachau Flossenbürg follow-up trials (USA v. Wilhelm Loh, et al., 000-50-46-1; USA v. Heerde, et al., 000-50-46-3), which are available in NARA and copies of which are available at AG-F and, to a lesser extent, in the investigation records of the BA-L (Zdl., 410 AR-Z 58/68—Investigations into Unknown Persons at the Altenhammer Subcamp). A transport list from Flossenbürg main camp to Altenberg is available in CEGESOMA. The Flossenbürg collection in the BA holds files on the Research Institute. Henry Orenstein has also published his memoirs, *I Shall Live: Surviving the Holocaust 1939–1945* (Oxford, 1988).

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**NOTES**

2. Ibid., letter of April 10, 1942, from commandant’s office.
3. BA-B Microfilm S 14430, labor allocation list of April 13, 1945.
7. NARA, RG 338; 290/13/22/3; 000-50-46; Box 537 (microfilm copy in AG-F).
8. Cf. CEGESOMA Microfilm 14683 (11 transfers to Altenhammer subcamp on March 31, 1945).
12. BA-B, NS 4/FL 165, camp map and map details.
13. BA-B, NS 4/FL 391, application by the SS-Construction Administration to retransfer bricklayers from the Altenhammer Research Institute detachment following completion of work, January 6, 1945.

**ANSBACH**

Between March 13 and April 4, 1945, concentration camp prisoners from Flossenbürg were held in and near the Rezathalle fair pavilion in Ansbach (central Franconia). The subcamp was accordingly located near the stockyards and main railway station. Numbering approximately 700, the prisoners were assigned to repairing bomb damage to the railway lines. More than half of the prisoners were non-Jewish Poles and
Russians, and about one-third were Jews from Poland and Hungary. There were smaller groups from an additional 19 countries. The guards were SS from Flossenbürg, members of the Wehrmacht, and presumably, the Volkssturm (German Home Guard). The camp commander was SS-Hauptscharführer Fischer.

Forced to perform heavy labor in a continual state of undernourishment, the prisoners in Ansbach were starving and completely exhausted. From the very beginning of the subcamp's existence, between five and eight prisoners died daily. Sometimes there was absolutely nothing to eat, sometimes only thin watery soup from the stockyards. Many prisoner reports state that prisoners ate parts of animal cadavers that they found in a wrecked train on the station grounds. No medicine was distributed to the prisoners. They received only rudimentary medical care from a prisoner doctor who worked in a nearby railway construction brigade (Eisenbahnbaubrigade) composed of prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The washing and toilet facilities were completely inadequate for the 700 prisoners.

The death register of the Ansbach subcamp, which has survived, lists the death of 72 prisoners—resulting from the appalling camp conditions—in the three weeks of its existence. Two prisoners succeeded in escaping. On April 4, 1945, 93 of the some 500 prisoners at the Ansbach subcamp were sent to Hersbruck, another Flossenbürg subcamp, and then on to Allach, a Dachau subcamp. The remaining prisoners were sent back to Flossenbürg. From Flossenbürg, the SS distributed some prisoners to other subcamps, including the Dresden subcamp. Behelfsheim, established on April 13. The majority of the prisoners, however, were driven in death marches from Flossenbürg in a southerly direction.

The SS had the corpses of 51 victims of the Ansbach subcamp buried hastily in a mass grave in a small forest near the Ansbach forest cemetery (Waldfriedhof). They were exhumed after 1945 and reinterred in the Waldfriedhof, the identification of the corpses having proven impossible. In 1945, 5 bodies were found buried in shallow graves near the Rezathalle fair pavilion. They were likewise reinterred in the Waldfriedhof.

The prisoners had been forced to perform labor in the copper mines—either doing construction work in the mines or on the railway line, or actually mining copper. Most of the 5,000 forced laborers were shot on a death march after the camp was dissolved in September 1944. The surviving prisoners were transferred either by ship or on foot to German concentration camps, among them Flossenbürg. After a few weeks, the majority were transferred to large Flossenbürg subcamps or to the Buchenwald or Mittelbau concentration camps. In view of these circumstances, it appears quite unusual that a Flossenbürg transfer list dated November 24, 1944, indicates that 20 craftsmen were selected from this transport to form a detachment assigned to perform construction work at the Reich 'Training Camp (Reichsausbildungslager) Elbe IV in Aue. According to a letter from the Kyffhäuser Einzelsatzgruppe of the Organisation Todt (OT), the prisoners, including a plumber, an electrician, a roofer, a carpenter, and two bricklayers, were assigned the task of "converting a disused HJ (Hitler Jugend) home into an SS leadership training school." According to the letter, the use of SS labor, either soldiers or prisoners, was a precondition for the granting of permission to carry out construction work on the building.

The prisoners were taken by rail to Aue and had their living quarters in the cells of the local prison. The doors of their cells were not locked. In addition to erecting a barracks, they had to chop wood and dig ditches. They were joined in their work at the education camp by Italian military internees (IMIs). Witness statements unanimously agree that the Hitler Youth mistreated the prisoners with beatings and attacks. On the whole, however, particularly in comparison to the conditions at Bor and Flossenbürg, the treatment is described as having been bearable—one witness states that on Christmas 1944 the prisoners were even given a radio. According to other witnesses, they were beaten, but there were "no serious consequences." In addition to the detachment leader, SS-Sturmbannführer Kraus, three additional SS men served as guards.

No prisoners died in Aue. Surviving documents show that there were no changes in the population of the subcamp throughout its existence. According to the claim voucher for
The Bayreuth subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp is mentioned for the first time according to the International Tracing Service (ITS) on July 3, 1944, with a reference to 38 prisoners. The listing in the Flossenbürg camp administration's address book was “Arbeitslager Bayreuth, Institut f[jr] physikalische Forschung in der Neuen Baumwollspinnerei, Karl-Schueler-Str. 54, Zentrale: Forschungs und Verwertungsgesellschaft m.b.H., Berlin W 15, Knesebeckstr. 48/49” (Bayreuth Work Camp, Institute for Physical Research in the New Cotton Mill, 54 Karl Schueler Street, Head Office: Research and Recycling Ltd., Berlin W 15, 48/49 Knesebeck Street).

The establishment of the subcamp in Bayreuth has a long history. In 1944, very diverse developments and motivational ideas going back to the late 1930s and the early 1940s were brought together in this subcamp, and they drew on the available manpower of the concentration camp prisoners ultimately for purely pragmatic reasons. The nature of the research in the New Cotton Mill leads to the origins of television engineering and to the little-known interconnections between the development of modern television and war-related research on remote-controlled glider bombs. The choice of Bayreuth as the location for establishing the institute is closely connected with the family relationships of the institute’s founder, Bodo Lafferentz, head of the National Socialist organization Kraft durch Freude (Strength through Joy) and chairman of the Gesellschaft zur Entwicklung des Volkswagen (Association for the Development of the Volkswagen). On December 26, 1943, Lafferentz married Verena Wagner, the granddaughter of composer Richard Wagner, in Bayreuth.

It was probably the conjuncture of a number of practical problems and personal inclinations that led to the idea of founding the Institute for Physical Research and the subcamp in Bayreuth as well. On the technical side, the German armaments industry had a problem in that the control systems for the remote-controlled bombs, the “miracle weapons” that allegedly would change the course of the war, were not yet perfected. Lafferentz, in his capacity as manager of the Volkswagen factory, along with many other managers, was officially tasked with finding a solution for this problem. Lafferentz found in Werner Rambauske an ambitious scientist who since 1939 had been carrying on research on developing aiming devices for remote-controlled bombs. His technical discoveries, however, thus far had not achieved a breakthrough. The new establishment of an Institute for Physical Research with the goal of developing a “iconscope,” based on the previous work of Rambauske, was thus extremely attractive for both men.

Lafferentz had very obvious private interests in locating this institute in Bayreuth. Lafferentz’s brother-in-law Wolfgang Wagner, in his autobiography, points to such a private motive. “In addition to a good many other businesses, my brother-in-law also ‘managed’ this concern, in which various military research projects were under way at that time. I had no specific knowledge of the projects at all, of course. I only knew that there were a variety of secret things being done there which promised to bring final victory, such as the targeted bomb. For my brother such an activity was naturally merely a kind of alibi in the total war situation.”

Very soon after assuming management of the Volkswagen factory, Lafferentz was open to the use of concentration camp prisoners for endeavors related to the armaments industry and for his own interests. For Lafferentz, however, the employment of concentration camp prisoners, at Bayreuth as well, was more a pragmatic decision than an ideological one.

On May 24, 1944, a transport with 33 prisoners from different nations was dispatched from the Neuengamme concentration camp near Hamburg to Flossenbürg. All the prisoners had technical professional training. The prisoners already
had been selected in Neuengamme, on the basis of their professional qualifications, for subsequent use in Bayreuth.² After a short period of quarantine in Flossenbürg, all 33 prisoners, together with 5 additional Flossenbürg prisoners, were taken to Bayreuth on June 13, 1944. The prisoners included 14 Russians, 9 Poles, 6 Germans, 4 French, 3 Czechs, 1 Austrian, and 1 stateless prisoner born in the Ukraine.³ The transfer of the 38 prisoners meant that the institute became a Flossenbürg subcamp as of June 13, 1944, not July 3, 1944, as stated by ITS.

The 38 prisoners transferred on June 13 formed the core occupancy of the Bayreuth subcamp. With their arrival, however, the subcamp had not yet reached its planned strength. This was achieved through additional transfers of prisoners with technical qualifications. The following list shows which prisoner transports arrived in Bayreuth up to November 1944, as well as the camps of origin:

- June 13, 1944: 38 prisoners including 33 from Neuengamme and 5 from the Flossenbürg main camp
- August 8, 1944: 2 prisoners from Neuengamme
- August 17, 1944: 3 prisoners from Dachau
- September 12, 1944: 1 prisoner from Gross-Rosen
- November 11, 1944: 1 prisoner from the Flossenbürg main camp
- November 6, 1944: 20 prisoners from Gross-Rosen

In November 1944, there were 63 prisoners in the Bayreuth subcamp. Actually, the workforce was intended to include 65 skilled prisoners, but 2 German prisoners had managed to escape on November 2, 1944. At the institute, the prisoners worked as draftsmen, at lathes, and in the production of fine metal mechanical parts. The exact context of the work, however, was not revealed to the prisoners, who were involved with separate work elements. Other than the testimony of witnesses during investigation proceedings, there is no information on the prisoners’ concrete work effort and the progress of the work on the iconoscope. All that is known is that the prisoners during their activities quite often had contact with Laferrentz, Rambauske, and apparently also Wieland Wagner (Wolfgang’s brother), who had worked in the New Cotton Mill since the fall of 1944.

The infrastructure of the Bayreuth subcamp’s institute did not necessarily correspond to today’s understanding of a “camp.” No hut camp with a camp gate and watchtowers came into being on the grounds of the New Cotton Mill. There was only a small area of the extensive industrial site that was set aside for the purposes of the institute and the housing of prisoners. From the outside, the prisoners’ area could not be identified as a prison camp. According to consistent statements by almost all the prisoners, the food in Bayreuth was better and the hygienic conditions more satisfactory than in other subcamps or in the Flossenbürg main camp. Those responsible at the institute had a vested interest in the prisoners’ state of health and in the maintenance of their capacity for work. Nevertheless, the conditions for the prisoners could change at any time, and even the skilled concentration camp workers at the Bayreuth Institute were seen as constantly disposable human material. After the escape of a Russian prisoner, 18 prisoners were transferred back to Flossenbürg on December 22, 1942; 1 of them was executed shortly thereafter, and at least 5 others died later. Conditions in the Bayreuth subcamp deteriorated in the last months of the war, the quantity of food was drastically reduced, and work at the institute also slowed. There were still 62 concentration camp prisoners in the Bayreuth subcamp on February 28, according to a monthly strength report of the SS-Kommandantur in Flossenbürg. This source, which is subdivided into categories of “Aryans” and “Jews,” shows that no Jewish prisoners were used in Bayreuth.

Evacuation of the camp began at 7:00 P.M. on April 11, 1945. SS teams drove the remaining prisoners from the subcamp in a column in the direction of Flossenbürg. The prisoners had to cover the entire distance on foot. Statements by former prisoners and SS men agree that on the three-day march from Bayreuth to Flossenbürg 1 elderly Italian prisoner died and another was able to escape. Finally, on April 14, 1945, 59 completely exhausted prisoners reached the Flossenbürg concentration camp. The prisoners who returned from Bayreuth remained at Flossenbürg until the dissolution of the Flossenbürg camp, which began on April 16, 1945. From there, they were driven farther southward after a short stay.

Altogether, 85 people of nine nationalities were imprisoned in Bayreuth during the existence of the subcamp at the New Cotton Mill.¹ In Bayreuth itself, there is no proven instance of the death of a prisoner, but there were several deaths that were related directly and indirectly to the Bayreuth subcamp. Of the 85 men who were prisoners in the Bayreuth subcamp, at least 11 died in the Nationalist Socialist camp system or of the consequences of their imprisonment in a camp.

SOURCES Recently, a publication dealing extensively with the Bayreuth subcamp has appeared, which illuminates in detail the armament development and engineering background of the research at the Institut für physikalische Forschung and, in particular, the family connections of the Wagner family to this subcamp. See Albrecht Bald and Jörg Skriebeleit, Das Außenlager Bayreuth des KZ Flossenbürg: Wieland Wagner und Bodo Laferrentz im “Institut für physikalische Forschung” (Bayreuth, 2003). Brigitte Hamann, in her biography of Winifred Wagner, Winifred Wagner oder Hitlers Bayreuth (Munich, 2002), has evaluated and quoted material on the involvement of the Wagner family with this subcamp.

The special character of the Bayreuth subcamp is reflected in an extremely disparate body of sources. The eight handwritten volumes of the Flossenbürg “Nummernbuch,” the original of which is in NARA, contain detailed information on the Flossenbürg subcamps, including Bayreuth. The investigation files of the ZStL (now BA-L) and the investigation...
files of the Sta. Würzburg (available at Sta-Wü) provide pivotal access to knowledge of the events at the Bayreuth subcamp. Important evidence is also supplied by the remembrances of surviving prisoners. These, together with documents from private, company, and public archives, allow a relatively complete picture of the Bayreuth subcamp to be drawn today. Wieland Wagner’s brother Wolfgang also mentions the events at the institute in his autobiography, Lebens-Akte (Munich, 1997).

Jörg Skriebeleit
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

NOTES
3. See AG-F, Microfilm of “Nummernbuch” 1.
4. AG-F, Hängeordner Stärkemeldungen.
5. Belgians, Germans, French, Italians, Yugoslavs, Dutch, Poles, Russians, Czechs, and stateless persons. According to today’s political map and after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, there are a few more; Austrians were registered as “Reichsdeutsche” (Reich Germans), AG-F, Stärkemeldung, February 28, 1945.

BRÜX

For various reasons the Brüx subcamp remains something of a mystery: first, because of the short duration of its existence (five weeks, from September 1 to October 7, 1944); second, because of its geographic location, which was long unclear; and third, because of the nature of the forced labor and the firm that benefited from it.

Since the end of the nineteenth century, the northern Bohemian town of Brüx (present-day Most) had been a center of the brown coal industry, which significantly influenced the entire region. Following the Nazi takeover of the Sudetenland, the state began to forcibly concentrate the extraction of coal, which until then had been characterized by medium-sized mine operations, including quite a number of Jewish coal mines. This process also resulted in a partial change in the method of production—from underground mining to strip mining with large machinery. One result of these efforts at concentration was the creation of the Sudetenländische Bergbau AG (Subag), a subsidiary of the Hermann-Göring-Werke. The mining of brown coal was important above all for the fuel that could be extracted from coal. For this purpose the Sudetendländische Treibstoffwerke (Sutag), a subsidiary of Subag, constructed in Maltheuern, near Brüx, a gigantic hydrogenation plant that primarily produced aviation gasoline. From the beginning of the war, thousands of forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) worked not only in the coal mines but also in the hydrogenation plants. A list prepared in September 1943 for the fuel plant in Maltheuern refers to 13,300 workers, including 4,000 male, 380 female foreigner workers, and 2,500 POWs. At this time there were 136 foreign males, 29 women, and 6 POWs at Subag. The total workforce was 236. The demand for workers was also satisfied by a labor education camp (Arbeiterziehungslager), and there were also large POW camps in the area.

It is therefore not surprising that concentration camp prisoners also were enlisted in forced labor in this industrial region. The short period of existence indicates that the construction of the Brüx subcamp, at least in part, was a temporary solution. The subcamp was not based in Brüx itself but in the village of Seestadtl, eight kilometers (about five miles) away, where the largest Czechoslovakian power plant had stood since the 1920s. On September 1, 1944, a transport of 1,000 prisoners from all walks of life and age groups was dispatched from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp to Seestadtl. This is documented by a transfer list from Sachsenhausen to Seestadtl and also in the Flossenbürg Nummernbücher (Numbers Books). Three-quarters of the prisoners were Poles, and more than 200 came from the Soviet Union. In addition to 50 French and 40 Germans, prisoners from 10 other countries were transferred to Seestadtl. The requisition document of the Kommandantur at Flossenbürg states that the first day that work commenced was September 3, a Sunday. On that day, 998 unskilled laborers were accounted for, for a half day. By the time the Kommando was dissolved, recorded as occurring on October 7, the number of prisoners fell to 967.

Investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg after the war revealed little information on the living conditions and the forced labor of the prisoners. The few survivors who were questioned evidently also included former POWs who were never in the subcamp. What can be confirmed is merely that the prisoners probably were housed in a former POW camp near Brüx, that there obviously was an infirmary, and that prisoners in Brüx died a violent death. The Nummernbücher record four deaths; the causes of death of the two 40-year-olds and the two sixty-year-olds are unknown. Also recorded was an escape attempt by a Soviet on October 2.

The prisoners probably had to work in coal mines, although some also told of assembling tanks. They had to march each day to and from work, and the distance was stated as being between 3 and 12 kilometers (almost 2 to 8 miles). The Kommandoführer was probably SS-Hauptscharführer Gustav Göttling (born 1893). He was later utilized in other subcamps, lastly in the Porschdorf subcamp in Sächsische Schweiz. There are said to have been about 25 guards.

After the dissolution of the Brüx subcamp, some of the prisoners were transferred to the Flossenbürg main camp and some (possibly directly but possibly also via Flossenbürg) to Leitmeritz, where they had to dig tunnels for Project Richard, the underground mining relocation project. A file note from Osram KG dated October 9 refers to the previous work and the future work: “thus far 350 men in Richard II; from October, 10 up to 600 men.” The dates mentioned correspond with the end of the Brüx subcamp.

There are indications of another deployment of Flossenbürg prisoners in the area of Brüx, specifically a requisition
document of the Kommandantur in Flossenbürg addressed to the Mineralölbaugesellschaft in Oberleutensdorf for April 1944; up to 490 prisoners were used there as unskilled labor. Admittedly, only this one requisition document has been preserved. The Mineralölbaugesellschaft, originally the construction arm of the Braunkohle-Benzin AG (Brown Coal-Gasoline AG, Brabag), was in charge of construction at Leitmeritz and was supported there by the Subag. It is, however, unclear whether the frequently intertwined coal extraction and fuel operations in this area used additional prisoners from Flossenbürg for forced labor at other locations and times.

SOURCES To date, there is no exhaustive study on forced labor in the Brüx region. Max Türp’s work Die Entwicklung des Kohlebergbaus im Braunkohletrevier Teplitz—Brüx—Komotau (Munich, 1975) and especially Wolfgang Birkenfeld’s Der synthetische Treibstoff 1933–1945: Ein Beitrag zur nationalsozialistischen Wirtschafts und Rüstungspolitik (Göttingen, 1964) provide information on the technical and wartime economic aspects of brown coal extraction and fuel production. Also worthy of mention is an exhibition on the history of the occupation period at the former crematorium in Brüx. The exhibition focuses on forced labor in the region, and numerous construction plans for Subag settlements or facilities are on display. Jörg Skriebleit’s “Die Aussenlager des KZ Flossenbürg in Böhmen,” DaHe 15 (November 1999): 196–217, erroneously lists Seestadtl as “Seestadt 1.”

In addition to the abovementioned inquiries by the ZdL (410 AR-Z 66/76, available at BA-L), there are numerous sources on the extraction of coal in the Brüx region in the BgA-Fg (the Oberbergamt Freiberg was also responsible for the mining offices in the occupied Sudetenland). The primary documents for Seestadtl are to be found in the SuA-M.

NOTES

2. SVG, collection 2120. The original is held by the ITT.
3. NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3, 000–50–46, Box 537 (microfilm copy in AG-F).
4. BA-B, NS 4/FL 393, vol. 2: Requisition documents of the Kommandantur to the Subag, Seestadtl, for September and October 1944.
5. LA-B, Best. Osram, ARep. 231 O.656, File Note 41, October 9, 1944.

CHEMNITZ

The Astrawerke AG in Chemnitz was founded in 1921. Since that date, it had, as its name—Spezialfabrik für Addier- und Buchungsmaschinen (Specialized Factory for Adding and Accounting Machines)—shows, made a name for itself through technical innovations such as the 10-key adding machine or accounting machines with a built-in typewriter. As part of the shift from civilian production to armaments production, Factory II of the Astrawerke had begun as early as 1937 the “manufacture of complicated weapons parts, which . . . keeps about one thousand civilian personnel occupied. It was organized with considerations of the most modern interchangeable mass production in mind.” On the other hand, in 1942 only 500 employees, most of them female, worked in the main factory, producing adding and accounting machines. In this factory, punch-card systems commissioned by the Armed Forces High Command (OKW) Amt für maschinelles Berichtswesen (Mechanical Reporting System Office) were developed.

Besides the military significance of the output, the fact that as of May 1, 1944, the Astrawerke was labeled a model National Socialist operation was probably also helpful for the allocation of concentration camp prisoners. Moreover, members of the management occupied leading roles in the self-administration of the armaments industry. For example, the director of Factory II was also the “Kriegsführer” and chairman of the Sonderausschuss Waffen Untergruppe 5 (Special Committee for Armaments, Subgroup 5). The guarding of the prisoners was already arranged prior to their arrival. The camp commandant in Flossenbürg sent a telegram to 26 female overseers, instructing them to cut their leave short and immediately report for duty at the Astrawerke in Chemnitz. The telegram was sent not only to quite a few addresses in Saxony but also to women in Magdeburg, East Prussia, and Vorarlberg. This suggests that the women were not exclusively former employees of Astrawerke. The abrupt interruption of their leave suggests that, as in many other cases as well, the exact arrival date of the prisoners was not known in advance. After the war, a female SS overseer stated that in mid-August 1944 about 40 female Astrawerke employees were delegated to undergo training as female SS guards in a course at Ravensbrück. From there, after a week, half of them were sent to a subcamp of Buchenwald at Leipzig-Schöna to guard 500 female Jewish prisoners who were working there. The SS overseer reported that in late February 1945 she and other women from the Astrawerke were ordered to Chemnitz and then had to accompany the prisoners to Leitmeritz. Altogether the guard force in Chemnitz consisted of only 8 guards, in addition to the rather high number of more than 30 female SS. A transport of 510 female prisoners from the Auschwitz concentration camp reached Chemnitz on October 24, 1944. The Flossenbürg Nummerzüchter (Numbers Books) show that the transport included some 200 Russians, 150 Poles and Italians (of whom many evidently were Slovenes), 10 Yugoslavs, and 5 Croats. They were above all “political” prisoners and “civilian workers,” as well as a few “Gypsies” and “associals.” The requisition certificates from the Flossenbürg Kommandantur addressed to the Astrawerke show, however, that at first only a small proportion of the women were used as forced laborers. By the end of the month, the number of working women had increased from 161 to 448; in November, there were 480 women on average; and as of mid-December,
almost 500 women were forced to work. The women worked a six-day week in two 12-hour shifts in two different plants. About 280 prisoners worked in Factory I, the main factory, and about 220 in the nearby Factory II (Waplerstrasse 1). From November 1944, the concentration camp prisoners in Factory I accounted for two-thirds of all foreigners engaged in forced labor there.

All the women were accommodated in Factory I (Alchemnitzer Strasse 41) in a building with barred windows. They were located on an upper floor and slept on three-tiered bunk beds. They worked on the lower floors. According to various statements, the women made metal parts for airplanes or machine guns. Two female prisoners who were wounded and two orderlies were released from work. The camp elder, Helena D. from Kraków, stated that there were in addition seven barracks room elders.

According to the numerous postwar statements from witnesses, the working conditions, aside from harassment by the female SS overseers, were on the whole bearable. While the sanitary facilities were described as relatively good, the poor food generally was criticized. The plant management was responsible for the food: in the morning there was a unsweetened “coffee,” at midday half a liter of soup, and in the evening a slice of bread with margarine. After the large air raid on Chemnitz on March 4 and 5, 1945, there was only beet soup available for a number of days. Unanimously, the prisoners deny that there were acts of homicide in the Chemnitz subcamp. The Flossenbürg Nummernbücher indicate two deaths in March and April. On February 12, 1945, seven women were transferred from the subcamp to Ravensbrück, including at least one pregnant Pole. On the same day, five prisoners were transferred from the Goehlewark subcamp in Dresden to Chemnitz, possibly to replenish camp numbers. The International Tracing Service (ITS) states that there was a transport of eight women the week before, but there is no proof of this transport. However, five escape attempts by Soviet and Polish prisoners beginning in March 1945, possibly as a consequence of the increased air raids on Chemnitz in the spring of 1945, are documented. As a rule, the women were locked in their quarters during the air raids. Only one witness reports that the Kommandoführer gave way to the pleas of the prisoners and permitted them to go to the air-raid cellar.

The Kommandoführer was SS-Oberscharführer Willing, born in 1894 in Ohrdruf. Called “Grandfather” by the prisoners, he was described as relatively humane, despite some statements to the contrary. He was in charge of the women during the evacuation in April 1945 as well. The prisoners were at first taken by rail to Leitmeritz, where they presumably stayed about one week. From there they probably had to go by foot to nearby Hertine, where a Flossenbürg subcamp had been cleared of its roughly 500 female Jewish prisoners shortly before; because of a typhus outbreak, the women were transferred to Theresienstadt. A few women report shootings of exhausted women and of women who could no longer walk on the march. The women from Chemnitz were kept busy filling munitions with explosives for about two weeks more. This dangerous job included the risk of phosphorous poisoning, among other things. Most of the SS guards disappeared around May 8. Some ethnic German guards who remained advised the women to flee, as one witness reported. Shortly thereafter, the women were freed by the Red Army.

The Astrawerke was speedily nationalized after the war as a “war profiteers’ firm” and later became a state-owned enterprise.

**Sources**

In addition to the relevant archival holdings at Flossenbürg, there is Best. 31092 (Astrawerke AG) in the StA-Ch. Besides a factory history, however, this contains only a few statistics and details on the use of concentration camp prisoners. The investigation files of the ZdL (410 AR 203/73, available at BA-L), which hold numerous, detailed witness statements, above all by Poles, are very comprehensive.

Ulrich Fritz

**Notes**

1. See STA-Ch, Best. 31092 (Astrawerke), Nr. 26: Entwicklungs-geschichtliche und sozialpolitische Übersicht über den Betrieb und seine Kriegsleistungen—Bericht des Betriebsführers [John Greve, November 23, 1942], p. 5
2. BA-B, NS 4/FL 10, telegram, handwritten, October 17, 1944, and signed by the senior radio operator.
3. STA-Ch, Best. 31092, Nr. 197, Copy of a report by SS warden Elisabeth L., incorrectly dated December 10, 1941.
5. NARA, RG 338, 290/13/223/3, 000-50-46, Box 537 (microfilm copy in AG-F).
6. BA-B, NS 4/FL 391 Bd. 2, Monthly requisition certificates of the Kommandantur Flossenbürg to the Astrawerke AG Chemnitz, October to December 1944.
8. CEGESOMA, microfilm 14683.

**Dresden (Behelfsheim)**

The existence of the subcamp Behelfsheim (Provisional Quarters) is documented only by a single source, a transfer list from Flossenbürg “to the work camp Dresden Behelfsheim, dated April 13, 1945.” The list compiled by the Labor Allocation Department, however, is dated April 12, 1945. The Behelfsheim subcamp thus is the last Flossenbürg subcamp—only a few days after the transfer of the slightly more than 100 prisoners, the Flossenbürg main camp was evacuated, and most of the prisoners were compelled to move southward on death marches.

Although the list, in its heading, mentions 105 transfers, only 103 names are noted. In addition to 6 Reich Germans, of
whom at least some probably acted as Kapos, 43 Poles (civilian workers, protective detainees, as well as 18 Jews), 30 Russians (civilian workers, prisoners of war [POWs], and 1 Jew), 8 French (1 of whom was a Jew), 7 Czechs, 2 Croats, 2 Hungarian Jews, 2 Dutch, 1 Yugoslav, 1 Slovene, and 1 Italian are listed, including a relatively large number of "older" prisoners (23 prisoners were born between 1897 and 1910). In addition to many unskilled laborers, about half the prisoners in this transport were skilled craftsmen, specifically metalworkers, milling cutters, electricians, or cabinetmakers. As is usual in many transport lists, this one also includes a note indicating the general state of health of the prisoners; most of them were given a rating of "2" by the camp doctor in charge; that is, they were certified as capable of work. What is unusual is that the prisoners were listed by prisoner number instead of alphabetically. The list is not signed by the Arbeitseinsatzführer, an SS-Unterscharführer.

In reconciling the list with the entries in the Flossenbürg Nummernbücher (Numbers Books), it becomes clear that many of the prisoners sent on this transport must have been in an extremely poor physical condition. For some prisoners, the entries apparently do not refer to illnesses or the like: For example, among the transferees were three Jewish Poles who came to Flossenbürg in August 1944 from the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp. Many of them, however, had returned from subcamps to Flossenbürg only shortly before the transfer to Dresden. Diseases were rife in these subcamps, such as Ansbach and Zwickau, and many prisoners had died. Others, who according to the Nummernbücher were transferred directly from Flossenbürg, are listed with the annotation "K" for "Krankenrevier" (infirmary) and/or with the numbers of infirmary Blocks 22 and 23. For a few prisoners, there are no entries at all for the corresponding prisoner numbers in the main source; the transfer list thus far contains the only known evidence, by name, of their fate.

The purpose of the Behelfsheim subcamp is completely unclear. The sketchy information, specifically the late date of the transport, the probable poor health of the prisoners, and their relatively advanced average age suggest that in this case sick prisoners were being pushed out of the already overcrowded main camp. Thus this late transport fits in with a number of other transfers that, probably for the same reason, were carried out shortly before the dissolution of the Flossenbürg main camp, by moving prisoners to various subcamps, although usually in a southerly direction.

**SOURCES** The only known source for the Behelfsheim subcamp is CEGESOMA, microfilm 14368 (Transfers from Flossenbürg to subcamps). The original is held by ITS.

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**NOTE**

1. CEGESOMA, microfilm 14368, transfers from Flossenbürg to subcamps.

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**DRESDEN (BERNSDORF & CO.)**

On November 26, 1944, a transport of 500 prisoners from the Stutthof concentration camp near Danzig (Gdańsk) arrived in Dresden for a Flossenbürg concentration camp outside detail at the Bernsdorf & Co. munitions factory. They received accommodations on the upper floors of the Reemtsma-Konzern cigarette factory at Schandauer Strasse 68. The transfer of this prisoner group from Stutthof to Dresden took place on orders of the D II office head in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), dated November 24, 1944. In accordance with this order, 500 male concentration camp prisoners originally were to be transferred to Dresden. A telex from SS-Standartenführer Gerhard Maurer, the D II office head, to the commandants of both the Stutthof and Flossenbürg concentration camps read: “K.L. Stutthof transfers on paper to K.L. Flossenbürg concentration camp three hundred male prisoners, who were already employed at the company Bernsdorf and Co., Obersitz, as well as two hundred male prisoners who were rejected by the aptitude tester Czarnulla, and immediately move them off to the Bernsdorf and Co. labor camp, 68 Schandauer Strasse, Dresden A 21, railroad station: Dresden-Reick unloading station. K.L. Stutthof provides transport accompaniment. Signed Maurer.” In fact, the Bernsdorf subcamp was supplied with the following: 273 women and young females, 209 men and young males, and 18 children, among whom were even five- and six-year-old boys and girls. The explanation for this prisoner group composition, which was a departure from orders, can be found in the statement by Abraham S. in 1967 before the Israeli investigating authorities:

In November 1944, I was brought to the Bernsdorf and Co.-Dresden camp with about five hundred Jews of both sexes and varying ages. Even in the Łódź ghetto, where I lived before my deportation to the camp, the core of this group was the so-called metal group. The metal group consisted of specialists and their family members. The metal group was supposed to remain—by order of the German authorities—a closed organization, and thus when we had to leave Łódź in late August, with the last leaving in early September 1944, and were first brought to Stutthof via Auschwitz, we passed through the gate at Auschwitz without selection. Our production was supposed to continue at Obrzisko, near Posen, but developments at the front affected the original plan. I was one of the fifty men who were taken to Obersitz [Obrzisko] from Stutthof in order to install the machine equipment there.... When I returned to Stutthof with the group of fifty men, I discovered serious changes in the metal group. Almost half of the men were no longer alive.... Before the group was dispatched to Dresden, our original number was replenished with other prisoners.
As earlier in Łódź, the prisoners in Dresden were used for the production of core projectiles and were under the direction of the former head of the ghetto administration at Łódź, Hans Biebow, and his deputy Czarnulla. The German civil engineers Hermann Braun and Upschat (or Orbschat) managed the actual production. But Jewish prisoners, being experts, actually ran the production organization. The leader and also camp elder was Hermann Ch., who had already directed Metal Division I in the Łódź ghetto. Division directors and foremen were also Jewish prisoners who had already served in similar functions in the ghetto. For the month of December 1944, proofs of debt for a total of 68,842 Reichsmark (RM) were prepared for the Bernsdorf subcamp. This was the price that the company had to pay into the SS account at the Reich bank for the prisoner employment of almost 500 workers in one month. The prisoners received nothing for the daily 12-hour shifts.

The women and girls were registered by Flossenbürg concentration camp with the matriculation numbers 59654 through 59937 and the men with the numbers 38354 through 38569, in addition to several matriculation numbers from other series. All told, the number of male and female Jews in the camp included 567 Poles, 10 Czechs, 8 Germans, 7 Hungarians, 5 Lithuanians, 2 French, and 1 Russian. The miserable living conditions, which had already claimed many victims among this prisoner group from Łódź at Stutthof, the camp of origin, also quickly led to the first death. One man died on the day of arrival; a woman and a man died on December 4, 1944; 1 man died on December 6, 1944; and another 5 died in the same month. There were 6 dead in January 1945 and 7 dead in February; and in March, there were 15 dead to mourn in the Bernsdorf subcamp, among whom were also victims who burned to death in the infirmary on the top floor during the bombing of Dresden on February 13, 1945. There were also a number of deaths at the Mockethal-Zatzschke overflow camp, to which the greater part of the prisoners were evacuated after bomb hits on the factory.

A strength report from January 31, 1945, lists 279 female and 205 male prisoners at the camp.

An overview of the nationality of the men shows that on February 28, 1945, 197 Polish, 2 German, and 2 Czech Jews, as well as 1 French Jew and 1 Hungarian Jew, were still in the Bernsdorf subcamp. On March 31, 1945, there were 187 Polish Jews in the camp, while the number of Jews of other nationalities had stayed the same.

The last and only identified camp head was SS-Oberscharführer Schmerse, who had already been employed in the same function, also at a munitions factory, for the Holleischen (Holyšov) outside detail of the Flossenbürg concentration camp. In addition to the detail commander, two other SS-Unterführer and nine SS members as well as eight SS female guards belonged to the camp guard. Most of the latter came from Dresden and were employed in Dresden factories before assuming the duties of concentration camp female guards. Ida Guhl, a brutal thug, functioned as senior female guard. Before the Israeli investigating authorities, Felicja H. said about her: “I remember the SS senior female guard, who was always dressed in an SS uniform. She was small. . . . The female guards were scared of her. . . . She was really especially cruel and gave merciless beatings at every opportunity; with her the abuse of prisoners was a system—she was a sadist.” After the severe damage to the factory building where the camp was housed, the prisoners were transferred by foot to the Mockethal-Zatzschke camp. Only a group of about 50 male prisoners remained to repair the machines and to do clearing-up operations in Dresden. After two weeks those male prisoners who still appeared fit to work were brought back to Dresden from Mockethal-Zatzschke, followed two weeks later by the women. Around April 10, 1945, the SS transported about 150 female prisoners, hardly still considered fit to work, to the Zwodau (Svarava) subcamp, which was also subordinate to the Flossenbürg concentration camp. The arrival in Zwodau of 143 women appears in the strength report of April 14, 1945.

Because the Zwodau camp was overcrowded, these women then were sent to Neurolau (Nová Role) subcamp and from there had to join the evacuation march, which, after transportation by train to Karlšbad (Karlový Vary), took them by foot via Marienbad (Mariánské Lázně), Planá, and Tachov to Alt-Zedlitz (Staré Sedliště), where they were liberated by U.S. troops on May 5, 1945.

The Bernsdorf subcamp was closed on April 14, 1945, and the remaining men and women there were evacuated to Theresienstadt (Terezín). Of those who arrived there from the Bernsdorf subcamp, 98 women and 103 men were registered. With the help of the German engineer Hermann Braun, several young men succeeded in escaping. About this, Chanan Werebejczyk reports:

In the morning we all were gathered on the street next to the factory building. Everyone received a piece of bread and half of a blanket. We stood for several hours. After midday the march south toward Pirna began. . . . I was friends with three young men in the camp: Nataniel Radzyner (Niutek), Iosif Majer, and my cousin Benjamin Lasman. We were all members of an illegal youth organization in the ghetto. At the end of March someone told the engineer Braun that an illegal group existed among the prisoners. Braun very carefully got in contact with Niutek. Thus we decided to escape and return to the factory building. We were sure that Braun would help us. It was already dark as we marched through Zschachwitz. At the first opportunity we jumped away from the marching column and hid. Together, around twenty people escaped and returned to the factory. The civilian management of the operation gave us a good reception. They asked us to clean the men’s bathroom. The bathroom was completely soiled with blood. We were told that as we waited on the street yesterday, a murder was committed here.
The Oberscharführer shot an Unterscharführer in the bathroom and presented it as a suicide. We were also told that the senior female guard Guhl prompted the murder. She convinced the Oberscharführer to shoot this Unterscharführer because he had spoken out against the evacuation. . . . We stayed three days in the factory. Then we had to flee again because the SS men came back to search for us. This time we looked for a hiding place in the ruins. With the help of Hermann Braun and the owner of a grocery store on Schandauer Strasse, near the factory, we succeeded in surviving there until the arrival of the Russians on May 8, 1945.¹⁸

In 1948, charges were filed against one former SS guard and three former SS female guards from the Bernsdorf subcamp for crimes committed against prisoners.


AMS; AG-T.

AR 3024/66; IV 410 AR- Z 57/68; ITS, Hist. Abt., AG-F; AMS; AG-T.

**NOTES**

2. AMS, Sign. I-II C-4, Fernschreiben des SS-WVHA, Amtsgruppe D (Maurer), an Kommandant Stutthof, November 23, 1944. 
3. Ibid. 
4. AMS, Sign. I-II C-3, Transportlisten. 
7. BA-B, Film 14 430, p. 1272, Übersicht der Kommandantur—Arbeitseinsatz—des KZ Flossenbürg an das Amt D II des SS-WVHA, January 1, 1945 
10. Ibid. 
15. AG-T (APT), Kasten 7, Flossenbürg, estate of K. Prochaska. 

**DRESDEN (SS-PIONIER-KASERNE)**

The subcamp in the SS-Field Engineer Barracks (Pionier-Kaserne) was the second Flossenbürg subcamp overall and the first of the Flossenbürg subcamps in Dresden. For almost three years, at 54 Döbelner Strasse, prisoners had to do construction work for the SS-Bauleitung Dresden, primarily building quarters for the SS-Pionier-Ersatzbataillon (Engineer Replacement Battalion). They also worked in places outside Dresden. The Flossenbürg administrative files use the terms Sonderkommando (special detail), Aussenzkommando (outside detail), and Arbeitslager Dresden (Dresden labor camp) for this subcamp.

The first 100 prisoners were transferred from the Flossenbürg main camp to the Dresden Pionier-Kaserne subcamp in June 1942. The transfer list, arranged according to trade, shows that the prisoners were almost exclusively skilled construction workers. As part of the dissolution of the Stulln subcamp, an additional 99 prisoners were transferred to Dresden in mid-October 1942. Predominantly German prisoners “in preventive custody” or “associals” were imprisoned in Dresden in addition to a few Polish, Russian, and Czech prisoners. For August 1942, there is documentation of an early instance of a transfer from another main camp, Sachsenhausen, to the subcamp of another main camp. The responsible SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) wrote on August 21, 1942, to the commandants of Sachsenhausen and Flossenbürg that “to simplify the transport” the two roofers would be “transferred directly to the labor detail of the SS-Field Engineer Replacement Battalion [Pionierersatzbataillon] Dresden,” and with guards from Sachsenhausen. Prisoner files and belongings were to be sent by mail to Flossenbürg.

The approximately 200 prisoners first had to construct a reserve hospital within the SS-Pionier-Kaserne. From October 1943, prisoners from Dresden along with others had to fortify Schloss Neuhirschstein, about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) down the Elbe River from Meissen, where the Belgian royal family was later interned. They were utilized for other building projects of the SS-Bauleitung, as in Seifhennersdorf, with the prisoners generally being made available to the private firms performing the work. These external projects, which were invoiced separately with the Dresden Bauleitung, also explain the fluctuations in prisoner numbers in the
Flossenbürg Kommandantur requisition documents, which for the year 1944 have survived intact. As for the rest, the SS-Field Engineer Replacement Battalion was responsible for the feeding of the prisoners and their invoicing, but as of April 1944 it was no longer required to reimburse the labor costs. On the other hand, the external details also had to be supplied from the allocation of foodstuffs, which worsened the already existing shortage. The increased consumption by the detail at Neuhermsheim “as a result of overtime and night work,” for example, was offset at the expense of the delivery to Dresden. The request of the prisoners in Dresden that the money in their blocked accounts be used to buy potatoes was denied.

The makeup of the prisoners in the Dresden Pionier-Kaserne subcamp reflected the ratios in the concentration camps in general; the initial large share of often longtime German prisoners was countered by a growing percentage of younger foreign prisoners. Along with several invalids, almost 30 prisoners had been returned to Flossenbürg by the beginning of 1943. During 1943, mostly Poles and Russians were transferred to Dresden, usually in transports consisting of 4 to 15 prisoners from a collection center; here, too, they were predominantly skilled construction workers or other skilled tradesmen such as bakers and a dentist. Also verifiable are the retransfers of individual prisoners to the Flossenbürg main camp. Several lists of the prisoners located in Dresden document the sharp change in the prisoner community. For example, on December 23, 1943, there were 198 prisoners in the Dresden Pionier-Kaserne subcamp: 95 Germans, 37 Russians, 21 Poles, 19 Slovenes, 15 Italians, 9 Czechs, 1 Serb, and 1 Belgian. Of the 198 prisoners, 117 were “protective custody” prisoners (Schutzhaftlinge), that is, political prisoners, as opposed to 69 preventive custody prisoners (Vorbeugungshaftlinge) and 12 “asocials.” In early January 1944, barely 200 prisoners were working at first, but in the second half of the month, there were 160. In late February, only 108 prisoners were charged for in the Dresden Pionier-Kaserne subcamp. On February 15, 1944, however, of 133 charged-for prisoners, only 54 were actually in the “Dresden labor camp.” Among the painters, masons, carpenters, and the like, were 33 Germans, 14 Italians, and a few Poles, Russians, and Czechs. Only three weeks later, on March 5, 91 prisoners again are listed as “belonging to the Dresden labor camp”—along with 54 Germans, 9 Slovenes, 8 Czechs, and also a few Poles, Italians, and Belgians. Two days later, on March 7, 1944, 101 prisoners were transferred from Dresden back to the Flossenbürg main camp. In addition to 24 German and Italian skilled workers, as well as 1 Russian, 1 Pole, and 1 Slovene, 77 unskilled workers—mostly Russians, Germans, Poles, and a few Slovenes—were transferred to Flossenbürg. The majority of the unskilled laborers were transported directly to Mauthausen. In March, a total of 59 prisoners were working for the subcamp.

Until mid-September, slightly more than 50 prisoners were in use; then a large transport increased the number of prisoners to 123. At the end of 1944, there was a slight reduction in numbers. On September 12, 1944, 77 prisoners were transferred to Dresden, most of whom, according to the transport list, were unskilled laborers and tradesmen; in addition to 53 Poles, there were a few Czechs, Russians, French, and 1 Slovene in this group.

On February 28, 1945, 121 prisoners are still recorded at the Dresden Pionier-Kaserne subcamp. In addition to 55 Poles and 29 Germans, there were 10 Czechs, 10 French, 9 Russians, and a few Belgians, Bulgarians, Italians, and Yugoslavs. On March 31, the number of prisoners was almost unchanged. For April 13, 1945, the last camp strength report gives the number of prisoners as 119. In particular, there has been no success thus far in aligning these fluctuations with the performance of certain types of work, owing to a lack of research. According to a statement by a member of the SS, Hans L., who was transferred to the Bauleitung in Dresden after he was wounded, the Waffen-SS and Police Construction Administration supervised, among other things, the building of barracks camps, the conversion of schools to hospitals, and the removal of war damage.

Several large prisoner transports from Flossenbürg to Dresden were carried out again in March and April, possibly to relieve the completely overcrowded main camp. As the transport lists for verifiably different subcamps simply bear the notation “Transport to Dresden labor camp,” the SS-Pionier-Kaserne also cannot be ruled out as the destination of one of these transports even in April 1945.

The transfer lists admittedly can give little information about the conditions in the subcamp other than the fact that sick prisoners were transferred back to the main camp and that there were a few documented escape attempts.

A far better overview of the forced labor, the accommodations, the food, and the treatment of the prisoners can be gained from the numerous detailed witness statements given after the war in investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg. The prisoners were housed inside the barracks area in three large garages, one of which served as a washroom. At night these buildings were guarded by about five members of the SS-Pioniersatzbataillon, usually men who had been wounded at the front. The food for the prisoners, which probably was better than in the main camp, also was provided by the SS barracks, as was an SS doctor in case of emergencies. While the almost exclusively German witnesses described the conditions after 30 years, as comparatively paradisial, several witnesses in an earlier trial of the second Kommandoführer, Kurt Markgraf, described repeated mistreatment by means of beatings with a club, failure to render assistance with the result that prisoners died, and the shifting of foodstuffs between the kitchen Kapos in charge and the SS. According to the witness statements, between 3 and 7 prisoners died in the Dresden Pionier-Kaserne subcamp. The suicide of a German prisoner in May 1943 (he took tablets) is also documented, as well as the failure to care for a Slovenian prisoner who had escaped in October 1942. Three days later he was wounded by a hunter in Radebeul and was returned to the barracks, where
he succumbed to his injuries. While the two Kommandoführer responsible for this, Josef Schnmatz and his deputy Markgraf (both SS-Hauptscharführer), were described by some as brutal, their successor, SS-Oberscharführer Wilhelm Hartmann, was generally popular. He was Kommandoführer in Dresden until September 1944 and later in Seifhennersdorf, where at times 30 prisoners from Dresden worked on building an SS hospital. Hartmann was held under arrest for three months in Flossenbürg for “facilitating escape” in this subcamp. His successor was SS-Oberscharführer Ernst Scheithauer, whom not one witness could remember, however.

The subcamp was dissolved around April 15, 1945. The originally intended route up the Elbe River toward Aussig, on which a combined transport was to be formed with prisoners from other subcamps, was blocked because of the approaching front. Therefore, the prisoners were then driven via Dippoldiswalde in the direction of Schmiedeberg, where the Waffen-SS Bauleitung had set up alternative quarters. Numerous prisoners escaped en route; according to various reports, up to 60 prisoners once escaped simultaneously without any attempt by the guards to intervene. Others say, however, that the commander of the Bauleitung sent out search parties and that 30 prisoners were executed.

**SOURCES** The Dresden Pionier-Kaserne subcamp appears in numerous postwar judicial proceedings. The aforementioned files of the ZdL (available at BA-L) contain many detailed witness statements about the conditions of imprisonment in Dresden. In addition, Bestand NS 4/FL in the BA-B holds numerous documents on the subcamp, among them the requisition documents for 1944. Transport lists are held at ITS, with some copies at CEGESOMA and AG-F.

**NOTES**

1. ITS, Flossenbürg File 26, p. 109 (copy by Toni Siegert, AG-F).
4. ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg, collected Files 10, p. 15; Letter from the Dresden Kommandoführer Markgraf, February 24, 1945, with handwritten notes by the Kommandantur; copy by Toni Siegert in AG-F.
5. CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14368 (Transfers from Flossenbürg) and 14368+ (Return Transfers to Flossenbürg).
8. See BA-L, ZdL, 410 (F) AR-Z 177/75 (Investigations into the Dresden subcamp and Rudi Schirner, etc.).
9. Sta. Hamburg, File 14 Js 185/49, Charges against Kurt Markgraf, December 13, 1950; Copies in the investigations of ZdL. Markgraf was sentenced in these proceedings to seven months’ imprisonment.
When I went out (together with around 30 Serbian female farmers), nothing hindered us from making it to the street. Despite these deaths on February 13, 1945, and the escape of many female prisoners, the Flossenbürg command reported on April 13, 1945, that there were still 679 women in the camp. SS-Oberscharführer Erich von Berg, who before his Universelle assignment had already been employed as camp leader at the Flossenbürg subcamps Neurohlaub (Nová Role) and Mülsen St. Micheln, functioned as camp leader in the weeks up to the bombing. After him, the camp, which was virtually closed, was placed under the command of SS-Oberscharführer Schmerse, while von Berg took over the Mockethal-Zatzschke camp. Until the bombing, the senior SS female guard was Charlotte Hanakam, who commanded 20 SS female guards. In internal camp happenings, she had full executive powers and bullied the women, even on the slightest pretexts, with cruel punishments such as standing barefoot in snow for several hours, corporal punishment, and several days of bunker confinement without food. Several German asocials and criminals supported her terror regime. After the bombing of Dresden in February 1945, Hanakam fled from Dresden and left the female prisoners to themselves. Despite the multinational composition and the interspersing of many criminals and asocials, which did not favor solidarity among the prisoners, they succeeded in obtaining various things from the SS through joint schemes. Thus the women demanded to be brought during air alarms from their lodging under the roof into the basement. The SS was also forced to hand out the underwear that the women had washed secretly and the SS had confiscated.

The women were divided into two work shifts. The day shift worked from 6:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M., and the night shift worked from 6:00 P.M. until 6:00 A.M. They had to produce parts for airplane engines and equipment. Political prisoners attempted to sabotage the work by deviating from dimensional accuracy when working on the parts. Slovene Darinka Vizjak-Fortunat reports: “They sent me together with Russian women to the heaviest engine lathes. I had to

“...for us it is still a miracle today that we are alive at all. Many of our comrades were already dead and we had to step over bodies and run through flames just to reach the street. We wandered around the streets of Dresden until we were apprehended by female guards the following morning and brought to the bunker in the main factory of the Universelle company on Zwickauer Strasse, where we had to sleep on the bare floor. We stayed here about 14 days and were then brought to the Zatzschke alternative camp. There were already 400 prisoners (men and women and even children) there... We stayed in Zatzschke a few weeks until 1000 male prisoners arrived here all at once from KZ Flossenbürg. Then we went on foot to Dresden. The Jews went to the firm Jasmatzi and we went to Universelle.

This return march to Dresden must have taken place around mid-March 1945. The female prisoners received lodgings again in the bunker of the main factory. They were employed in clearing-up work. Of the 700 women, only 84 still remained.

On April 14, 1945, the SS evacuated the women toward Leitmeritz. During a low-flying bomber attack near Pirna, several women managed to escape. They were, however, apprehended again by the gendarmerie and once again taken to the Mockethal-Zatzschke camp. Before a jury in the Dresden regional court in 1946, proceedings were conducted against senior SS female guard Hanakam, the person mainly responsible, and one other SS female guard. On November 25, 1946, this court found Hanakam guilty of crimes against humanity under Article II, Clauses 1 c and 2 b, of Law No. 10 of the Allied Control Council for Germany from December 20, 1945, and sentenced her to five years in prison. The other defendant, the female guard M., received a prison sentence of four months.

**Sources**


Primary sources for the Dresden Universelle subcamp begin with the files of ZdL (IV 410 AR-Z 101/76, Band I and Band II), available at BA-L. Files on this subcamp are also found in ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg. Additional information may be found in Ba-VEB-Vmb-D (Mappe Florastrasse).

Hans Brenner

**Notes**

The formation of a subcamp in the Goehle-Werk was part of the plan to establish a series of armaments-related subcamps of Flossenbürg in Dresden. Two subcamps with female prisoners were established on October 9, 1944: one at the Zeiss-Ikon AG Goehle-Werk and one at the Universelle company. This was after the establishment of the Reichsbahnausbesserungswerke (German National Railways Repair Works, RAW), September 12, 1944, but shortly before the establishment of the Mühlenbau- und Industrieaktiengesellschaft (MIAG) Werk in Zschachwitz near Dresden, October 13, 1944, each of which had male prisoners. Another subcamp was established two weeks later at Zeiss-Ikon’s Werk Reick. The relatively late use of concentration camp prisoners at Dresden was due in part to a diversified industry that was largely incompatible with the needs of armaments production and had largely become inoperative during the course of the war. Thus, areas were kept ready for relocation of firms from cities that were supposedly more likely to be bombed.

The Goehle-Werk in northwestern Dresden (32 Riesaer Strasse) belonged to Zeiss-Ikon AG, which was the result of a 1926 merger of several companies, including the camera factory of Heinrich Ernemann and Ica AG, also Dresden based and under the management of the Carl-Zeiss-Stiftung. Zeiss-Ikon manufactured products in the four Dresden factories as well as in factories in Berlin and Stuttgart. Its products, which ranged from the Contax camera to motion picture equipment, included a wide selection of optical devices and cinematographic accessories. The war caused all the Zeiss-Ikon factories to switch over to making war-related products such as special devices for the German Luftwaffe. However, the Goehle-Werk was planned from the beginning as a war plant for munitions production and was established in 1940–1941. This was reflected not only in its typically late 1930s-style architecture, which was intended to make industrial buildings of steel-reinforced concrete “bombproof,” with small windows and reinforced staircases, but above all by the large-scale use of unskilled or semiskilled, mostly female forced laborers. These workers included Dresden Jews and foreign female forced laborers and, in a final step, also female prisoners from Flossenbürg. The Goehle-Werk made time fuses, incendiary fragmentation projectiles (Brandschrapnelle) for the 12.8-cm and 8.8-cm anti-aircraft guns, bomb fuses, and other products. The manufacturing was regarded as very high priority and was in part incorporated into the anti-aircraft program of the “Fighter Production Program” (Jägerprogramm)—probably a prerequisite for the allocation of prisoners.

One source not cited in the research thus far gives detailed insight into the organizational preparations undertaken by management for the use of prisoners at Zeiss-Ikon. In a letter from the payroll office to the management of Goehle-Werk and Reick and/or to the relevant departments of the other Zeiss-Ikon factories, reference is made to the results of a meeting that took place on November 14, 1944: “Absorption of Female KL Workers from the KL Flossenbürg at Weiden/Oberpfalz.” On October 18, 1944, 200 “female KL workers” were allocated to the Goehle-Werk, a further 300 on October 28, 1944, and yet another 200 were expected. Numbers were reserved for the women in the factory’s list of workers, and Hollerith (punched) wage cards were stocked. For want of a name, the cards were stamped with the words “KL-Arbeiterin” (female KL worker), along with the prisoner number.

The firm also regulated other eventualities in advance, such as security during and compensation for hospital stays, as well as reporting of escape attempts. The prescribed “remuneration” for use of the prisoners—4 Reichsmark (RM) each per day—had been investigated, according to the record, by a member of the Goehle-Werk management on the occasion of his visit to Metallwerk Holleischen and the camps there on October 25 and 26.

It is not clear why October 18 is given as the date of the first allocation of prisoners. The book of accounts of the Goehle-Werk factory canteen for October 1944 records, at any rate, the debiting and crediting (the factory’s in-house term for posting) of “prisoner meals from 8.-31.XI.44” for “labor camp 453.”

This date, like the other figures in the above-mentioned record, is supported by the concentration camp Flossenbürg Haftlingsnummernbücher (prisoner number books), which refer to a transport of 200 women from Ravensbrück to “Dresden Zeiss Ikon” on October 9, 1944. With the exception of two French women, they were all Russians and Poles. The criteria by which they were chosen cannot be determined, at least not from their statements after the war. For October 24,
1944, the Nummernbücher (Numbers Books) record a transport of an additional 300 women from Auschwitz. With the exception of a very few German, Italian, and Yugoslav prisoners, they again were Russian and Polish women, mostly political prisoners or “civilian workers.” A final transport of 197 women from Ravensbrück is verifiable for December 14, 1944, with not only Russians and Poles listed but also numerous German and French prisoners, as well as a few Luxembourgers, Italians, Czechs, and even an Egyptian.6

Information on the conditions in the Dresden Goehle-Werk subcamp can be found in the investigation files of the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg as well as in press reports on the so-called Goehle-Werk Trial: the trial took place in the Goehle-Werk itself and ended in January 1949 with the sentencing of 10 defendants, including the deputy manager Nitsche as well as several craftsmen and SS female overseers, to between one and eight years of imprisonment.7 The articles in the newspaper SächsZ, however, do not make it clear whether former prisoners of the Dresden Goehle-Werk subcamp also testified (mostly forced female laborers are named), nor is there any mention of concrete criminal charges. At any rate, the living conditions of the female forced laborers appear here in a totally different light than in numerous statements by former prisoners in the ZdL investigation files. There, the mostly German political prisoners describe the medical care as positive, including medical treatment of a patient with scarlet fever in a Dresden hospital.

That the food was completely inadequate is confirmed by all the statements. Moreover, this assertion is also supported by a comparison of the factory canteen accounts for December 1944 with the relevant labor requisition document. The result is a daily ration of about 0.45 kilograms (1 pound) of bread per prisoner per day, assuming that the rations charged were in fact handed out to the women.

From other sources, it is possible to draw indirect conclusions about the extremely adverse living conditions of the women at the Goehle-Werk subcamp. For example, the Nummernbücher as well as the reports of the Kommandantur in Flossenbürg confirm continual escape attempts, which at least after the massive attacks in February 1945 had prospects of success.8 As early as October 24, 1944, two Russian women attempted to escape; at least one, according to the Nummernbuch, was captured and transferred to Ravensbrück on December 6, 1944. Additional sporadic escape attempts, the last on April 5, 1945, illustrate the misery of the women. The transfer of two prison nurses from the Neurohlau subcamp in November 1944 permits the conclusion that the women’s state of health also was bad.

The prisoners scarcely mention their forced labor in their witness statements; the extent of the forced labor can be gathered from the labor requisition documents of the labor supply detachment in the Flossenbürg Kommandantur.9 The department charges for the use of 190 female unskilled workers starting on October 9, 1944, while 492 per diem rates are assessed as of October 30, 1944. The requisition documents for the following two months show a slight decline in the per diem rates charged, to 484 on December 9, 1944, while payments for 679 women are demanded starting on December 11, 1944. Apart from a slight decrease, this number remained almost constant until February 1945. As a consequence of the air raids on February 13 and 14, 1945, the women did not work at all on some days between February 14 and February 20, with 30 to 75 women used in part, before the old numbers were reached again. The last distribution of work on April 13, 1945, shows a total of 684 female prisoners. Individual transfers from the Neurohlau subcamp took place, and some women were sent back to Ravensbrück. In addition, 5 women were transferred to the Chemnitz subcamp at the Astrawerke on February 12, 1945 (according to the Nummernbücher, on February 21, 1945).10

According to prisoner statements, the prisoners were guarded by female SS members who were armed with rubber truncheons, which they used. On October 25, 1944, the Flossenbürg Kommandantur sent identity cards for 17 female guards to the senior guard, Gertrud Schäfer. An undated register lists 22 female guards for the Goehle-Werk, all of whom came from a training course in Holleischen.11 All the women came from Dresden and the surrounding area, which supports claims by some prisoners that the guards had previously worked at Zeiss-Ikon. As proved by the previously cited accounts for the Goehle factory canteen, the feeding of the guards was also undertaken by the factory. Schäfer was detail leader (Kommandoführerin) at the Goehle-Werk until February 1945. She was followed by the SS guard de Hueber, described by most women prisoners as cruel and merciless.

The women were housed on one level of the factory, and they worked two or three levels below. During the bombing raid on February 14, 1945, the women were confined to their quarters. A few used the chaos following the attack to escape. The sister-in-law of a successful escapee was beaten until she became deaf in one ear and was punished with bunker arrest for one week.

Two deaths are recorded for November 1944. A third, because of the “special treatment” (Sonderbehandlung) of a Russian female prisoner, took place in the Flossenbürg main camp in January 1945.

The camp evacuation took place in mid-April 1945. The prisoners were evacuated by rail and by foot along the Elbe Valley. The destination was Leitmeritz. The prisoners were reached again. The last distribution of work on April 13, 1945, shows a total of 684 female prisoners. Individual transfers from the Neurohlau subcamp took place, and some women were sent back to Ravensbrück. In addition, 5 women were transferred to the Chemnitz subcamp at the Astrawerke on February 12, 1945 (according to the Nummernbücher, on February 21, 1945).10

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The camp evacuation took place in mid-April 1945. The prisoners were evacuated by rail and by foot along the Elbe Valley. The destination was Leitmeritz. The prisoners were freed right before they reached the Czech border, after many already had escaped, however.


VOLUME I: PART A

The SHStA-(D) holds the company records of the Ernemann-Werke AG/ Zeiss-Ikon AG Dresden (Signatur 11722, Nr. 205 Meldung der beschäftigten Ausländer [einschl. Juden] und Kriegsgefangenen). Internal factory statistics provide details on the constantly increasing share of foreign workers (some 1,777 between April 1942 and December 1944) at the Goehle-Werk. The armaments production and the use of the prisoners also are relatively well documented in the aforementioned files. The Flossenbürg-Bestand stored in the BA-B contains labor deployment documents for the Goehle-Werk subcamp. The prisoners’ names are fully documented in the Flossenbürg Nummnernbücher, which are available at NARA and copied at AG-F. Transfers and escape attempts are found in the replacement records of the inaccessible files held by the ITS. The investigation files of the ZdL (at BA-L) contain extensive witness statements. Victor Klemperer’s diaries discussed the forced labor of German Jews at the Goehle-Werk; see Ich will Zeugnis ablegen bis zum letzten (Berlin, 1995). He depicts the Goehle-Werk until the dissolution of the Jewish Sections (Juden-Abteilungen) as a site of hard forced labor but also as a place where important intelligence was exchanged by members of the highly threatened Dresden Jewish community. Heny Brenner deals with the same subject in her autobiographical sketch “Das Lied ist aus”—Ein jüdisches Schicksal in Dresden (Zurich, 2001).

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trans. Stephen Pallavicini

NOTES

2. SHStA-(D), Sign. 11722, Ernemann-Werke AG/ Zeiss-Ikon AG Dresden, Nr. 42+: Kriegsauftrag Kolben mit Uhrwerk SS 563-1-5115. Only the classification number of the collection is mentioned below.

3. SHStA-(D), Sign. 11722, Nr. 319 Werksküchen. In this book of accounts there are, in addition to the record dated November 28, 1944, numerous lists of foods delivered for prisoners and female guards as well as directions for settlement of accounts with the Flossenbürg Kommandantur.

4. NARA, RG 338 290/1322/3, 000-50-46, Box 357 (a microfilm copy is held by the AG-F).


6. The Nummnernbücher record the whereabouts sometimes as “Dresden Goehle,” sometimes as “Dresden Goehl” or “Goehel,” and sometimes completely incorrectly as “Rochlitz Goehl.”

7. Here was located the gala room of the Sachsenverlag, which after the war had established itself in the former Goehle-Werk. A few of the articles on this subject in the SED newspaper the SächZ are found in the Zeiss-Ikon Bestand of the HStA-D.

8. CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14683+ (Fluchtmeldungen from October 29, 1944, and/or for March 3, 1945, and March 7, 1945).

9. BA-B, NS 4/Fl 393/2: Forderungsnachweis Nr. Flo. 659 for the use of prisoners at Zeiss-Ikon, Goehle Werk, Dresden, for the period from October 1–31, 1944, dated Flossenbürg, Nov. 1, 1944. The charges were made only for those prisoners who actually worked.

10. CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14368 (Transfers).

11. BA-B, NS 4/Fl 10.

DRESDEN (ZEISS-IKON, WERK REICK)

The Werk Reick, located in the eponymous southeastern part of Dresden (Mügelner Strasse 40), was one of four Zeiss-Ikon AG plants in Dresden. Like the Zeiss-Ikon Goehle-Werk, it became the site of a subcamp in October 1944. Unlike the other subcamps with female prisoners in Dresden, the Werk Reick is less well known. This may be because no trial was held, in contrast to the case of the Goehle-Werk, or because the Werk Reick, unlike the Goehle-Werk and Universelle subcamps, had no well-known German political prisoners.

Like the other Zeiss-Ikon sites, the Werk Reick already used many foreigners as forced laborers, as many as 671 between April 1942 and December 1944, even before the Flossenbürg subcamp was established. Male and female forced laborers were in roughly equal proportion.1

For the period from October to December 1944, the numbers of prisoners can be tracked by using the labor requisition documents of the Labor Deployment Department (Abteilung Arbeitseinsatz) at Flossenbürg. According to those documents, starting on October 22, payments were requested for 200 women, and this number, with slight downward fluctuations, remained constant. In contrast to the Goehle-Werk, some of the women at the Werk Reick occasionally had to work on Sundays as well. The women’s names are noted in the Flossenbürg Nummnernbücher (Numbers Books), according to which the transport on October 24, 1944, from the Auschwitz concentration camp went directly to Dresden. Except for 1 German, 1 Yugoslav, and 1 Italian, Poles and Russians (all female) were transferred to the Werk Reick subcamp.

There are no exact statements about the work of the prisoners. However, the women’s living conditions are well documented in the investigation files of the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg.2 Details of the prisoners’ accommodations are contradictory, but the majority of the statements indicate that the women were housed in the factory building. There is no proof of instances of voluntary manslaughter at the Werk Reick. On the other hand, at least one report confirms the murder of a female prisoner: on December 23, 1944, a Russian female “civilian worker” was transferred back to Flossenbürg, whose report by the Flossenbürg camp orderly room bears the notation “SB [Son- derbehandlung, Special Treatment] 3.1.45,” as well as being
marked with a cross. On the same day, two additional Russian female prisoners from the Universelle subcamp were also the victims of “special treatment” in Dresden. Other than that, there are no indications that the three murders were connected. Also verifiable, among other things, are the transfers of two female prisoners who were medical orderlies from the Neurohau subcamp to Werk Reick in early February 1945, as well as a few transfers from the Werk Reick subcamp to Flossenbürg and Bergen-Belsen.

There are only a few documents that shed light on the guarding of the women at the Werk Reick. On October 11, 1944, the Flossenbürg Kommandantur sent identity cards for seven female SS to senior female overseer Ida Guhl. The (undated) assignment of several SS men to Werk Reick is also documented. In contrast to the Goehle-Werk, the Kommandoführer at the Werk Reick were men: according to the concluding note of the Ludwigsburg investigations, they were SS-Oberscharführer Olscheswki and his replacement SS-Unterscharführer Johann Heinz.

After the raid on February 14, 1945, the women were enlisted in cleanup work. On February 25, 1945, an additional large transport of 200 women from Bergen-Belsen was transferred to “Dresden Zeiss-Ikon” or “Dresden-Reick” [sic]. Most of the women were Hungarian, but there were also a few German, French, Greek, Italian, and Czech Jews, as well as Russian civilian workers, some of whom—according to later witness statements by the women—had been taken to Bergen-Belsen via Auschwitz. Shortly after their arrival, an epidemic of typhus broke out in the camp and claimed many victims. The Nummernbücher record the deaths of 23 prisoners between March 5 and April 8, 1945, and there were 7 on March 21 and March 31 alone. The women affected were exclusively the greatly weakened ones from the second transport, which according to some statements was placed in strict isolation. One female witness speaks of 36 deaths and mentions that an SS-Oberscharführer from Hungary brought with him a Jewish doctor from his hometown to treat the sick in the camp. Other witnesses refer to far higher numbers of typhus victims but cannot give exact numbers.

A few of the women took advantage of what the statements depict as chaotic conditions to make their escape. According to the Nummernbücher, on February 27, 1945, alone, 8 women escaped, with another escape on March 22, 1945. On April 13, 1945, there were 362 female prisoners in the Werk Reick subcamp. The investigation files contain highly contradictory statements on the dissolution of the camp and the subsequent fate of the women. The witnesses are unanimous in stating that the camp was evacuated at the end of April 1945, and the women were forced to go in the direction of the Czech border (some mention the village of Hellendorf), where they were liberated by Soviet troops.

**SOURCES** For the Werk Reick subcamp, the files from the Best, Zeiss-Ikon AG in the SHStA-(D) (Signatur 11722) are clearly less rich than for other Zeiss-Ikon subcamps at the Goehle-Werk. There are only summary statements about use of prisoners, along with figures on the use of civilian forced laborers. The main source on this subcamp therefore is the investigation files of the ZdL at BA-L.

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2. BA-L, ZdL, 410 AR 3016/66 (Investigations into the “Zeiss-Ikon Reick” subcamp).

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short notice gave him an alternative: either assume responsibility immediately for 600 prisoners, or there might well be no allocation of prisoners at all because of the large demand by the armaments industry. The need for labor obviously outweighed the misgivings expressed in regard to accommodations. According to post-war investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg, the prisoners had to find accommodation in an unheated locomotive shed—part of Erecting Shop II—where they slept in four-tiered bunk beds; the guards lived in the shop’s repair areas, which were fenced in. The first 300 prisoners came from Warsaw—some had participated in the August 1944 Warsaw Uprising—and after a short period of forced labor in the Heinkel-Werke at Sachsenhausen concentration camp, they were brought to Dresden on September 14, 1944. Apart from 1 German and 1 French prisoner, only Polish “civilian workers” are recorded in the Flossenbürg Nummernbücher (Numbers Books). A second group of prisoners was transferred to Dresden from the Gross-Rosen concentration camp in a transport on October 25, 1944. The majority of these 300 prisoners were Polish and Russian “protective detainees” and civilian workers, in addition to a few Czechs, Lithuanians, Germans, French, and Croats. Political prisoners and a few “socialists” and “Gypsies” were a small minority.

The requisition documents of the Flossenbürg Kommandantur expressly identify September 15, 1944, as the “beginning of the Kommando.” The first prisoner died as early as September 30. By the time the second transport arrived on October 27, the number of prisoners actually engaged in forced labor, who also had to work half a day on Sunday, had dropped from 300 to 281: an indication of worsening living conditions. By the end of the year, the number of prisoners had dropped from a high of 586 to about 540.

The prisoners had to repair damaged railroad cars in a “Concentration Camp Prisoners’ Department of Freight Car Repair” set up expressly for this purpose by RAW. The prisoners from Sachsenhausen and/or Gross-Rosen had to work in two shifts of 12 hours each. According to former prisoner Zbigniew Kołakowski, they met each other for the first time only after their accommodations had been destroyed in the air raids on Dresden. Following other statements, the prisoners were housed in the same hall but worked in different locations. In fact, the entries in the Flossenbürg Nummernbücher indicate striking differences between the two transports. Above all, however, they document the catastrophic conditions in the Dresden-Friedrichstadt subcamp. Obviously there was a fear that prisoners in the domain of the Reichsbahn in general were highly likely to attempt escape. At any rate, the responsible department head promptly ordered that the prisoners had to wear an arm band, after the model of the prisoners employed at RAW Jena. Three days before this order, on October 25, 1944, 3 prisoners were shot while “attempting to escape.” According to later witness statements, the prisoners had tried to escape from the cordoned-off area of the subcamp beneath the axles of the repaired railroad cars. According to the Nummernbücher for November and December 1944, at least 5 men were shot while attempting to escape. The outcome of other escape attempts is not documented. The reason for these acts of desperation was, besides the extremely poor food, the very serious mistreatment of individual prisoners, which was consistently documented after the war. Altogether, 24 prisoners from the Sachsenhausen transport died in Dresden, and at least 55 prisoners from the Gross-Rosen transport died there.

The person responsible for all this was the Kommandoführer, SS-Hauptsturmführer Rudolf Becher from Falkenberg, who died in 1946 as a POW in the USSR. Updated return lists for weapons and munitions indicate that there were between 25 and 32 SS men of lower ranks, probably including a few Hungarian Germans and Ukrainians, stationed at Dresden-Friedrichstadt. There is nothing in the documents to indicate the relationship between the civilian employees and the prisoners, and the memoirs collected by RAW for the sixtieth anniversary celebration in 1954 provide no information on this subject. Names of the civilian workers with access to the concentration camp are recorded there, including the right of access to the subcamp for the works medic on September 26, 1944.

The prisoners from the transport from Gross-Rosen were obviously affected by the large air raids on Dresden on February 13 and 14, 1945, which supports the conclusion that the two groups of prisoners had different workstations. Under the date February 20, 1945, 32 deaths from this transport are designated in the Nummernbücher with a red cross and enumerated. A comparable identification is not demonstrable for any of the other Dresden subcamps. A further 19 deaths are documented for February 22.

The 514 survivors were transferred by rail as early as February 19 back to the Flossenbürg main camp. During this transport, at least 15 prisoners attempted to escape. According to all the witness statements, they escaped through a hole in one side of a railroad car while the SS guards shot at the car. Many of these prisoners sent to Flossenbürg died shortly after their arrival. The rest were transferred to various subcamps, where in some cases they had to work for the Reichsbahn again, while others went to what definitely were camps for the dying (Sterbelager). The survivors of the Sachsenhausen transport were mostly sent to the Ohdruf subcamp of Buchenwald, the Natzweiler system, and the RAV Regensburg subcamp. The prisoners from the Gross-Rosen transport were mainly transferred to the Leonberg subcamp of Natzweiler, as well as the Ansbach, Kirchham, and Portenstein subcamps of Flossenbürg.

For the Dresden-Friedrichstadt subcamp, the last verifiable date recorded in the relevant literature, such as the International Tracing Service (ITS), is April 13, 1945, when the last labor distribution of the Flossenbürg main camp still records four prisoners for this subcamp. The concluding comment of the Ludwigsburg investigators states, “The former prisoners who were questioned date the time of the subcamp’s
Within RAW, there obviously were different opinions regarding the further use of the camp area. According to a note dated February 27, "350 foreigners (civ. workers)" were to be housed "in the concentration camp for emergency aid," and they were to be "later converted for use in production." According to another handwritten note by the department head, dated March 11, 1945, "on no account" were additional workers to be housed "in the former concentration camp... Concentration camp prisoners must be turned away, at all events." Nevertheless, only two weeks later a subcamp again was established within the authority of the RBD Dresden. The Kommandoführer was SS-Hauptscharführer Franz Rohloff, who arrived in Dresden on March 23 with a transport of 63 SS men of lower ranks, including two dog handlers. The Dresden (Reichsbahn) subcamp, the prisoners were set to work repairing destroyed railroad tracks. A total of 500 men were transferred to Dresden on March 24, including 180 Poles, 89 Hungarians, 87 Russians, 35 Italians, 28 French, 23 Czechs, and 20 Belgians. Among the Poles, there were 61 Jewish prisoners; among the Hungarians, 82; the Czechs included 7 Jewish prisoners; and the French, 3. The rest included a few Jewish and non-Jewish prisoners from Germany, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia, Croatia, Romania, and Slovakia. The numbers remained constant until March 31. Many of them already had been compelled to do forced labor in the Dresden-Friedrichstadt subcamp, while others had been transferred only recently from the State Police Offices in Nürnberg-Fürth (French and Belgians) and Regensburg (Poles and Russians) to Flossenbürg.

According to witness statements, the prisoners were housed in a building in the vicinity of a railroad station hall, sleeping in five-tiered bunk beds. Correspondence by Kommandoführer Rohloff, however, bears the address SS-Aussenarbeitslager R.A.W. Dresden-Friedrichstadt (SS Work Subcamp R.A.W. Dresden-Friedrichstadt) throughout. The absence of hygiene and the poor condition of the prisoners were conducive to the outbreak of typhus. The Dresden Health Office's apparent concerns about the transmission of the disease resulted in a dispute with Kommandoführer Rohloff. While a city representative pushed for multiple delousing of the prisoners as well as for isolation of the guards and monitoring of their temperatures, Rohloff referred to a regulation of the Flossenbürg Kommandantur, the effect of which was that only the SS garrison doctor in Flossenbürg could impose a quarantine in the subcamps, which were to be regarded as exterritorial.

Investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) failed to bring to light any further details on this subcamp. In the concluding comment of the investigations into the Dresden (Reichsbahn) subcamp, the contradiction between some prisoners' reports of an evacuation march in the direction of Austria or Theresienstadt and the dissolution date of May 8, 1945, given by the ITS, cannot be resolved.

**SOURCES** In addition to the relevant sources on Flossenbürg and its subcamps—the “Häftlingsnummernbücher” in NARA, the Flossenbürg-Best. NS 4/FL in the BA-B, and the replacement records of the documents at the ITS, the most important collection for the Dresden-Friedrichstadt and Dresden (Reichsbahn) subcamps is in the SHStA-(D) (Best. 11699 A, RAW Dresden). In particular, for the brochure on the sixtieth anniversary of the RAW in 1954, a great deal of source material was gathered on the topics of forced labor and the use of prisoners, as well as memoirs of employees and the like. The investigation files of the ZdL (at BA-L) provide information, through numerous witness statements, about conditions in the Dresden-Friedrichstadt subcamp; the files on the Dresden (Reichsbahn) subcamp are extremely sparse, which is probably attributable to destruction caused by the air raids on Dresden, as well as to the late date of the subcamp's origin.

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**NOTES**

1. SHStA-(D), 11698 A, RAW Dresden, Nr. 37.
4. Ibid., p. 105, Statement by Karol S.
5. NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3, 000-50-46, Box 537 (microfilm copy in AG-F).
9. SHStA-(D), 11698 A, RAW Dresden, Nr. A 166.
11. BA-B, NS 4/FL 428.
12. SHStA-(D), 11698 A, RAW Dresden, Nr. A 37 and A 157 (Firm History).
13. SVG, vorl. Signatur 2121, Camp Strength Report, February 20, 1945. The originals are held at ITS.
15. SHStA-(D), 11698 A, RAW Dresden, Nr. A 166, not foliated.
16. Ibid.
17. BA-B, NS 4 FL/428, Transport to SS work camp RAW-Dresden-Friedrichstadt.
EISENBERG

From the summer of 1943 until the end of the war, there was a small special detail (Sonderkommando) of the Flossenbürg concentration camp at Castle Eisenberg (Jezerˇí) in northwestern Bohemia, near the municipality of Ulbersdorf (Albrechtice) at the edge of the Erzgebirge and close to Brüx (Most). Also located in the castle, which previously was property of Czechoslovak ambassador Max von Lobkovic, who emigrated to London in 1938, was a special camp of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) for 100 to 200 mostly senior French officers.

The older Czech research refers also to a prisoner-of-war (POW) camp in Eisenberg, with an occupancy level of 40 to 50 men. Since April 1943, French POWs who were used for forestry work were housed in wooden barracks close to the castle’s forest administration office.1

According to SS documents, the Eisenberg subcamp was a Sonderkommando of the RSHA, which was used for the construction and then for the maintenance and repair of the special camp.2

The first mention of the Eisenberg subcamp of Flossenbürg is dated June 21, 1943: on this day 30 male prisoners (14 Soviets, 9 Germans, and 7 Poles) were transferred from the Flossenbürg main camp to Eisenberg. However, there is already a document on the SS-Kommando Eisenberg dated May 6, 1943, in the records of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) in Oranienburg, transferring three radios and two pictures of Hitler, among other things, to Flossenbürg as supplies for the welfare of the troops.3

After the construction work at the Eisenberg camp was completed during the summer, on August 16, 1943, the majority of the Kommando was transferred back to Flossenbürg. According to a statement by K.G., a former prisoner and Kapo at the Eisenberg subcamp, the construction detail (Baukommando) was tasked with surrounding the site with barbed wire and making structural changes in the buildings. During this time, the prisoners slept in the castle’s stables.4

Polish prisoner Z.G. said in a witness statement that around 200 French officers were interned at the castle as POWs: “Among the Fr. officers there was also a brother of Marshal Pétain.”5

Between January 1944 and the end of the war, three to eight prisoners can be verified as present at the Eisenberg subcamp. A strength report dated February 28, 1945, mentions seven male prisoners—four Germans and three Poles.6

Prisoner Z.G. said the following about the conditions in the camp: “There were seven of us prisoners and we were busy doing unskilled labor in the kitchen, the garage, and the castle courtyard. Around the castle walls, which were still intact, high barbed wire had been put up, with about six guard towers, manned day and night. The prisoners were housed in the castle, specifically in an old storeroom on the ground floor. The officers lived on the upper floors, and we were forbidden to go up there. . . . In general, I can say that the guards behaved properly at Eisenberg. That made the treatment at Flossenbürg even worse.”7

Most of the prisoners had to work in the kitchen of the camp for prominent POWs. On March 2, 1945, a Czech dental technician also was transferred from Flossenbürg to the Eisenberg subcamp.

The special camp and the concentration camp subcamp were guarded by a total of about 50 men. The Kommandoführer was Austrian SS-Hauptsturmführer Kamillo von Knorr-Krehan (born March 25, 1899).8

The Eisenberg subcamp was mentioned for the last time in the Flossenbürg strength reports on April 13, 1945, when it held eight prisoners. According to Z.G., the captive officers were taken over by the Swiss Red Cross on April 20, 1945, and transported by rail to Switzerland. The prisoners were able to leave the castle on April 27, 1945, after the guards had disappeared. On foot, the prisoners managed to reach the Americans in Weimar.

SOURCES


The direct sources consist mostly of investigation files of the ZdL (at BA-L) as well as the Flossenbürg SS-Verwaltungsakten zu Eisenberg, which are summarized in the BA-B in Best. NS4/FL. In addition, there are the transfer lists in the CEGESOMA, Microfilm No. 14368. Czechoslovak investigation files in Best. KT-OVS of the SÚA and the monthly strength reports from the final phase of the camp in Best. NSM, Sign. 110-4-88, round out the number of sources.

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2. CEGESOMA, Microfilm No. 14368.
3. Ibid.
4. BA-L, ZdL, 410 AR 718/73.
5. Ibid.
7. BA-L, ZdL, 410 AR 718/73.
8. Monthly Strength Reports for Guards as well as Prisoners in Work Detachments of the HSSPF for Bohemia and Moravia from late 1944 to February 1945, SÚA, NSM, Sign. 110-4-88.

FALKENAU

The first step in discussing the Falkenau subcamp must be to clarify which camp is actually meant, as documents mention the Falkenau women’s labor camp (Frauenarbeitslager Falkenau), the Falkenau subcamp (Nebenlager Falkenau), and a subdetachment of the Zwodau labor camp of Flossenbürg.
AG (S&H) and Siemens-Schuckert Werke AG (Siemens-Schuckert Works, Inc., SSW). The armaments firm operated electric fire systems. In view of the positive results that Siemens director Paul Storch in the spring of 1943 was led to consider transferring production to the periphery of the Old Reich, a decision in which the responsible party was linked to its predecessor camp Falkenau. However, there are no reported deaths in Falkenau itself. It is not possible to comment here on the postwar trials of the Zwodau subcamp guards conducted in the Czechoslovak Republic. In West Germany, starting in the mid-1960s, the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg conducted investigations in relation to homicides, particularly in the last phase of the war, when hundreds of weakened Jewish prisoners came to the Zwodau subcamp on “evacuation marches.” In this connection, the predecessor camp Falkenau was also investigated by the ZdL. Zwodau and its predecessor camp Falkenau were also examined as part of the collective preliminary proceedings for the Flossenbürg subcamps (Flossenbürg was responsible for Zwodau as of September 1944).

In 1974, the relevant State Attorney’s Office in Munich conducted preliminary proceedings against the defendants Jordan, Unger, Schmidt, and others on suspicion of murder but abandoned them in 1979 because no defendants could be located. Subsequently, in 1991 the ZdL also abandoned its corresponding preliminary proceedings.

**Sources** To date the only comprehensive study on the Flossenbürg subcamps, of which Zwodau also was one starting in September 1944, was produced by Hans Brenner in 1982: “Zur Rolle der Aussenkommandos des KZ Flossenbürg im System der staatsmonopolistischen Rüstungswirtschaft des faschistischen deutschen Imperialismus und im antifaschistischen Widerstandskampf 1942–1945” (Ph.D. diss., Dresden, 1982).
1982). Like most East German historians, he sought primarily to document the decisive influence of large corporations on state institutions and the war economy. This limitation on the formulation of the question, however, reduces the informative value of this otherwise meritorious and well-documented study, to which access is possible only with difficulty, owing to the poor legibility of most copies. Brenner also has published his findings and theses on the use of prisoners in two essays, in which, however, a small outside detail—attested only on the basis of postwar sources—is listed under the Falkenau subcamp: “Frauen in den Aussenlagern von Flossenbürg und Gross-Rosen in Böhmen und Mähren.” TSD (1999): 263–293 (see table on p. 266); and “Der ‘Arbeitseinsatz’ der KZ-Häftlinge in den Aussenlagern des Konzentrationslagers Flossenbürg—ein Überblick,” in Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager: Entwicklung und Struktur, ed. Ulrich Herbert et al. (Göttingen, 1998), 2: 682–706.

Karl Heinz Roth compares a number of prisoner operations for the Siemens firm in “Zwangsarbeit im Siemens-Konzern (1938–1945): Falten—Kontroversen—Probleme,” in Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945, ed. Hermann Kainen (Opladen, 1996), pp. 149–168. Roth’s structuring typology of the use of forced labor for the firm is valuable. Using the records of the ZdL as well as the Flossenbürg Nummernbücher, discovered at NARA, Jörg Skribeleit provides an up-to-date overview of the Flossenbürg subcamps in Bohemia, “Die Aussenlager des KZ Flossenbürg in Böhmen,” DaHe 15 (1999): 196–217. Skribeleit assumes incorrectly, however, that the Falkenau subcamp existed for only a few weeks. His analysis of the Nummernbücher, however, provides important new information on the growth of the death rate in female subcamps under investigation. Only with the beginning of the “evacuations” of camps located in the east and the transfer of their inmates to camps farther west, such as Zwodau, did this rate increase at a rapid speed. A monograph by Wilfried Feldkirchen, the former director of the AS-M, appeared on the 150th anniversary of Siemens AG, Siemens 1918–1945 (Munich, 1996). What should be emphasized, however, along with a conspicuous apologetic tendency, is first and foremost the extensive system of annotation, in which AS-M sources also are selectively quoted, sources that otherwise are not publicly accessible, as they are held in the “un-catalogued sources, temporary archives.” The aspects of modernization and technical and social streamlining are of extraordinary relevance for the integration of captive, unqualified laborers into a modern, capitalist industrial firm; thus the works below examine the absolutely essential prehistory of all use of forced labor in Germany’s most important general-purpose company in the electrical industry, with explicit discussion of the importance of female labor. The standard works are by Heidrun Homburg, Rationalisierung und Industriearbeit: Arbeitsmarkt, Management, Arbeitsbeziehungen im Siemens-Konzern Berlin 1900–1939 (Berlin, 1991); Carola Sachsse, Siemens, der Nationalsozialismus und die moderne Familie: Eine Untersuchung zur sozialen Rationalisierung in Deutschland im 20. Jahrhundert (Hamburg, 1990); Tilla Siegel and Thomas Freiberg, Industrielle Rationalisierung unter dem Nationalsozialismus (Frankfurt am Main, 1991); Rüdiger Hachtman, “Industriearbeit im Dritten Reich: Untersuchungen zu den Lohn- und Arbeitsbedingungen in Deutschland 1933–1945” (Göttingen, 1989); Hachtmann, “Industriearbeitschaft und Rationalisierung 1900 bis 1945: Bemerkungen zum Forschungsstand,” JWg 1 (1996): 211–258; Hachtman, “...artgemäßer Arbeitseinsatz der jetzigen und zukünftigen Mütter unseres Volkes: Industrielle Erwerbstätigkeit von Frauen 1913 bis 1945 im Spannungsfeld von Rassismus, Biologismus und Klasse,” in “Neuordnung Europas: Vorträge vor der Berliner Gesellschaft für Faschismus- und Weltkriegsforschung; 1992–1996, ed. Werner Röhr and Brigitte Berlkamp (Berlin, 1996), pp. 231–252.

The presumably quite extensive collections of the AS-M are in great part inaccessible for independent research. Research is therefore dependent on state archives. The above-mentioned investigation records of the ZdL (at BA-L) are thus one of the most important cohesive collections for the investigation of the Falkenau subcamp (and of the subsequently established Zwodau subcamp). They contain numerous witness statements by surviving prisoners, other witnesses, and perpetrators. Here it must be stressed that the investigating state attorneys worked closely with the ITS. At that time they still were able to use the ITS’s collections of contemporary documents and use them in their investigations. Further, years before it aroused the interest of historians in the West, the state attorneys also assessed the extensive collection on KZ Flossenbürg now held as NS4 in the BA-B, the second important closed collection on the Falkenau subcamp. There are probably important documents in the Czech archives on the origins of the use of prison labor and on the plans for use of prisoners, as indicated by the enquiries made at Ludwigsburg for plans by the Commission for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes. The BA-MA holds collections regarding the war economy including contracts and production records of the LGW.

NOTES


5. See the entry “Siemenslager Ravensbrück” in this volume.


8. See Overview ZdL Prisoner Level for Flossenbürg Subcamp according to NS4, ZdL, IV 410 (F) AR 629/67,


11. See Anon., “I Was in a Siemens Concentration Camp, Report of a French Forced Laborer,” F, October 5, 1946. Owing to identical formulations, the article was probably written by Henriette Seller; see Report by Henriette Seller on the Transport from Compiegne and KZ Zwodau, LA-B-BPA-SED V6/3/6007, Nachlass Baumann; Record of Interview with Halina Prei. née Smo., October 23, 1971, in Poznan, ZdL, a.a.O. The report dated January 31, 1945, 598 prisoners were reported for Flöha.7 The strength of the Flöha subcamp grew to almost 800 prisoners, despite repeated shifting of sick prisoners and those unable to work to the Flossenbürg main camp and to Bergen-Belsen. In January 1945, an additional 24 Jewish prisoners arrived from the Banzlawi Rauscha subcamp of Gross-Rosen.8 In the strength report dated January 31, 1945, 598 prisoners were reported for Flöha.8 A report on February 28, 1945, gives an overview of the nationalities represented in the camp: 309 citizens of the USSR (described by the SS as Russians, although they belonged to several nationalities); 159 French; 79 Poles, among whom were 24 Jews, although 2 were of Hungarian nationality; 15 Germans; 14 Czechs; 4 Italians; 3 Lithuanians; 2 Yugoslavs; and 2 stateless persons.8 For April 13, 1945, 600 prisoners were recorded.7

The factory premises were fenced in with barbed wire, and guard towers with machine-gun posts were intended to foil any escape attempt. The prisoners were housed on the fourth floor (attic) of the factory building. The prisoners in the completely overcrowded attic room were exposed to greater risk of destruction during bombing raids.

The employment of the prisoners took place in various groups under the supervision of German master craftsmen and foremen in a 12-hour shift system. The management of Flossenbürg charged the Erla works for most of the employed prisoners a daily rate of 4 Reichsmark (RM) for “skilled laborers” and for only 15 percent of the prisoners a daily rate of 4 RM for “unskilled laborers.” After deducting 0.65 RM for food per day per prisoner, for which the Erla works were responsible, they paid into the SS account at the Reichsbank branch in Weiden, after production start-up in July 1944, increasing monthly amounts: 52,722 RM in July 1944, 90,300 RM in August 1944, 95,348 RM in September 1944, 87,014 RM in October 1944, and 72,412 RM in December 1944.8

The inhumane living conditions, completely inadequate nutrition, 12- to 14-hour work shifts, insufficient sleep due to disturbances during shift changes and air-raid warnings, frequent standing for hours at roll calls, and abuses by SS guard personnel and criminal Kapos claimed many victims in the camp. In addition, there were victims of shootings and hangings. The names of 27 prisoners who died in the Flöha camp.
are known. Polish prisoners, who had made rings from discarded aluminum to exchange for bread with German civilian workers, were hanged for sabotage of armaments in front of all the prisoners in the factory courtyard. The criminal Kapo Knehr served as hangman. Before Israeli investigating authorities, former Polish Jewish prisoner Wolf S. reported on an execution: “As I remember, two prisoners, Russians, were accused of sabotage in the Flöha camp, sentenced to death by the camp leader, led out of the camp, and shot. I saw the clothes and shoes of the accused, which were later brought back into the camp.”

A group of French prisoners, technicians, and engineers carried out a sabotage campaign, which remained hidden from the SS and the inspecting Wehrmacht representatives. Toni Siegert writes about this: “French engineers and technicians, prisoners who were employed in an aircraft manufacturing plant at Flöha/Saxony, conducted demonstrable active sabotage. They knowingly manufactured faulty machine parts whose defects were not immediately recognizable but during great stress in air combat would cause the machines to fail; they also developed a special system of brittle riveting of airplane parts.”

Despite all threats of punishment, several Russian and French prisoners attempted to escape, and during one attempt a farmer in a neighboring village shot Frenchman Robert Bonneaud. Those responsible for the crimes committed in the Flöha camp include camp leader SS-Oberscharführer Karl Brendel and the SS guard detail of 10 SS-Unterführer and 57 SS men under his command; in addition, factory manager Max G. and master craftsman Paul K. were brought before a court in 1948. Brendel, who was charged with another atrocious crime, was never apprehended and sentenced.

On April 14, 1945, the Flöha subcamp was evacuated in a march on foot toward Erzgebirgskamm. The destination was most probably the Flossenbürg main camp. During the first night’s rest, Brendel killed three prisoners, two Polish Jews and one Russian. From the report of Wolf S., the names of the two Jewish victims are known: “Among those shot were two of my school classmates—Szlamek Fischnitz and Chaim Zylberstajn. Many others were shot during this march.” The path of this death march appeared in the report by former French prisoner André L.:

On the next morning, April 15, 1945, SS-Oberscharführer Brendel (the commandant of the labor camp) told our comrades who were sick with tuberculosis, who like us the day before had taken part in the foot march and were equally exhausted, to get on a horse-drawn wagon. . . . We were to find our comrades again on the way out of the town Marienberg. . . . One of the trucks confiscated by the SS took them from now on. The arriving SS-Oberscharführer spent a short time at the vehicle and called the exhausted among us to get on, under the pretext of wanting to save them the hardship of another foot march. Finally in the afternoon . . . we saw those transported in the truck being shot in a forest. There were fifty-seven who had boarded the truck.12

Twenty-three French and 34 Soviet citizens were victims of this cowardly murder.

The prisoner column continued its march through northeastern Bohemia initially in a southwesterly direction toward Flossenbürg but turned toward the east when the SS had news of Flossenbürg being occupied by U.S. troops. Seven French prisoners whose names are known and countless prisoners of other nationalities died on the continuing march. On May 6, 1945, the remainder of the marching column was brought to the ghetto at Theresienstadt; 97 prisoners were registered there. Among those prisoners from the Flöha camp who were liberated on May 8, 1945, by Soviet troops in Theresienstadt (Terezín) but later still died at Terezín was French writer Robert Desnos, who met his death there on June 8, 1945. Because of their complicity in the crimes against humanity committed in the Flöha camp, the factory manager of Fortuna GmbH Flöha, Max G., was sentenced to 20 years in prison on February 20, 1948, in the Chemnitz regional court, and the former master craftsman at this factory, Paul K., was sentenced to 25 years in prison. The opinion of the court said, among other things:

The accused did his utmost to carry out systematically the criminal endeavors of the National Socialist rulers in total disregard for any human rights at the cost of the freedom, health, and life of foreign forcefully displaced civilian prisoners and persons of different political opinions. . . . The reference to the orders given by the leadership of Flossenbürg concentration camp and other National Socialist rulers is not suitable for absolving the accused, for it is not about orders based on morality and law, but rather about arbitrary acts that scorn all morality and law. Just as everyone who issues such orders is guilty, those who follow such orders are also guilty. When the accused adopts the orders of the leadership at Flossenbürg concentration camp as his own, he makes himself a henchman of the leadership of Flossenbürg, as whose branch the Fortuna works at Plaue were to be considered.

Sources


Hans Brenner
trans. Eric Schroeder
NOTES
1. Ba-VEB-Ts-Fl, Protokoll der Aufsichtsratssitzung AG (Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting) der Tüllfabrik Flöh, November 9, 1943.
3. AG-B; NARA, RG 242, Film 8; Transport List, October 25, 1944.
4. ITS, Photocopy Flossenbürg, No. 209.
7. BA-B, Film 14 430, p. 1264.
8. BA-B, Film 4053; labor requisition documents for July–October 1944.
12. ZdL, IV 410 (F) AR-Z 236/75, 1:17; Translation of a letter from Mr. André L. to Mr. Simon Wiesenthal from November 28, 1967.

FREIBERG
In Freiberg, preparations for the erection of a subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp to house an outside detail at the Arado-Flugzeugwerke GmbH (Arado Aircraft Works, Ltd.) began in December 1943. The planning and construction of the housing camp is a clear example of the collaboration between the armaments industry, the SS, and the Ministry of Armaments. First, Office D II of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) approved the application for the allocation of a prisoner work detail that Arado had submitted within the context of the Jägerstab’s (Fighter Staff’s) measures. In its building application, which was not sent to the local authorities (the Oberbürgermeister of Freiberg) until April 1944, the company was represented by the building commissioner of the Reich Ministry for Armaments and War Production (RMFRK) in Armament Inspection Region IVa (based in Dresden). The camp planning was done by the Reich Industry Group (the lobbying organization of the entrepreneurs), Land Saxony Area, Regional Office Dresden. The bureaucratic hurdles that cropped up caused delays, so that on the arrival of the first transport on August 31, 1944, with 249 primarily Polish, Jewish women and girls from Auschwitz, to whom the Flossenbürg Kommandantur assigned prisoner numbers 53423 through 53671, the barracks camp was not yet completed. The women and girls received provisional lodgings in empty factory halls of a closed-down porcelain factory. The second transport came on September 22, 1944, with 251 women from Auschwitz, again primarily Polish Jews, who were assigned prisoner numbers 53672 through 53922. Some 180 Czechs, 127 Slovaks, 91 Germans, 28 Yugoslavs, 22 Dutch, 15 Hungarians, 6 Poles, 1 Italian, 1 Russian, and 1 U.S. citizen, as well as 21 stateless persons, all female and Jewish, arrived with the third transport from Auschwitz, which was registered on October 12, 1944, by Flossenbürg for the Freiberg subcamp. The nationalities of 9 women on this transport has not been determined. The women of this last transport once again received the consecutive prisoner numbers 53923 through 54435. This leads to the conclusion that all three transports were completely coordinated beforehand with the Flossenbürg main camp. With the addition of 3 women, who were given the prisoner numbers 56801 through 56803, the Freiberg subcamp held 1,002 prisoners. A strength report on January 31, 1945, still listed 996 women in the Freiberg camp.

They always assembled in groups of five, followed by the high SS marching by in their perfect uniforms. It was Dr. Mengele personally who sorted the people into those capable of work and prisoners destined for gassing. As we were both dressed in a good coat and an anorak, he signaled my cousin Vera and me to the right and my mother to the left, which meant to the gas. My mother said in good German, “Please, these are my children.” Mengele now also signaled my mother to the right. We did not suspect that to the right meant work and life and to the left meant gas and death. . . . But the great miracles were still to come. They took all of our things away, shaved our hair, and everyone received a dress and wooden clogs or other shoes. . . . Until I die I will never forget the feeling of the cold on my shaved head. Without hair—that is a complete degradation for a woman. We did not suspect that to the right meant work and life and to the left meant gas and death. . . . But the great miracles were still to come. They took all of our things away, shaved our hair, and everyone received a dress and wooden clogs or other shoes. . . . Until I die I will never forget the feeling of the cold on my shaved head. Without hair—that is a complete degradation for a woman. We were so many that the SS did not manage to tattoo all of us. . . . Still in October we were put on a transport toward Germany. That was like a prize. Thus we reached Freiberg in Saxony.

In contrast to the wretched barracks in the women's camp at Birkenau, the lodgings at the factory in Freiberg, which were heated and to some extent dry, appeared considerably better to the women. Anneliese W., at the time 16 years old, said about the lodging: “It appeared to be a good change from Auschwitz. We slept only two to a bed, had pillows and a type of blanket.”
Several women reported on the employment, like Slovakian Katarina L: “We worked in two shifts, twelve hours each, as heavy laborers building airplane wings. As we were not skilled workers in aircraft construction, we also made mistakes, which were answered with slaps in the face.” In her report, Czech Marie S. goes into the relationship with German civil workers: “My work consisted mostly of riveting the ‘small wing’ with another female prisoner. There was no foreman around, only an inspector who came by daily to check whether we had worked well. Once I asked him where we were. To be sure he answered me, but only briefly, ‘in Freiberg’ and added that he was forbidden to speak with Gypsies. When I asked him if we had worked well. He then muttered, ‘The fascists have deceived me.’ After that he always told us what was reported from London.”

Czech Hana St. also describes a similar dialogue:

“This conversation appears strange, almost like a joke, but I find it very instructive as it is probably something like a reflection of the foggy thinking, brought about by the Nazi propaganda haze, of so many “little people” in Germany at that time. . . . This dialogue with Foreman Rausch took place in the first days: with hand motions and no words he sent me to get some tool, but I didn’t bring the right one. Furious, he grabbed me by the dress and beat me against the scaffolding. I was indignant and told him that when he wanted something he would have to explain it to me as I had never before worked in a factory. Rausch was surprised that this creature—resembling a scarecrow—addressed him, and even in German. He asked me where I had worked and what type of work I had actually done. In another conversation we talked about the concentration camp and I explained to him that I was sent there as a Jew. To that Foreman Rausch replied in amazement: “But the Jews are black!” I had blue eyes and despite a shaved head was without doubt a dirty blond with a light complexion. And when I asked him—I was so impudent—if he knew what concentration camps are, he answered me: “Yes, that’s where various elements are trained to work.” I then informed him that we were brought from Auschwitz to Freiberg. I told him that we all had studied and worked normally and that among us were a number of highly educated women, JDs, PhDs, holders of master’s degrees (Magister), doctors, professors, teachers, etc.; that I myself, at that time twenty-three years old, completed my diploma at a classical high school in 1939 and later worked as a qualified infant nurse and child care professional. Ever since that conversation, Foreman Rausch treated me well.”

German Jew Herta B. testified completely differently during her witness examination: “Zimmerman was the foreman in an airplane factory at Freiberg. . . . Zimmerman had a group of about twenty prisoners to supervise. He repeatedly abused me physically. He threw shop tools, which I was required to bring him, at my back, or he tore the tool from my hand and beat me with it.” It is probable that this sadist is identical with the foreman about whom other female prisoners also report: “‘What, you claim to be a teacher?’ he screamed. ‘You piece of dirt!’ and once again the hammer flew.”

With the transferring of the prisoner camp to the still incomplete barracks camp in December 1944, the women obtained considerably worse living conditions. Without socks and with almost no underwear, they were forced daily to walk in deep snow to the factory, which was half an hour away by foot, and some also went to the Hildebrand munitions factory. The cold and wet concrete barracks, brutality of the SS female guards, draining work, and extremely bad nourishment soon claimed victims. According to SS documents, only five deaths are recorded, but the actual number of victims may be higher. Women who came to Freiberg pregnant and whose condition only became apparent there suffered especially. Slovak Priska Löwenbein (Lomová) gave birth to her daughter Hana on April 12, 1945, two days before the evacuation. Other women gave birth during the evacuation transport or shortly after arriving at Mauthausen.

Some 20 (later 28) female SS guards, some of whom were recruited from the Freiberg area and some of whom came with the prisoners from Auschwitz, guarded the women. SS-Unterscharführer Richard Beck was in command at the camp and over 27 SS-Unterführer and SS men from the camp guard.

After work had already been stopped on March 31, 1945, the women were left to their own devices in the barracks camp. The food rations were reduced.

Czech Lisa M. reports on the evacuation:

On April 14, 1945, there was a sudden departure. We were loaded into open cars at the train station and traveled westward into the protectorate, passing train station signs with familiar city names. The nights were cold and sometimes it snowed or rained. Only sometimes did we receive food. En route we encountered similar transports to ours almost daily. Then we had a long stop in Horní Bríza and were transferred into closed cars. The people of the town brought us something to eat. We were supposed to be brought back to our original camp, Flossenbürg.

We owe our thanks to a brave station manager who despite threats held up our train. We traveled back in the direction of Budweis. No one knew what happened in the other car. Once a day the car was opened and someone shouted the command, “Out with the dead.” We noticed that the train changed direction. On April 29 we stood in the train station at Mauthausen. Half starved we dragged ourselves...
through the town. At a fountain we wanted to at least drink something, but the locals chased us away and threw stones at us. In the camp we found out rather quickly that the gas chambers were already out of action. Hungarian women who had come there a few days earlier than we did died there.

On May 5 we were liberated by the U.S. Army.\textsuperscript{17}

\textbf{NOTES}

1. ASt-Fg, Baupolizei, Protokoll der Beratung im Stadt-
hauamt, December 17, 1943.
2. ASt-Fg, Baupolizei, No. 212/2, Bauakte “Freia GmbH.”
4. Ibid., pp. 82–86.
5. Ibid., pp. 87–95.
13. ZdL, IV 410 AR 2473/66 (B), p. 44.

\textbf{GANACKER}

Ganacker is located in Lower Bavaria on the last section of the Inn River before it meets the Danube River in the Landkreis Dingolfing-Landau, in the community (\textit{Gemeinde}) of Pilsting. The subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp was initially housed on the compound of Ganacker airfield. Once the Allies had achieved complete air superiority, the subcamp was relocated to a more protected area in a clearing in the forest known as Erlau, which was about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) away from the air base, close to Markt Wallersdorf. The grounds, which covered about 1 hectare (2.5 acres), consisted of a field located in front of a small wood. The prisoners of the camp were housed in the field under terrible conditions in the rain and snow, living in improvised earth-tents, the so-called “Finn” or “Finn-huts,” which were protected against bad weather only by a roof made of brushwood or leaves. These huts rather resembled large dog huts, were extremely primitive and because of the season usually full of water. One of these huts was the infirmary (\textit{Revier}) for sick inmates, with a Czech, a German, and a Belgian male inmate nurse. Later the huts were replaced by tents. The parade ground was also located there. In the small wood were barracks for the guards and supplies. A ditch filled with water formed the western boundary of the camp and also provided the prisoners’ water supply. The living conditions in the camp were horrendous: insufficient food and water supply, as well as inadequate housing, lead to the death of at least 183 inmates. Since this number only comprises the registered deaths, the actual number might have been higher. In March 1945 alone, 34 inmates died from diphtheria, which had been brought into the camp with a prisoner transport from Kaufering.

The workplace for the prisoners was at the nearby Ganacker airfield (also known as Pilsting), where a fighter squadron was based. The squadron did not fly combat missions, as the air base was used only for pilot training. Here the prisoners had to dig trenches, excavate one-man bunkers, and fill in bomb craters after Allied air raids. They were also deployed to work on preparations for the construction of a concrete landing strip, which was intended for the future receipt of jet planes of the Me-262 design. The landing strip was never finished, however. According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), the prisoners were employed by the firm Polensky & Zöllner. Prisoners were also deployed to work in Münchshöfen, north of Wallersdorf. The daily work shift lasted from 5:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., with a 30-minute lunch break.

The Bundeszentrale indicates that the earliest date for the camp’s establishment found in reports is 1941; eyewitnesses and a report by the local authorities in Wallersdorf from 1951 point to the fall of 1944 (September). Already at this time, the first transport of about 300 male concentration camp prisoners is supposed to have arrived at the Ganacker air base. ITS gives the date for the opening of the camp according to official concentration camp files as February 21, 1945. This would correspond with the opening of similar Flossenbürg subcamps in Regensburg-Obertraubling, Kirchham, and Plattling.

The number of prisoners in the camp is also disputed; the figures range from some 400 or 500 up to about 900. A transfer

\textbf{SOURCES} For the Freiberg subcamp, see Hans Brenner, \textit{Frauen in den Aussenlagern des KZ Flossenbürg} (Regensburg, 1999). Andreas Baumgartner also mentions this camp in \textit{Die vergessenen Frauen von Mauthausen: Die weiblichen Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen und ihre Geschichte} (Vienna, 1997). With the assistance of the city of Freiberg and the Bergakademie Freiberg, students from Freiberg-Kolleg produced \textit{Jüdisches Leben in der Bergstadt Freiberg—eine Spurensuche} (Freiberg, n.d.).

Primary sources on the camp begin with testimonies in BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 AR 2473/66 (B); ITS, Hist. Abt. Flossenbürg; and ASt-Fg (Baupolizei). \textit{NFWSL}, July 22, 1965, cited the testimony of Priska Lomová.

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The number of prisoners in the camp is also disputed; the figures range from some 400 or 500 up to about 900. A transfer
list dated February 20, 1945—upon the opening of the camp, according to official files—names 321 Jews among the 440 prisoners brought to the subcamp on this day, including 192 Jews from Poland, 46 from Hungary, 18 from France, 17 from Greece, 14 from the Czech lands, 10 from Germany, 7 from Holland, 6 from Belgium, and individual Jews from Lithuania, the Soviet Union, Slovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey. One Jew was stateless. In the view of local historian Nik Söltl, the camp grounds would have been rather small for 900 prisoners—even given their cramped housing together in the Finns. Nonetheless, among the survivors of the subcamp there were actually some prisoners who were not included on the transport list of February 20, 1945, which might confirm the presence of more than 440 prisoners in the camp.

The food supplies given to the prisoners were just as miserable as their housing conditions. Söltl indicates that the starving inmates grabbed through the barbed wire to tear off grass and eat it. According to Söltl, the Schlappinger family, which lived on the Huber property on the eastern edge of Erlau, succeeded on many occasions in supplying the prisoners with food: the head of the Schlappinger family was a Communist, and his wife baked bread twice a week, with the heads of the Schlappinger family in the hayloft of their barn. Since the living quarters, the cowshed, and the barn were all under the same roof in the house of the Schlappingers, the Schlappingers risked the lives of their entire family. Two prisoners armed the family with knives, in case they might be forced to defend themselves. With the arrival of U.S. troops on April 29, 1945, these prisoners also achieved their liberty.

The evacuation of the remaining prisoners of the subcamp had already taken place on April 24 or 25, 1945, in the direction of Traunstein. According to an official report, they arrived there on May 2, 1945. Numerous prisoners died on this death march: in Haunersdorf, which lies 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) to the south, 8 corpses were buried in a mass grave; in Arnstorf, 5; and in Schönau um Rottal, another 10. On the clearing of the subcamp, 45 prisoners who were sick, weak, or unable to walk were shot and superficially buried either in a wood behind the camp or in another wooded area some 350 meters (383 yards) to the west.

Between March 2, and April 23, 1945, 138 prisoners in Ganacker died.

During the course of the Flossenbürg Trial, Eisbusch, who was a prisoner, Kapo, and Revierkapo in the Ganacker subcamp after February 20, 1945, was sentenced to death and executed. Walter Paul Adolf Neye, a prisoner in Flossenbürg and a block leader in the Ganacker subcamp, was sentenced to 15 years in prison. Johann Nowak, the kitchen Kapo, was accused by the Landgericht Landau in 1954 of mistreatment; his sentence is unknown. In 1977, the State Attorneys of Landschut and Munich I investigated events involving the Ganacker subcamp, but investigations ceased due to the statute of limitations.

Sources


Information on the subcamp can be found in the AG-F and in the collections held by ITS. The rescue of the prisoners by the Schlappinger family is confirmed by a thank-you letter signed by three prisoners dated April 20, 1945, which is in private hands. An additional thank-you letter of January 26, 1946, contains a sworn declaration by the other two prisoners concerning their rescue by the Schlappingers.

Evelyn Zegenhagen trans. Martin Dean

GRAFENREUTH

The SS-Wirtschaftslager (Business Camp) Grafenreuth was set up in June 1943 as the eighth subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp. The establishment of a clothing camp was part of the endeavors by the SS to achieve autarky. At
other concentration camp sites, the SS had constructed large textile plants for its own requirements.

In the spring of 1943, the Construction Inspectorate (Bauinspektion) of the Waffen-SS und Polizei Reich-Süd in Dachau planned the construction of a clothing camp at Grafenreuth, just 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) from Flossenbürg. After SS-Obersturmführer Schöffel had inspected the site, the Bauinspektion at Flossenbürg was tasked with making the necessary preparations for construction of the clothing camp on a roughly 5.5-hectare (13.6-acre) site of vacant land beside the Weiden-Floss-Eslarn railroad line, opposite the Riebel & Cie brickworks. The prisoners’ lodgings and guards’ block were to be built outside this area on a new road that would be constructed. The planned construction of the clothing camp was delayed because there was a lack of skilled workers (surveyors), guards, and tools. In mid-June the head of Amtsgruppe C (Construction) of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), SS-Brigadeführer Kammler, ordered the building of 20 camp barracks and 2 housing barracks because of the urgent need; and although negotiations with the property owners were not yet concluded, he authorized the 20 barracks to be sent to Grafenreuth. Upon receiving a report from the Bauinspektion Reich-Süd that, on June 21, 32 railroad cars with barracks parts had arrived but could not be unloaded and stored, the WVHA reacted by unceremoniously attaching the parcels of land in question for use by the Waffen-SS.

At this time, about 20 prisoners evidently were already being used—probably only by the day—for unloading the railroad cars, as shown by the corresponding accounting for June 1943. The plan was to use a maximum of 50 prisoners so that costly improvements of the springs were avoided and the water supply was connected to the water supply of the brickworks. With an eye on the material to be warehoused, a water reservoir for use as a firefighting pond was created. Starting in late July, 6—later, as many as 20—prisoners had to carry the required bricks from the brickworks to the camp site opposite. On July 10, SS-Rottenführer Alfred Bütikofer was ordered to Grafenreuth to serve as construction manager. On August 2, 150 prisoners were transferred from the Flossenbürg main camp to Grafenreuth, three times more than the number envisioned by those who planned the construction. The majority of them had been transferred from Auschwitz to Flossenbürg in a transport of 1,000 prisoners on March 14. At Flossenbürg they had to spend several weeks in quarantine. The prisoners were in extremely poor physical condition. In the construction phase of the camp, this and other matters led to tensions between the local construction manager, Bütikofer, and Kommandoführer Fries. Thus Bütikofer complained in a letter dated September 30, 1943, that of the 140 prisoners as many as 20 could not be used for 10 to 14 days and that Kommandoführer Fries refused to swap the sick prisoners for healthier ones, while the clothing camp had received 60 prisoners, “the worst of whom was equivalent to the best at the construction site.” The high sickness figure was probably attributable to the excessive number of prisoners, given the still-unfinished lodgings and unsatisfactory sanitary facilities.

Since the warehousing of clothing began as early as September, further logistical problems resulted from the fact that building of the subcamp was not yet complete. The parallel delivery of building materials and clothing, in combination with inadequate security, increased the risk of injury to prisoners and SS members alike. Admittedly, the Flossenbürg Bauleitung had reported as early as mid-August that the preliminary work was done, but it took another year for all the construction to be completed. When finished, the subcamp consisted of 10 double barracks for warehousing clothing, 1 barracks for the prisoners, and 1 for the SS guards. It was surrounded by barbed wire and watchtowers.

In early October 1943, Bütikofer requested that the Bauleitung relieve the head Kapo, Kelchner, who without his knowledge had allocated prisoners to do work for the clothing camp. This had a negative effect on construction, including completion of the railroad trunk line leading into the camp area.

The internal disputes could not have helped the prisoners. At any rate, as early as October 1943, a few prisoners tried to escape. On September 2, 1944, a Soviet prisoner was shot while trying to escape. Otherwise, no deaths in Grafenreuth are recorded in the Nummernbücher (Numbers Books), presumably because sick prisoners were transferred back to the Flossenbürg main camp. There, approximately in early January 1945, two French prisoners died who had been transferred back from Grafenreuth shortly before Christmas. In the investigations of the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg, many witnesses indeed reported several daily deaths and shootings after failed escape attempts, but the constant number of prisoners recorded in the labor requisition documents points to the likelihood that there were fewer deaths.

At first, food was brought at midday and in the evenings by a food vehicle from Flossenbürg to Grafenreuth. From October 1944 on, the Bauleitung in Grafenreuth evidently provided food for the prisoners on its own.

For the Grafenreuth subcamp, there are two types of labor allocation documents. First, the prisoners for the Grafenreuth construction project were invoiced to the Bauleitung in Flossenbürg. In January and February 1944, 20 skilled and 62 unskilled workers were charged for, and in March, only slightly more than 40 unskilled workers. From mid-May to the end of the year, 6 to 13 skilled workers and between 26 and 62 unskilled workers were used, an average overall of between 33 (May) and 74 (July) prisoners. The labor allocation for the Bauleitung also included the so-called brickworks detail (Ziegeleikommando), in which roughly 14 to 20 men did construction work for the Riebel & Cie brickworks and transported bricks to the construction site for the clothing camp. In 1944, 1 to 2 prisoners were used as skilled laborers, and a constant number of about 60 prisoners were used as unskilled laborers for the clothing factory at Grafenreuth.
The Kommandoführer initially was SS-Hauptscharführer Kübler, who according to one prisoner’s testimony mercilessly goaded the prisoners to do hard labor and held back food intended for the prisoners.6 His successor, SS-Hauptscharführer Voigt, according to several witness statements, made sure the prisoners were better fed.

Owing to the subcamp’s proximity to the main camp and the short-term use of prisoners, especially by the Bauleitung, the makeup of the prisoners was subject to constant variation. Initially, mostly German, Polish, Soviet, and French prisoners had to work at the construction site and the clothing plant. On February 28, 1945, there were 80 prisoners in Grafenreuth, including 40 Poles, 15 Czechs, and 11 Yugoslavs, as well as a few Russians, French, Germans, and an Italian. For March 31, there are 60 prisoners recorded but with no details of their nationalities.

For various reasons the surroundings of Grafenreuth were more exposed to the subcamp than was the case at other places. The brickworks owner profited by becoming a user of the prisoners’ forced labor. The farmers in the surrounding villages were enlisted in supplying transportation for the subcamp. Two property owners contracted with the SS to allow their land to be used to lay a water line from the Heideck pond to the camp.

The subcamp was evacuated on April 20 or 21. The prisoners and Kommandoführer Voigt joined a march out of the Flossenbürg main camp but formed their own group and were freed by U.S. troops at Cham. Owing to Voigt’s considerate behavior, no prisoner died on the march.

After the evacuation, the local population looted the clothing camp.

**SOURCE**

As with all other subcamps that were built relatively early for use by the SS, there is a great deal of source material on Grafenreuth. The Flossenbürg-Best. in the BA-B holds numerous administrative and construction-related files. The investigation files of the former ZdL, now BA-L (410 AR-Z 166/75), hold numerous witness statements. Oliver Muckof from Floss, while writing a paper for the Weiden Fachhochschule, interviewed contemporary witnesses and put together a photodocumentation, which is accessible in the AG-F.

**NOTES**

2. Ibd., 219/2, Letter from the WVHA on June 17, 1943.
3. Ibd., 217, Handwritten letter from Büttikofer to construction manager Seiz in Flossenbürg.
4. NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3, 000-50-46, Box 537 (Microfilm copy in AG-F).
7. BA-B, Bestand ehem. ZSA-P, Dok/K 183/11.

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**GRASLITZ**

One cannot determine the exact date that planning began for the use of prison labor in Graslitz, on the basis of surviving source documents. Nevertheless, there is information about the context: The Luftfahrtgerätebau Hakenfelde GmbH (Aircraft Equipment Works Hakenfelde Ltd., LGW) was founded in 1940 as a wholly owned subsidiary of Siemens & Halske AG (S&H) and Siemens-Schuckert Werke AG (Siemens-Schuckert Werks, SSW). The armaments firm operated at high capacity in manufacturing auto pilots, navigation instruments, gyroscopes, flight instruments and electronics, communications equipment, and electric fire systems for aircraft. The positive results that Siemens had been able to achieve from the fall of 1942 onward at its “Ravensbrück manufacturing plant,” coupled with the increasing risks caused by air raids, led Siemens director Paul Storch in the spring of 1943 to transfer production to “more secure areas” and to “use concentration camps for the assembly of particularly important parts.”7 Thus, using concentration camp prisoners on the periphery of Germany was a strategic decision by Siemens that combined the enormous increase in turnover in the armaments industry8 with the simultaneous shortage of labor. The company based its plan of expanding production on the model project for use of prisoner labor at the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

The use of prisoner labor in the Graslitz subcamp began with 150 female prisoners from Ravensbrück on August 7, 1944,9 and thus later than in nearby Falkenau and Zwodau. This suggests that the decision was probably influenced by the previous, enormous destruction done to the main factories and the LGW in Berlin.4 However, Graslitz and Zwodau were already noted as alternate sites in April 1944 on a map for “planned transfers.”6 The high degree of integration between the manufacturing sites at Zwodau and Graslitz is noteworthy—prisoners were transferred to the Zwodau subcamp for training, and both production sites had a common manager.

By November–December, additional transports to the Graslitz subcamp (under Flossenbürg since September) had increased the number of concentration camp prisoners to 470. There were an exceptionally large number of prisoners persecuted as “Gypsies,” including a significant number of “Reichsdeutsche” (German nationals)10 Polish women (13 percent) and Czech women (9 percent) were also represented in large numbers. At first there were no Jews in the camp.8 The company employees obviously wanted prisoners who, in addition to the known criteria of dexterity, good eyesight, and adequate health, had a sufficient knowledge of German, in order to facilitate training later. Prisoner numbers remained constant until the spring of 1945 when prisoners from other subcamps such as Rochlitz (among them many Jews) and eventually also prisoners from Ravensbrück were transferred to Graslitz, causing a lasting deterioration of living conditions.9

The prisoners were housed in one of the upper floors of the factory building and had no way of getting outside. The accommodation was equipped with bunk beds and an infirmary.
Food for the prisoners was prepared in the camp kitchen under the supervision of SS guards. It was delivered from Flossenbürg. Survivors complained about its poor quality and the inadequate supply. It is probable that some of the food did not reach the prisoners and was redirected to the SS and prisoner-functionaries.

The prisoners were supervised by 150 Siemens employees and worked in day and night shifts on fine mechanical assembly work, while some also did office work. Additionally, they were supervised by female SS guards, who, for example, ensured that the “no speaking” rule was observed while they worked.10 There was a bonus system, as in Zwodau and Ravensbrück, where good work performance meant that prisoners received privileges such as camp money, which in turn was supposed to enable them to obtain extra food in the camp kitchen.11 Of more significance for the often weak and undernourished prisoners was the threat of punishment for insufficient work, such as additional work or being reported to the SS, which in the end could mean being returned to the main camp, classified as “unfit for work.” After Graslitz was bombed in the spring of 1945, the women were also used for cleanup work in the railway station area. That meant heavy physical outside labor for women who were malnourished and did not have proper clothing.

The camp leader was initially a Czech SS-Oberscharführer named Richter. He was in charge of 10 SS men and up to 19 female SS guards. Survivors spoke positively about Richter. He did not mistreat them and restrained his subordinates. After his transfer on March 7, 1945, SS-Rottenführer Dziobaka took command of the camp. Survivors stated that his behavior was rough and violent. At first the head SS female guard was Elfriede Tribus. She was transferred on March 14, 1945, and replaced by Helene Schmidt from the Holleschen subcamp. Both of these women are claimed to have behaved violently and beaten the prisoners. Of the camp elders, only Annemarie Mertens is known. She did not arrive at the subcamp until March 21, 1945, though. She, too, is said to have beaten the prisoners. However, accounts vary as other survivors claim that they were treated decently. This is probably a reflection of the torn and stratified prisoner community.12 In the camp itself there allegedly were no killings.13

On April 15, 1945, a first group of the prisoners in the camp, which held at least 877 prisoners total at that time, were driven by the SS on a march in the direction of Karlsbad-Marienbad. The camp was evacuated five days later on April 20, 1945, and the remaining prisoners also had to march into the Böhmerwald. Prisoners who were incapable of walking were shot; others managed to escape. At the end of April, the survivors were finally freed by U.S. troops.14

At this point no comment can be made on the postwar trials of the Graslitz guards in former Czechoslovakia. At first, denazification proceedings were conducted against SS members and female guards interned by the Allies,15 until in 1962 the Nürnberg-Fürth State Attorney’s Office commenced investigations into the former female guards Schmidt and Eggert, who were suspected of murder. However, the proceedings were discontinued.

In 1966, the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg launched an investigation into the Graslitz subcamp. It was dropped on November 4, 1975, because no acts of homicide and thus no basis for prosecution could be turned up. Relevant information on the Graslitz subcamp can also be found in the main judicial inquiry into the Flossenbürg concentration camp and its subcamps. Because of prisoner transfers from the Rochlitz subcamp to Graslitz and the joint death marches to Bohemia, these records also hold prisoner reports and other witness statements regarding Graslitz.16 The Graslitz subcamp was again investigated by the ZdL in 1975 and the State Attorney’s Office at Zweibrücken, but again the investigation was soon dropped.17

**SOURCES**

The only comprehensive study on the Flossenbürg subcamps, of which Graslitz was one as of September 1944, is by Hans Brenner, “Zur Rolle der Aussenkommandos des KZ Flossenbürg im System der staatmonopolistischen Rüstungswirtschaft des faschistischen deutschen Imperialismus und im antifaschistischen Widerstandskampf 1942–1945” (Ph.D. diss., Dresden, 1982). Like most East German historians, he mostly sought to investigate the influence of large corporations on state institutions and the war economy. This limited frame of research has the result that this otherwise laudable and well-documented study is of limited use, in addition to the fact that most copies are only scarcely legible and thus difficult to examine. However, Brenner has published his research results and theses on the use of prisoners in two essays: “Frauen in den Aussenlagern von Flossenbürg und Gross-Rosen in Böhmen und Mähren,” TSD (1999): 263–293 (see the table on p. 266); and “Der ‘Arbeitseinsatz’ der KZ-Häftlinge in den Aussenlagern des Konzentrationslagers Flossenbürg—ein Überblick,” in Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager; Entwicklung und Struktur, ed. Ulrich Herbert et al. (Göttingen, 1998), 2: 682–706. There are some errors on the numbers. Karl Heinz Roth has compared a number of prisoner deployments by Siemens and developed a valuable, structuring typology of the company’s use of forced labor in “Zwangsarbeit im Siemens-Konzern (1938–1945): Fakten—Kontroversen—Probleme,” in Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft, 1939–1945, ed. Hermann Kajenburg (Opladen, 1996), pp. 149–168. Using the files of the ZdL, as well as the Flossenbürg Nummernbücher, which have been rediscovered in NARA, Jörg Skribeleit has provided a more current overview of the Flossenbürg subcamps in Bohemia in “Die Aussenlager des KZ Flossenbürg in Böhmen,” DaHe 15 (1999): 196–217. His analysis of the Nummernbücher has provided important new insights into the development of mortality in the researched women’s subcamps. In contrast to its “sister camp,” Zwodau, where the arrival of thousands of Jewish women from camps to the east quickly increased the death rate, Graslitz showed no such development. Norbert Aas recently presented a study on Sinti and Roma (Gypsies) in Flossenbürg and the two subcamps at Zwodau and Wolkenburg in Sinti und Roma im KZ Flossenbürg und in seinen Aussenlagern Wolkenburg und Zwodau (Bayreuth, 2001). His analysis of the Flossenbürg
The BA-MA has holdings of war economy authorities regarding plans that have emerged for the Zwodau subcamp. On the origins of the use of prisoner labor in Graslitz, there are probably further documents in the Czech archives decades before Western historians developed an interest. Important holdings on the Graslitz subcamp. This was done in the collection known today as NS4—extensive holdings on the Flossenbürg concentration camp and the second-most important archive, the "interim archive" and is not accessible to independent research. Witness the investigating state attorneys worked closely with traitors. It should be noted that during their search for witnesses the investigating state attorneys worked closely with the ITS, whose files containing contemporary documents were then still accessible for the investigations. Furthermore, state attorneys assessed materials held by the BA-B in the collection known today as NS4—extensive holdings on the Flossenbürg concentration camp and the second-most important holdings on the Graslitz subcamp. This was done decades before Western historians developed an interest. There are probably further documents in the Czech archives on the origins of the use of prisoner labor in Graslitz, as proven by plans that have emerged for the Zwodau subcamp. The BA-MA has holdings of war economy authorities regarding the orders and production situation of the LGW. Other, smaller collections have been referred to in the notes.

NOTES


15. See Vernehmungsniederschrift [SS-Aufseherin] Elfriede Tribus, May 5, 1947, in Ludwigsburg [denazification proceedings], ZdL, File Ravensbrück “TUV.” Today the proceedings are usually kept in the responsible state or city archives.

16. See ASt-N-F, 1bJ5993 a-b/62 (Graslitz); ZdL, IV 410 (F) AR-Z 2531/66 (Graslitz); ZdL, IV 410AR-Z60/67 (Flossenbürg).

17. ZdL., 410 AR-Z 92/75 (Graslitz); ASt-Zwbr, 7J3759/76 (Graslitz).

GRÖDITZ

The Lauchhammer factory Gröditz of the Mitteldeutsche Stahlwerke GmbH, which belonged to the Flick concern and which was already employing thousands of foreign slave laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) at its industrial sites, decided relatively late in the war to use concentration camp prisoners—when other sources for augmenting its workforce were exhausted. To do so, the management even circumvented the central office of its own company organization, the Reichsvereinigung Eisen (Reich Iron Association, RV), which as late as August 1944 had indicated that member factories should not get in touch with the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) directly but contact the SS only via the branch office central office.1

The technical director of the Gröditz factory, Dr. Heger, and the man responsible for mechanical engineering at the factory, Erich Weisser, traveled directly to the WVHA in Oranienburg after informing their corporate headquarters in Berlin. As a result of the meeting, a Wehrmacht Hauptmann came to Gröditz shortly thereafter and, after visiting the future production site and accommodations of the concentration camp prisoners to be employed, discussed with Heger and Weisser the details of surveillance, food, and collaboration between the factory and SS camp leadership.

Toward the end of the summer of 1944, Heger and Weisser traveled to Flossenbürg. Since they did not find enough prisoners there who met their requirements, they traveled on to Dachau and chose suitable prisoners there.2

On September 30, 1944, the first transport with 300 prisoners from the Dachau concentration camp arrived in Gröditz.3 More transports reached Gröditz on November 17, 1944, and December 22, 1944.4 In February 1945, another transport came with 300 Jewish men from Mauthausen and the Gusen subcamp, where an Obermeister from Gröditz had selected them.5 Arriving with them were SS men and navy soldiers who had already guarded these Jewish prisoners at the Laurahütte subcamp of the Auschwitz concentration camp, where they had been employed manufacturing guns for Rheinmetall-Borsig AG. 6

On January 31, 1945, there were 605 prisoners in the Gröditz detail.7 By February 28, 1945, their number had sunk to 466, due to many deaths and transports of those unable to work to the Flossenbürg main camp and to Bergen-Belsen, but then increased with the addition of more prisoners to 769 by March 31, 1945.8

The prisoner detail was composed of members of several nationalities, with the Poles, French, Soviets, and Italians being the biggest groups. But Belgians, Germans, Croats, Luxembourgers, Dutch, and Czechs were also at the Gröditz camp.

In March 1945, typhus fever, which had been brought in with the Mauthausen transport, claimed many victims. The infirmary was overcrowded with the terminally ill.9 The dead from this epidemic were thrown naked into massive common graves, located in the immediate vicinity of the gun production plant where the prisoners worked and slept. The clothes of the dead were then handed out to surviving prisoners.10

The leader of the Gröditz subcamp was of the opinion that “no concentration camp prisoner may enter the infirmary without my approval and if he does not have a fever of more than forty degrees [Celsius; 104 degrees Fahrenheit].”11 A German assembly manager, to whom concentration camp prisoners were subordinated with regard to work, released several of the sick from work. Contrary to his release, however, these prisoners were assigned to work again after 20 minutes, as they had been driven back to their workstations with beatings.12 A young French prisoner, who had studied medicine for a few semesters, tried to help the sick. He endeavored, but often in vain, as he did not have any medical aid available.13 The company doctor did not pay much attention to the sick. He even said “that there is not enough medicine for the soldiers” and “thus no concentration camp prisoner should be treated with this medicine.”14

Thus between March 15 and April 15, 1945, at least 148 people died, a fourth of all employed prisoners in the Gröditz subcamp, mostly of typhus fever. For April 2, 1945, alone, the strength and death reports of the Flossenbürg concentration camp cite 21 dead at Gröditz.15 Historian Klaus Drobisch writes that “in view of this fact . . . the claim by the company doctor in his defense testimony that he and the company leadership did everything for the prisoners and thus the level of sickness was ‘not unusually bad’ is an insolent lie.”16

The prisoners were housed in the eastern side aisle of the gun production hall on the second floor under the roof. The sleeping room was tubelike, 100 meters (328 feet) long, and at the same time an eating and washroom. A section was partitioned off as an infirmary. The prisoners slept on metal beds with bare springs. At the beginning there was a cover for every two prisoners, but later, not even that. French prisoner Vladimir Rittenberg, who had been accustomed to concentration camp food for years, judged the rations at Gröditz to be even poorer than those at Auschwitz and in Gusen. Belgian Fernand Travers also explained that what was being served to the prisoners at Gröditz was not food but rather pig feed.17
All prisoners whose work performance did not meet the expectations of the superiors were recommended for punishment or handed over to the SS by direct demand of those responsible at the gun production facility. The principle of "extermination through work" had drastic effects on the prisoners at Gröditz.

The camp leader was SS-Obersturmführer Köhrmann. Six SS-Unterführer and 57 SS guards (later 60) reported to him. In addition, older navy soldiers under the leadership of an Obermaat belonged to the external camp guard. German prisoner Valentin Kieser was camp elder.

After all POWs and almost all slave laborers had already been transported out of Gröditz, the company manager Weisser asked the deputy camp leader on April 17, 1945, what orders had been received for evacuating the concentration camp prisoners. Evidently, Heinrich Himmler's order from April 14, 1945, had not reached the camp at Gröditz, for the SS-Führer answered Weisser "that he didn't know what he should do either, he didn't have contact anymore with the Flossenbürg main camp and what I would then advise him." Weisser made a quick phone call to the Höherer-SS und Polizeiführer (Higher SS and Police Leader, HSSPF) in Dresden and explained the situation to him. Only a few hours later, two SS-Führer from Dresden were in Gröditz and, in the presence of the office of Weisser, gave the deputy camp leader the order to evacuate those fit for transport and shoot the sick. Weisser merely demanded that the shootings not take place on the order to evacuate those fit for transport and shoot the sick.

The camp leader was SS-Obersturmführer Köhrmann. As a result, 135 selected prisoners considered unfit to march, 17 sick prisoners from the "mercy block," and over 30 sick prisoners from the "typhus fever block" were loaded onto the vehicles. On April 17, 1945, the shooting of 184 prisoners was carried out in the sandpits in the Koselitz community not far from the factory. On the evening of April 17, 1945, the Wehrmacht Standortälteste Grossenhain, who had provided vehicles for the transport, reported to Heger that approximately 200 prisoners from the factory had been shot and buried in a grave pit near Wülknitz. Heger asked Weisser about it, who pretended not to know and had the camp leader come. He confirmed the report with the cynical words: "It is not two hundred, but only 170, and they are also not badly buried." This information evidently calmed Heger, and he closed his file notes with the sentence: "Herewith I expressly establish that neither the management nor one of our employees who had the task of looking after the workforce had any knowledge of the event and that we must reject any responsibility."

The evacuation march of the other prisoners from the Gröditz subcamp ended for some in Leitmeritz (Litoměřice), where 325 prisoners were registered, for the Jewish prisoners the destination was the Theresienstadt (Terezín) ghetto, where the arrival of 46 prisoners was recorded. The crimes committed against the concentration camp prisoners in the Gröditz outside detail formed part of the trial at Nürnberg against the top people of the Flick concern. Neither Heger nor Weisser was convicted there.

**NOTES**

1. Flick-Prozess, Dok. NI-5598, Rundschreiben der Reichsvereinigung Eisen (RV Eisen), Aussenstelle Mitte, August 28, 1944.
2. Flick-Prozess, Protokoll, 6853, interrogation of Weisser.
3. AG-D.
4. Flick-Prozess, Protokoll, p. 660, Statement from the former Belgian prisoner at Gröditz, Fernand Travers.
9. Flick-Prozess, questioning of Rittenberg, p. 556.
10. Flick-Prozess, Protokoll, p. 687, statement by Travers.
12. Flick-Prozess, Protokoll, p. 2389, statement by the assembly manager Brambusch.
15. BA-B, Film No. 41820, Picture No. 787–791.
17. Flick-Prozess, Burkart Document No. 855, testimony given under oath by the Gröditz company doctor Dr. Mühling from July 20, 1947.
19. BA-B, Film No. 14430, Picture No. 787–791.
22. Ibid. The HSSPFs were given the task by Himmler to evacuate the concentration camps. See IMT, Document 053-L, Befehl des Befehlshabers der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD in Polen, July 20, 1944.

**GUNDELSDORF (WITH KNELLENDORF)**

The Gundelsdorf subcamp near Kronach formally came into existence on September 12, 1944. Three days later, 100 Polish Jewish women arrived in Gundelsdorf from a work detachment for women at the Krakau-Plaszow concentration camp. They had worked at the Air Intelligence Instrument Camp 1 (Luftnachrichtentengerätelager) in Military District VIII. After this detail was transferred to Gundelsdorf, the women were first taken to Auschwitz and from there to Gundelsdorf.¹ The detachment leader of the camp both at Plaszow and at Gundelsdorf was a Luftwaffe Hauptmann, Friedrich Fischer. Most of the prisoners were young women and girls; the youngest of them was 15. They were supervised by female SS guards. The first task for the prisoners was to complete the construction of accommodation barracks next to the brickyard “Marie.” Later they were engaged in heavy physical labor, loading and unloading trains. The prisoners had to suffer the cold, lack of food, and physical abuse by the camp administration. However, there were no proven deaths while the women were in Gundelsdorf.

In September 1944, a clothing factory was relocated from Erkelenz to Knellendorf. From December 11, 1944, onward, about 20 female prisoners worked in the old school in Knellendorf, an outside detail of the Gundelsdorf subcamp. They sewed uniforms for the Wehrmacht but were still accommodated in the subcamp’s barracks about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) away in Gundelsdorf.

As of November 4, 1944, there was also a small detachment of male prisoners in Gundelsdorf who were to replace the male prisoners still based in Plaszow working at the Luftnachrichtentengerätelager but who had not been taken to Gundelsdorf. However, most of the men had been transported to Gundelsdorf from the Auschwitz concentration camp and were often so weak that they could only remain in Gundelsdorf for a few weeks and were then transferred to the Flossenbürg main camp. At least 21 of the Gundelsdorf male prisoners are listed; in the BA-B, there are a few requests and work allocations that provide evidence for the Gundelsdorf subcamp. The court proceedings of the postwar years with witness accounts are documented in the ZdL (IV 410 AR 3009/66), now BA-L.

**NOTES**

1. BA-B, NS 4/FI 393/2 (Forderungsnachweis September 1944); BA-B, Film Nr. S 14430 (Arbeitseinteilung 13.4.1945); Evangelische Jugend im Dekanat Kronach, ed., Das KZ-Aussenlager Gundelsdorf: Ergebnisse einer Spurensuche (Kronach, 2000), p. 15.

2. NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3, 000-50-46, Box 537, the names of the Gundelsdorf prisoners are also listed; in the BA-B, there are a few requests and work allocations that provide evidence for the Gundelsdorf subcamp. The court proceedings of the postwar years with witness accounts are documented in the ZdL (IV 410 AR 3009/66), now BA-L.

3. Das KZ-Aussenlager Gundelsdorf, p. 44.


**HAINICHERN**

The formation of a subcamp outside the Flossenbürg concentration camp at the Framo-Werke GmbH in Hainichen was connected with a plan to expand the manufacturing of parts and equipment at the factory for several armament programs. The company owner himself was the manager of the W8 group and had four select committees of the weapons main committee of the Reich Ministry for Armaments and War Production under his control.

On September 8, 1944, a first transport of prisoners arrived at Hainichen with 155 Polish Jewish women and girls. After the Łódź ghetto had been cleared, these prisoners were brought to Auschwitz, selected for work, and after three weeks were chosen to work in Hainichen.² They were assigned the registration numbers 53267 through 53422 by the commander at Flossenbürg. On October 11, 1944, a second
transport arrived at Hainichen with 335 Hungarian, 2 German, 2 Romanian, 1 Lithuanian, 1 Dutch, and 1 stateless Jewish women.\(^1\) They received the registration numbers 52924 through 53264. In May 1944 the SS had deported the Hungarian women to Auschwitz from northern Transylvania and the Carpathian Ukraine. There, the younger women and girls were often separated from their parents and other family members. Hungarian Sara R. stated: “I was deported from the Uzschorod ghetto sometime in May 1944. . . . We arrived on the day before the Shawuoth festival. Immediately after our arrival we passed through a selection that Dr. Mengele, who I later saw repeatedly, directed. During the selection my mother and my two-and-a-half-year-old brother were designated for death by gas. With my sister Hilda . . . and Rosa, who Mengele later selected for death, I went to camp section ‘C’ at the Auschwitz II-Birkenau concentration camp.”\(^4\)

On April 5, 1945, another addition of seven Czech and Slovakian women to Hainichen transported from Auschwitz is recorded in SS documents.

The age composition of the Hainichen subcamp prisoners was as follows: 1 born before 1900; 69 born between 1900 and 1909; 182 born between 1910 and 1919; 142 born between 1920 and 1924; 103 born between 1925 and 1930; and 3 with no information.

The women at Hainichen were housed in a multistory building. On the first floor there was the sleeping room for the Poles, a doctors’ room for the prisoner doctors, an infirmary, and an isolation room. The Hungarians had their sleeping and day rooms on both of the upper floors, and the female SS guards were situated on every floor.\(^5\) Former prisoners who were questioned agreed unanimously that the camp at Hainichen offered substantially better conditions than Auschwitz. It was clean and had washing facilities, which, however, the women could only use at night due to the supervisory SS female guard’s ban on daytime washing. Despite the ban, they did it when the SS female guards were not present. Cleanliness was extremely important for them.\(^6\)

Rosalia I. wrote about the medical care: “For work-related injuries the female prisoners were treated at the infirmary of the factory. My finger was also operated on in the factory, and the treatment was correct. I remember two women dying in the infirmary. A fellow sufferer from Poland died from kidney disease; she did not receive any treatment because the supervisory female guard declared her a malingerer.”\(^7\)

This death infuriated the women, as they had witnessed the abuse of Pole Edzia Feinowa by the supervisory female guard. Sonja P. stated: “When Feinowa was in the factory her foreman noticed her condition and gave her light work which she could perform while sitting. The supervisory female guard who made a habit of coming to the work site saw her working that way and demanded that Feinowa go with her to the camp. When we returned to the camp from the work shift . . . we saw the supervisory female guard hitting and kicking her. The camp doctor, Dr. Rita Smrcka from Bohemia, was not allowed to treat Feinowa . . . . The doctor also did not have any medicine or dressing.”\(^8\) Feinowa died a few days later.

SS documents record the deaths of four prisoners. Survivor reports list three other deaths in which the supervisory female guard and an SS guard were implicated. Regarding the work assignment, Sonja P. reported: “We had to work at Framo-Werke—I was trained there to be a master welder. We had to work very intensely—in two work shifts at twelve hours each. We walked to work—it was a two kilometer (one and a quarter mile) journey. . . . Every group was accompanied by an SS female guard, who was always armed with a gun.”\(^9\)

The regulations for calculating the work of the prisoners are found in the official directives: “Thus, the total work time per prisoner has to be proven with absolutely no interruptions in an unambiguous manner with evidence and exact information pertaining to control numbers, name, quantity produced, or earned time units, etc.”\(^10\) Another reference reads: “The fixed daily rate we have to pay is 4 Reichsmarks (RM),—. If one assumes an average workday of ten hours, an hourly wage of .40 RM results, which applies to every female Jewish prisoner without regard to their age. Every wage hour is to be valued at this rate. The settlement factor, which is to be credited on the wage bill, is fixed for these prisoners at 6.4 RM for every one hundred time units, which will be paid for German women nineteen and older. If this rate does not result in a net payment, this crediting factor is still absolutely justified, for we also pay premiums and have a number of additional costs to cover, for example, the entire camp maintenance.”\(^11\)

For the month of December 1944, the Flossenbürg administration claimed from Framo-Werke 10,395 full days worked at the rate of 4 RM per prisoner per day and 474 half days worked at the rate of 2 RM per prisoner per day, which altogether amounted to 42,526 RM. After deducting the cost of prisoner rations that the factory had procured, amounting to 10,479.80 RM, 32,048.20 RM were to be paid into the Flossenbürg account at the Reichsbank branch in Weiden.\(^12\) With these official directives, the factory management admitted its responsibility for the slave driving of the prisoners at work (piecework), as well as their starvation of the women with extremely meager rations.

SS-Oberscharführer Wilhelm Loh was the camp leader (Lagerführer), about whom several women testified that he did not behave inhumanely toward them. However, he “did not have the situation at the camp under control. He was afraid of the supervisory female guard.”\(^13\) Ten SS guards reported to him, among whom were several ethnic Germans that the SS had recruited from the Hungarian and Romanian Banat region.

Supervisory SS female guard Gerda Becker determined the internal running of the camp; she was in charge of 25 female guards, some of whom had come with the women from Auschwitz but most of whom had been recruited in Hainichen and the surrounding area. The survivors were unanimous in their verdict of the supervisory guard. Hungarian Eva G. expressed this as follows: “The female camp leader was the
demon of the camp. . . . She did worse things than her orders allowed. If something bad happened to the prisoners one could be sure that she was behind it. She was also the only one who regularly beat prisoners." Another Hungarian inmate said about the head guard: “She was the terror of the camp. Those of us prisoners who spoke Hungarian called her *Halál* (Hungarian for death). . . . During the winter, without proper shoes and warm underwear, many of us suffered from cystitis and had to urinate frequently. The supervisory female guard issued the order that we could only go to the bathrooms in groups and at specific times. This was in effect for the work site. The women who developed cramps from the irritation relieved themselves on the work site in buckets. . . . As punishment, the entire work unit had their lunch taken away."

In April 1945, the women were at first evacuated on foot in the direction of Freiberg and from there transported on a several days’ journey in open freight cars toward Leitmeritz (Litoměřice). At Aussig (Ústí n.L.) two women attempted to escape during a bombardment. The SS caught them again but did not shoot them. As no rations were distributed, the guards let the women pull up weeds or gather and cook plant remains from adjacent fields during stops.

About their liberation, Rosalia I. reported: “We then traveled to a city that was about five kilometers (three miles) away from Theresienstadt [Leitmeritz], and went to Theresienstadt on foot. I saw many dead bodies in front of the camp gate at Theresienstadt. I lost consciousness and awoke in the camp. The camp leader had accompanied us to the camp gate. . . . I was liberated by Soviet troops on May 9, 1945, in Theresienstadt. I stayed in the camp until August 15, 1945, working there as a nurse with those sick with typhus.”

Several women from the Hainichen subcamp, of which 41 were not registered upon their arrival at the Theresienstadt ghetto, possibly because they had become victims of the evacuation transport, died of typhus or exhaustion after liberation, while still in Theresienstadt. Historian Marek Poloncarz reported that 484 women registered at Theresienstadt were reported to have come from the Hainichen subcamp. In fact, only 466 of these prisoners belonged to the Hainichen subcamp.

After the war, Lagerführer Loh was investigated and brought before court along with other SS members. In the Flossenbürg Trial, a U.S. military tribunal sentenced him to death but then commuted the sentence to life in prison. Hans-Werner R., manager of Framo-Werke, was imprisoned by Soviet authorities after the war and committed to the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD) special camp Tost near Gleiwitz (Gliwice) in Poland, where he presumably died from dysentery and hunger in September 1945.

### SOURCES


Relevant records may be found in BA-L, ZdL., IV 410 AR-Z 3007/66; IV 410 AR-Z 54/70, Bd. I and II; ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg; Ba-VEB-BH.

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### NOTES

1. Ba-VEB-BH, letter of Framo-Werke's company manager to the armaments detachment on February 1, 1944.
6. Towa Karny, communication to the author from November 2, 2000.
8. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 54/70, Bd. II, p. 399, statement by Sonja P.
12. BA-B, Film 4053, Auf.-No. 701, Forderungsnachweis No. 798 des KZ Flossenbürg an die Framo-Werke Hainichen.
15. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 54/70, Bd. II, p. 298, statement by Blanka F.

### HAPPPURG

Near Happurg, a small town in the vicinity of Hersbuck near Nürnberg, there were plans to dig a system of tunnels into a mountain from mid-1944 so that Bayerische Motoren Werke (BMW) could produce airplane engines underground, safe from Allied air raids. The project was part of an attempt by the German war command to produce fighter planes that
could defend Germany from Allied bombers. A special Fighter Staff (Jägerstab) was formed that was supposed to work with various ministries of the German Reich to organize fast and effective production of aircraft. As in many other locations, the SS made large numbers of concentration camp prisoners available for the project—in Happurg the prisoners came from the Flossenbürg concentration camp.

At first, a prison camp was established in Happurg itself in May 1944. From August 1944 the prisoners were held in a new subcamp at Hersbruck.

On May 17, 1944, 147 prisoners from the Flossenbürg concentration camp arrived in Happurg by truck and were accommodated in the hall of the Hotel Schwarzer Adler. Until the end of May, the prisoners had to construct a makeshift camp in a barn near the Haberstumpf mill. The SS eventually accommodated some 500 to 700 prisoners there for a few months. The living conditions for the prisoners were very poor. Later witness statements mention nightly screams, torture, deaths, and executions. It is claimed that there were between 10 and 15 deaths in Happurg. There is also a record of at least one successful escape attempt.

The whole town of Happurg was dramatically changed by the massive underground relocation project: civilian workers, forced laborers, SS men, secretaries, engineers, and miners required accommodation in town, and office space had to be created for the organization of the construction project. As a result, just about all the townspeople came in contact with those involved in the construction project, whether directly or indirectly. Friendships were made, and marriages took place, too. The construction project, located on a slope above the town, completely changed the entire valley—there were railway tracks, a building yard, cable cars, and thousands of people in the tunnels and right in front of them. The inhabitants of Happurg (and later of Hersbruck) could see the prisoners every day as they marched to work and later returned to the camp.

Construction of the tunnels was performed not only by concentration camp prisoners but also by forced laborers, by detainees held by the SS and police units, and by civilian workers. The initial accommodation of the concentration camp prisoners in Happurg, the Hotel Schwarzer Adler, was used as a forced labor camp after the prisoners were transferred to the barn at Haberstumpf. From August 1944, all concentration camp prisoners were no longer held in Happurg but in the newly erected subcamp at Hersbruck. The mill at Haberstumpf where the prisoners had previously been housed was now used as a temporary accommodation for detainees held by the SS and police while they had to construct their own penal camp with stone barracks between Happurg and Förrenbach, a neighboring town.

The Happurg subcamp was the beginning of a construction project that in the few months between May 1944 and April 1945 cost about 4,000 concentration camp prisoners their lives. Gradually, the project at Happurg turned into a camp landscape with various kinds of prisoners and civilian workers. However, the project was mainly carried out by concentration camp prisoners who, in contrast to the forced laborers and SS and police detainees, had to live and work under such murderous conditions that nearly half the concentration camp prisoners in Happurg and Hersbruck did not survive those few months in 1944–1945.

SOURCES

The most important archival sources on the Happurg subcamp (and above all the Hersbruck subcamp) are the files from the U.S. Army's second Dachau Trial—case 000-50-46, original files in NARA; filmed copies in BHStA-(M)—and the trial files from the Nuremberg Hersbruck trial in 1950—StA-N, Sta. LG Nürnberg-Fürth, 2367. Elmer Luchterhand's estate (BCL, Elmer Gustav Luchterhand Papers) contains research material and interviews with contemporary witnesses for both subcamps, Happurg and Hersbruck.

NOTES
2. See StA-N, Sta. LG Nürnberg-Fürth, Nr. 2637 (investigations by German judicial authorities with numerous witness accounts).

HELMBRECHTS
On July 19, 1944, 179 female prisoners and a few female guards from the Ravensbrück concentration camp arrived in Helmrechts, where they established a subcamp of the Ravensbrück concentration camp for women. The male guards
came from the Flossenbürg concentration camp. SS-Unterscharführer Alois Dörr was detachment leader. In June 1944, the Nürnberg armaments manufacturer Kabel und Metallwerke (Cable and Metal Works) Neumeyer had approached the Flossenbürg concentration camp with a request for prisoners since it had relocated part of its production facilities, which had been heavily hit in the air war, from Nürnberg to a factory building in Helmbrechts owned by the textile enterprise Witt (Weiden).  

From September 1, 1944, the women’s subcamp at Helmbrechts was administered by the Flossenbürg concentration camp. Helmbrechts thus became one of 25 Flossenbürg subcamps for women. The camp on the southwest side of Kumbacher Strasse was ready for occupancy in August 1944 and consisted of 11 wooden barracks, 4 of which were surrounded by a barbed-wire fence. Initially, 3 wooden barracks were filled with prisoners, and another served as an infirmary where untrained prisoners worked as nurses and a Russian female doctor, a prisoner herself, provisionally took care of the sick. The roll-call square was located between the prisoners’ barracks and the infirmary.

By April 19, 1945, four other transports with about 500 female non-Jewish prisoners had arrived in Helmbrechts from the Ravensbrück concentration camp. The prisoners had been given nothing to eat on their three-day journey and were poorly clothed. Many of them fell ill during the transport. The living conditions for these prisoners, mostly from Poland, the Soviet Union, and the Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, were extreme to catastrophic. The lack of food, poor hygienic conditions, 12-hour work shifts with only one longer break, and beatings and humiliation at work were all part of everyday life in the Helmbrechts subcamp and the branch factory of Kabel-und Metallwerke Neumeyer. Admittedly, the company’s administration protested against the mistreatment of prisoners since, after all, they wanted to achieve their production targets.

However, this did not alter the camp terror of the female guards and camp leader Dörr. Beatings with rubber tubes were common; the prisoners were not allowed to wash their clothes and could only wash themselves once every two months with a piece of poor-quality soap. Two prisoners who had escaped from the factory premises were caught one day later and hanged in the Flossenbürg main camp. Until they were caught, all prisoners were forced to stand in the roll-call square without food.  

This episode repeated itself on February 25, 1945, when there was another escape attempt that included the Russian female doctor. After two of the three escapees had been caught, they were beaten in front of the eyes of their fellow prisoners until they lay lifeless in the roll-call square. The doctor died that same night. These events were also observed by a neighboring site outside the camp. In addition, by March 1945, between 10 and 20 non-Jewish prisoners had died in Helmbrechts.

The conditions in the Helmbrechts subcamp abruptly changed on March 6, 1945, with the arrival of 621 Jewish women and girls from the Silesian subcamp Grünberg of the Gross-Rosen concentration camp. They had had to cover the distance to Helmbrechts on foot, beginning at the end of January 1945. After their deportation to Auschwitz, the Jewish women from Hungary had already marched from there to Schlesiersee, excavated tank ditches, and been driven on foot to the Grünberg subcamp. Here they remained for only one night and eventually arrived in Helmbrechts utterly weakened, undernourished, and in an extremely critical state of health. Originally, the trek had consisted of about 1,000 women and girls; with the prisoners from Grünberg, the numbers rose to 1,300. Some 200 women who could no longer walk were transported by the SS to the Zwodau subcamp. Of the others, only 621 arrived in Helmbrechts. The remainder had either collapsed or been beaten or shot to death along the way.

In Helmbrechts the camp administration put the Jewish prisoners in the two rear barracks. There were no places to sleep, only some straw on the ground. Seriously ill prisoners were placed in one corner of the barracks where there were bunk beds, but there was practically no medical care even though the SS designated this area as the “Jewish sickbay.” Medicine and new prisoner clothes that were available were not handed out to the Jewish women. Empty barracks were not used despite the catastrophic overcrowding. The Jewish women were given “Jewish soup,” a particularly poor form of food; were not put to work in the Neumeyer armaments factory; and remained locked up in the camp. Until the camp was evacuated on April 13, 1944, between 40 and 50 of the Jewish women died during their one-month stay in Helmbrechts—a death rate that fundamentally contrasted that of the non-Jewish prisoners.

The murderous living conditions that affected above all the Jewish women and girls continued on the death march from Helmbrechts along the border of the German Reich and the Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The non-Jewish prisoners were given new clothes, shoes, and a little food before the march and were thus able to increase their chances of survival. The Jewish women were excluded from these privileges, had to march at the rear of the trek, and slimmed down to skeletons within a short period of time. From the Zwodau subcamp—the initial goal of the march—the prisoners had to continue marching south. Many Jewish women from the Zwodau camp were taken along; some non-Jewish prisoners were left behind there. Now the march consisted of about 700 Jewish women, a little more than 20 non-Jews, and the guards. All in all, at least 129 women died from exhaustion, illness, and the cold during the last stage of the death march to its final destination Prachatitz. At least 49 were murdered by the guards. Around 100 women who were sick and could no longer walk were left behind in Volary (Wallern), the second-to-last stop on the death march; 20 of them died before they were liberated by the Americans.

Until 1947, American judicial authorities investigated events in Helmbrechts without prosecuting anyone. It was only in 1969 that the Hof District Court sentenced camp leader Alois Dörr to life imprisonment.
SOURCES

The most important source on the Helmibrechts subcamp and the death march along the Bavarian-Bohemian border are the files of the trial against Alois Dörr at LG Hof (J 1325/62). They include numerous witness statements and photographs.  

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NOTES
4. Ibid., p. 128.
5. Ibid., p. 148.

HERSBRUCK
In 1944–1945, the Hersbruck subcamp held several thousand prisoners who were used to dig a system of tunnels into a mountain close to the nearby town of Happurg. There, the Bayerischen Motoren Werke (BMW) intended to manufacture airplane engines for fighter aircraft under the code name “Dogger.” However, the tunnels were only partially completed, and nothing was actually produced. Only the Osram Company transferred machines from the Leitzmeritz subcamp (Litomerice) to Happurg in 1945.

The first 147 prisoners, who arrived in Happurg by truck on May 17, 1944, were accommodated in the hall of a hotel at first and later in a temporary camp near a barn in Happurg. Probably by July 26, 1944, all the concentration camp prisoners were no longer held in Happurg but in the newly constructed Hersbruck subcamp. The SS had the subcamp constructed next to the Reichsarbeitsdienst (Reich Labor Service, RAD) barracks, which later became the city of Hersbruck’s tax and revenue office. The concentration camp site thus lay on the outskirts of Hersbruck. The camp towers could be seen from the local open-air swimming pool, the Strudelbad. According to priest Hans-Friedrich Lenz, who as a member of the Luftwaffe had been assigned to the SS to be a guard at the camp, it consisted of “fifteen overcrowded accommodation barracks and the four overcrowded barracks of the infirmary and the ‘mercy block.’” In addition, there were the camp office, kitchen buildings, toilets, the mortuary, and roll-call square. An aerial photo from 1945 shows a few additional barracks.

The Dogger construction project used not only concentration camp prisoners but also forced laborers, SS and police detainees, and civilian workers. For all of these people, accommodations and camps were set up in Happurg and the surrounding area. In mid-August 1944 there were about 1,900 prisoners in the Hersbruck subcamp, the center of the camp landscape surrounding the Dogger construction project. The number of concentration camp prisoners rose steadily in the eight months of the Hersbruck subcamp’s existence, as its strength reports show. On December 28, 1944, there were 2,754 prisoners in the camp; on February 1, 1945, 4,028 prisoners; on February 28, 1945, 5,863; on March 31, 1945, 4,970; and finally, on April 13, 1945, there were 4,767 registered prisoners. Thus, there were times when there were almost 6,000 prisoners in the Hersbruck subcamp at once. However, with up to 30 people dying each day from the conditions in the camp, from execution, hunger, or brutal violence of the SS guards or camp Kapos, the total number of prisoners at approximately 9,000 to 9,500 people was considerably higher. Transports with prisoners arrived from Flossenbürg, Gross-Rosen, Auschwitz, and other camps.

The detachment leaders at the Hersbruck subcamp were, in succession, SS-Hauptsturmführer Emil Fügner, Heinrich Forster (who disappeared after 1945), and Ludwig Schwarz. Because the project, in part, served air force armament, some of the guards were transferred from the Luftwaffe to the SS.

The camp elder was Martin Humm, considered a criminal prisoner. He was sentenced to death by a U.S. military court; later he was pardoned and released from prison in 1957.

There were prisoners from 21 nations in the Hersbruck subcamp, including many Hungarian Jews. The camp on Amberg-Strasse was overcrowded and had a completely inadequate, improvised infrastructure. Morass and the poor disposal of feces promoted illnesses of all types. Inside the tunnels, the work detachments were constantly affected by accidents because of inadequate safety measures. Outside the tunnels, the prisoners suffered because of weather conditions and the heavy physical labor involved in building railways and transporting building materials. Thus, the extreme conditions in the camp and at work inside and outside the tunnels cost the lives of about 4,000 to 4,500 concentration camp prisoners in the few months of the Hersbruck subcamp’s existence between May 1944 and April 1945. This means nearly every other prisoner in the camp did not survive the winter of 1944–1945. According to entries in the Flossenbürg Zahlenbücher (Numbers Books), which are incomplete, 39 prisoners successfully escaped. Only 4 releases are documented. Because of the many dead, the SS established its own crematorium. Corpses of prisoners were also burned in the open air at the end of 1944.
The Hersbruck subcamp was evacuated in April 1945. A transport train with sick prisoners left Hersbruck in the direction of Dachau, and five columns set out on foot on a death march. Some of the prisoners were freed by the U.S. Army on the way to Dachau; others were forced to march from Dachau in the direction of the Alps before they were liberated. About 500 prisoners were able to escape during the marches, and 300 died or were killed.

There are a number of Hersbruck survivors who became prominent after 1945. Some of them wrote about their time in the camp. They include author Bernt Engelmann; the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) politician from North Rhine Westphalia, Werner Jakobi; sculptor and professor of literature Vittore Bocchetta; author Janusz Krasiński; Italian resistance fighter Teresio Olivelli; artist Georg Hans Trapp; and Hungarian-born Bernhard Teitelbaum.

In the Dachau Flossenbürg Trial of 1946–1947, SS men and prisoner-functionaries were put on trial. In the Nürnberg Hersbruck Trial of 1950, other perpetrators as well as miners and members of the construction administration were tried. Most received light sentences or were pardoned or acquitted. Only the last detachment leader, Ludwig Schwarz, was executed.

**NOTES**

1. See BA-B, NS 4, 393/1, S. 845; StA-N, Sta. LG Nürnberg-Fürth, Nr. 2637 1a, pp. 29r–30 (record of interview of the prisoner Felix Marszalek).

2. BA-B, NS 4/Fl 393/2, FZW 925 (overview labor demand, July 1944).

3. See the collection in the ASt-Her, File NS 2 (Hersbruck subcamp).


8. The death rate is quoted by Lenz, Sagen Sie Herr Pfarrer, p.131.


**SOURCES**

Gerhard Faul’s book Sklavenarbeiter für den Endseig. KZ Hersbruck und das Rüstungsprojekt Dogger (Hersbruck, 2003) is the first to depict the camp landscape around Huppurp and the Hupburg subcamp as the precursor to the Hersbruck subcamp, but unfortunately it is without source references or a scientific apparatus. Two essays that also deal with the Hupburg subcamp are Alexander Schmidt, “Das KZ-Aussenlager Hersbruck und seine Wahrnehmung in der Region Nürnberg nach 1945,” in Spuren des Nationalsozialismus: Gedenkstättenarbeit in Bayern, ed. BLZ-BPA (Munich, 2000), pp. 150–162; and Schmidt, “Das KZ-Aussenlager Hersbruck. Zur Geschichte des grössten Aussenlagers des KZ Flossenbürg in Bayern,” DaHe 20 (2004). The most important sources on the Hupburg subcamp (above all the Hersbruck subcamp) are the files of the U.S. Army’s Dachau Trial (cases 000-50-46 and 000-50-46-I). The original documents are located in the NARA; film copies are held at the BHStA-(M). Also important are the trial files from the Nürnberg Hersbruck Trials in 1950 (StA-N, Sta. LG Nürnberg-Fürth, 2367). The estate of Elmer Luchterhand (BCL, Elmer Gustav Luchterhand Papers) contains research material and eyewitness accounts on the Hupburg and Hersbruck subcamps. An important source on life inside the camp is Hans-Friedrich Lenz’s book Sagen Sie Herr Pfarrer, wie kommen Sie zur SS?—Bericht eines Pfarrers der Bekennenden Kirche über seine Erlebnisse im Kirchenkampf und als SS-Oberscharführer im Konzentrationslager Hersbruck (Giessen, 1982). Vittore Bocchetta, a former prisoner, has published a graphic memoir, Jene fünf verdammten Jahre: Aus Verona in die Konzentrationslager Flossenbürg und Hersbruck (Lage, 2003). Sociologist Elmer Luchterhand, who as an American officer in 1945 experienced the liberation of the Hersbruck subcamp, has published interesting eyewitness statements in “Das KZ in der Kleinstadt. Erinnerungen einer Gemeinde an den unsystematischen Völkermord,” in Die Reiben fest geschossen: Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alltags unterm Hakenkreuz, ed. Detlev Peukert and Jürgen Reulecke (Wuppertal, 1981), pp. 435–454.

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**HERTINE**

The Flossenbürg subcamp Hertine was located close to a munitions factory in the village of Hertine (Rtyně), which was about 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) to the southeast of Teplitz (Teplice) in Bohemia.

A transport of 599 Hungarian Jewish women arrived from the Auschwitz concentration camp at the newly erected Hertine camp on October 10, 1944.1 The prisoners were forced to work at the Welboth (Velveˇty) Fabrik zur Verwertung Chemischer Erzeugnisse Hertine GmbH (Factory for the Processing of Chemical Substances Hertine, Ltd.), a subsidiary of the explosives company Dynamit Nobel AG.

According to a statement by former prisoner K.F., the camp was located in a forest close to the factory. It consisted of five barracks in each of which slept approximately 120 women. Each barracks was divided into rooms that were shared by between 15 and 20 women. The women slept on threestiered bunk beds. The square site was surrounded with barbed wire, and at each corner, there was a watchtower.2

The detachment leader of the Hertine camp, SS-Oberscharführer Christian Mohr, had been block leader between 1938 and 1942 in the Flossenbürg main camp. He was
women who were over the age of 18. Filled with explosives, and this work could only be done by the shell casings that had been produced in Oederan were being exchanged for older Oederan prisoners; in Hertine Oederan, this transport comprised younger Hertine prisoners transferred to Oederan. According to S.H., who was held in Hertine camp, women from the Flossenbürg subcamp in Oederan were transferred to Hertine, and 27 women from Hertine were transferred to Oederan. The Flossenbürg Nummernbüchern (Numbers Books) confirm this: the women transferred from Hertine to Oederan were mostly born between 1907 and 1922. Nevertheless, there were still many young women who remained at Hertine.

A small prisoner detachment did agricultural work. However, the majority of the prisoners worked three shifts a day at the Welboth munitions factory. They filled bombs, grenades, and mines with explosives and phosphorous. Prisoner mistreatment was prevalent. The prisoners' warm clothing was taken from them, and they had to work in winter wearing thin workers' clothes. Many fell ill. One girl is said to have been driven insane by the inhuman conditions in the camp and was shot. An explosion in the middle of December 1944 is said to have mortally injured a female overseer and a number of prisoners. The SS suspected sabotage and killed a number of other female prisoners. It is known for certain that 626 prisoners entered the Hertine camp. The Flossenbürg Nummernbüchern record 4 deaths in the period from the end of November 1944 to the end of January 1945. On January 16, 1945, 2 women were transferred to Ravensbrück. Five women's names have been crossed out in the period from the end of November 1944 to the end of January 1945. On January 16, 1945, 2 women were transferred to Ravensbrück. Five women's names have been crossed out and replaced by other names; this was probably to correct an error in the entries. The last surviving strength report from April 13, 1945, refers to 394 prisoners—there is no plausible explanation for the large discrepancy between the documented deaths and the small strength numbers. Apparently, dead prisoners were cremated in the nearby crematorium of the Flossenbürg subcamp at Leitmertiz. On April 16, 1945, 16 Jewish prisoners from Hertine were buried at the local cemetery. The camp was evacuated in the middle of April 1945 to Theresienstadt. The prisoners covered most of the way by rail, and they were liberated by the Red Army on May 8, 1945.

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According to prisoner K.G., after the Hertine camp was evacuated, women from the Flossenbürg subcamp at Chemnitz who had already been evacuated to Leitmertiz were forced to work in the Hertine munitions factory until liberation on May 8, 1945.


The investigation files of the ZdL at BA-L, collections 410 AR 721/73 and 410 AR 2959/66, and files of the BA-B, NS 4/FL, are the main source on the Hertine camp. They have been complemented by an exhaustive report on exhumations done at the end of the war in the Teplitz area (collection OVS, Inv. č. 83, Carton 162) and the monthly strength reports from the last months of the war (collection NSM, Sign. 110–4-88) in SUA. There are also prisoner memoirs that deal with the prisoners’ time in Hertine in Michael Düsing, ed., Wir waren zum Tode bestimmt. Lódz—Theresienstadt—Auschwitz—Freiberg—Oederan—Mauthausen (Leipzig, 2002).

**NOTES**

1. BA-B, NS 4/FL 393–2.
2. BA-L, ZdL, 410 AR 721/73, S. 258.

**HOF-MOSCHENDORF**

The Hof-Moschendorf subcamp was established on September 3, 1944. It was established as a Dachau subcamp when the SS-Hauptzeugamt (Main Material Office) was transferred to Hof. From September 30, 1944, to its dissolution on April 4, 1945, it was administered by the Flossenbürg concentration camp.

The subcamp was located in the Hof suburb of Moschendorf in the disused Reincke pottery factory between Oberkotzau Strasse and the railway line Selb–Hof–Eger. About 100 prisoners who repaired weapons seized in the war were held there. The prisoners and guards all came from Dachau.

The work, living, and food conditions in the Moschendorf subcamp were much better than at the Flossenbürg main camp or in subcamps such as Ansbach, Hersbruck, or Helmbrechts. Among the 102 prisoners in March 1945, there were 33 Germans, 20 Poles, and 14 Russians, as well as smaller prisoner groups from another 10 nations. There was only 1 Jew among...
the prisoners. Most of the prisoners wore the red triangle. The Kapo was Heinrich Witt from Munich. His deputy was Alois Pelka. The camp commander was SS-Sturmbannführer Ludwig Bauer from Neustadt near Coburg.

Four deaths can be verified at the camp: two Polish prisoners who were buried in the Hof-Moschendorf cemetery are recorded in the prisoner lists compiled after 1945 as having died from tuberculosis; another prisoner died in a work accident. He is buried at the Hof city cemetery.¹

Yugoslav prisoner Simeon Sarnawski was caught by the SS when he tried to make soles for his shoes from disused driving belts. He was reported and taken back to Flossenbürg, condemned to death, and publicly executed on December 27, 1944, on the factory site in front of the other prisoners. It is alleged that SS-Oberscharführer Otto Haupt was in charge of the execution. Sarnawski’s body was cremated in the Hof crematorium.²

A large number of prisoners were able to escape during the dissolution of the camp, with the result that only about 60 prisoners were taken by car and bicycle in the direction of the Dachau concentration camp. Only 42 reached their goal. There are contradictory statements on the deaths and murders that occurred on the route to Dachau. There is no evidence to support a claim that about 20 prisoners were murdered in Rehau and Oberkotzau.³

On April 15, 1945, after the liberation of the camp, 35 prisoners who had escaped before the evacuation march gathered together in Hof. One of them, the Polish prisoner Alois Pelka, died, and he was buried at the Hof-Moschendorf cemetery. In 1960, the 3 who were buried in the Hof-Moschendorf cemetery were reinterred, with 10 others buried in the city cemetery at Plauener Strasse in the memorial cemetery at the Flossenbürg concentration camp. Of these, only 4 can be said to have certainly been at the Hof-Moschendorf subcamp.


The BA-B holds a few strength reports and transfer documents relating to the Hof-Moschendorf subcamp. The Numerkubichern of the Flossenbürg concentration camp (NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3, 000-50-46) list the names of the prisoners from Hof. Judicial proceedings relating to Hof-Moschendorf are documented in the ZdL (410-AR-Z 115/68) at BA-L. The report by eyewitness Hans Ballmann, originally a speech given on June 8, 1946, at a public meeting, contains a few errors. It was published as Im Konzentrationslager: Ein Tatsachenbericht (Calw, 1946).

Alexander Schmidt
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

NOTES


3. ASt-Hof, BE 751, amp Moschendorf.

4. For the unproven murders, see Hans Ballmann, Im Konzentrationslager: Ein Tatsachenbericht (Calw, 1946), p. 15.

HOHENSTEIN-ERNSTTHAL

During the large air raid on Chemnitz on September 11, 1944, the Wanderer-werke of the Auto Union AG in Siegmar-Schönau was also hit. The accommodations for the outside detail of the Flossenbürg concentration camp burned down. The prisoners were employed for weeks doing clearing-up work and had to sleep outside for a long time.¹ The Auto Union planned to transfer part of its production. This was discussed in a board meeting. The minutes read: “The HL-230 manufacturing should be housed in branch plants. The factory rooms of the company Laurenz und Wilde, Hohenstein-Ernstthal, are suggested.”² The transferring of the tank motor HL-230 manufacturing to the disused cloth-weaving mill Laurenz und Wilde at Hohenstein-Ernstthal was completed before the end of the year.

In January 1945, the SS forced the prisoners of the Siegmar outside detail to march to their new deployment location. The prisoners were housed in a barracks camp on the rifle house grounds in Hohenstein-Ernstthal, which were secured by high barbed-wire fences and guard towers.

Around 400 of the original 420 prisoners were transferred to Hohenstein-Ernstthal. Left behind were at least 6 dead and some prisoners injured during a bombing raid on Siegmar. A transport of 50 Hungarian Jews replenished the Hohenstein-Ernstthal outside detail. The detail primarily consisted of Polish Jewish men who had been brought to Auschwitz after the Lödz ghetto had been cleared. Former Polish prisoner Pinkus B. stated: “From the outbreak of the war until approximately August/September 1944 I was housed in the Lödz ghetto. Only in 1944 were we resettled in several transports. Most of the people from this ghetto went to Auschwitz. After only about six weeks we went to Siegmar-Schönau, where we stayed a couple of months. After Siegmar-Schönau was bombed, we were transferred to Hohenstein-Ernstthal.”³

In Siegmar the prisoners had already received the Flossenbürg concentration camp matriculation numbers 26411 through 26810.⁴ The command at Flossenbürg gave the Hungarian prisoners the matriculation numbers of the series 40000. On February 28, 1945, the Hohenstein-Ernstthal prisoners were of the following nationalities: 379 Poles, all Jewish; 49 Hungarians, all Jewish; 4 Russians, all Jewish; 4 Germans, 3 of whom were Jewish; 2 French, 1 of whom was Jewish; 1 Chinese, who was Jewish; and 1 Czech, who was Jewish. According to this list the camp at this point had a strength of 441 prisoners.⁵ Until March 31, 1945, this number was changed only by the death of a Polish prisoner.⁶

The prisoners were employed in 12-hour shifts manufacturing parts for the “Tiger” tank engines HL-230 as well as...
truck gearbox parts. Under heavy pressure after the long-term stoppage of the factory at Siegmar, but primarily due to the delayed start of production in the subterranean tank motor factory “Elsabe” of the Auto Union in Leitmeritz, factory management attempted to use the prisoners as effectively as possible. It thus came to a very typical incident in this respect, about which Jewish historian Adolf Diamant reports: “Several of the Jewish prisoners, from whom their eyeglasses had been taken at Auschwitz, complained to the German foremen in the factory that they could not see well without glasses. As a result the work management sent these 'concentration camp skilled workers,' under SS guard, to an eye doctor who prescribed them glasses that the prisoners also received.” As the food was completely insufficient in light of the heavy work, the physical strength of the prisoners drained, and their resistance to sickness dwindled. At least six prisoners died at Hohenstein-Ernstthal. Szaja B. wrote about the death of his brother: “My brother and I worked at Hohenstein-Ernstthal in the factory, until my brother got sick and went to the sickbay. An SS-Oberscharführer . . . allowed me to sleep the last night in the sickbay next to my brother until he died. With the help of a fellow prisoner I buried him the next day in the graveyard at Hohenstein-Ernstthal.” Two SS-Unterführer and 29 guards served under the camp leader, SS-Oberscharführer Franz Reber. In October 1944, Reber had already taken over the command at Siegmar-Schönau in place of the former leader, who had been injured in a bombing raid. He relied on Max Garfinkel, acting as the camp elder, who did not receive any positive testimonies from survivors. He more or less worked against the prisoners.  

After production had ceased in April 1945, owing to an interruption in material delivery, the SS evacuated the prisoners by foot in April 1945 toward Erzgebirgskamm with the goal of reaching the Bohemian side of the Flossenbürg concentration camp. During the march, a number of prisoners died from exhaustion. Several could escape as the SS increasingly wandered off from the column. Pinkus B. stated: “The camp was evacuated—it was around the middle of April as we started out marching. I remember that we were on the road for several weeks toward Eger . . . . Our small guard unit carried out the evacuation, but at liberation there were only a few left as the others had themselves fled . . . . I also tried to escape but was caught. I do not know of any killing actions due to escape attempts, only beatings . . . . Many also died at night, which surely resulted from the evacuation strain and hunger.”

On May 7, 1945, the Soviet army liberated the prisoners near Ludira (Zlutice). The completely exhausted men were brought to hospitals and sanatoriums, some also to Upper Franconia, where several of them died even weeks after liberation.

SOURCES An unpublished study that deals with this subcamp is Adolf Diamant, “Chronologie der Orte des Widerstandes, der Zwangsarbeiter, der Kriegsgefangen und der KZ-Häftlinge. Hohenstein-Ernstthal” (unpub. MSS, Frankfurt am Main, n.d.).}


HOLLEISCHEN

One of the largest subcamps in what is the present-day Czech Republic was located 25 kilometers (15.5 miles) to the southwest of Píšťa in the west Bohemian village of Holleischen (Holyšov) near the German-Czech border. On average, 600 women were forced to work in Factory II of Metallwerke Holleischen GmbH (Metal Works Holleischen Ltd.) from April 1944 to the end of the war. The women from the Holleischen subcamp worked in the munitions factory. There was also a men's camp where 200 prisoners worked as a construction detachment in building a shooting range. During the last months of the war, Holleischen was also a holding camp for evacuees from other subcamps, and the numbers of female prisoners increased by the end of the war to over 1,000.

Both Flossenbürg subcamps were part of a larger armaments and camp complex in Holleischen. The Berlin Waffen- und Munitionsfabriken AG (Weapons and Munitions Factories, Inc.) took over the site of an empty glass works in Holleischen in October 1938, soon after Germany’s annexation of the Sudetenland, and built it into a munitions factory (Factory I) for the Luftwaffe. The armaments company was renamed Metallwerke Holleischen GmbH in 1941. Factory II was located in a forest outside the village, which included a work settlement for German workers and employees. By the time of its completion, there were to be homes built in Holleischen for 1,000 families. In 1941, a subcamp for mostly Czech forced laborers was established. They were to construct the settlement. In the same year, another subcamp for
700 female Czechs was constructed. These women were to be forced laborers in the munitions factory. On June 31, 1941, the first 360 French prisoners of war (POWs) were transferred from Stalag XIII B in Weiden to Holleischen. In addition, mostly Russian POWs, being held in a special camp, were employed in forced labor in the armaments industry. The total number of workers in both factories is estimated to have been about 8,000 by the end of the war.\(^1\)

In the surviving labor request confirmations from the headquarters of the Flossenbürg concentration camp to Metallwerke, the Holleischen subcamp, with 195 female prisoners, is first documented on April 15, 1944. The male camp, consisting of 200 prisoners, is mentioned for the first time on August 11, 1944, in a trip report by the Higher-SS and Police Leader for Bohemia and Moravia, SS-Obergruppenführer Karl Hermann Frank, who was on an inspection tour of subcamps in the Sudeten district.

The Holleischen women’s subcamp was originally administered by the Ravensbrück concentration camp, because the first women transferred to the subcamp in April 1944 were from Ravensbrück. Although the camp was subordinate to Flossenbürg as far as work assignments were concerned from the beginning, it was administered by Ravensbrück until August 31, 1944.

The female prisoners were accommodated in the farm buildings of a nearby manor on the edge of the village, between Factory I and Factory II. The manor had an infirmary. The barns, haylofts, and stables of the manor were turned into quarters for the prisoners. All the windows, the gate, and roofs were covered with electrified barbed wire.\(^2\)

By August 1944, the number of women in Holleischen had climbed to 600. Thereafter, it remained relatively constant until the spring of 1945. The largest group of prisoners was French—more than 50 percent of the women were French. The number of Poles and Russians followed, with approximately 25 percent each.\(^3\) There were hardly any other nationalities or Jewish prisoners in Holleischen. This changed on March 6, 1945, with the arrival of 145 Jewish women by rail from the Flossenbürg subcamp at the Siemens-Schuckert works in Nürnberg. As a result, the prisoner numbers increased to 836. On March 9, 1945, another 259 prisoners arrived in Holleischen from the same dissolved subcamp, which had been bombed in mid-February and evacuated to Holleischen, together with its guard force.\(^4\) The prisoners, almost exclusively Hungarian Jews, had been deported in the autumn of 1944 from Auschwitz to Nürnberg.

The commander of Holleischen was SS-Hauptsturmführer Emil Fügner. At the time of Karl Hermann Franks’s visit on August 11, 1944, the Holleischen camp was guarded by 64 Luftwaffe soldiers and 27 female guards.\(^5\) The female SS guards came mostly from German Bohemia, and with one exception, they had all been stationed in Ravensbrück.

Five additional female guards from Ravensbrück arrived at Holleischen on October 25, 1944, and in the spring of 1945, there were 48 SS women at Holleischen. From October 1944 to the latest, Holleischen served as a training camp for the subcamps’ female guard personnel. In addition, it was a place where company representatives could learn about security, wages, and care for prisoners at subcamps.\(^6\) The companies often had to detail their own female employees to the SS as guards; they were trained for several weeks at Holleischen and then transferred to the SS, after which they had to swear allegiance to the SS and wear the SS uniform. Some of the guards, at their trials before the Extraordinary People’s Court (mimořádný lidový soud) in postwar Czechoslovakia, were able to prove that their service in the SS was forced upon them. Such proceedings ended with a prison term of between 1 and 10 years. The female SS guard Anni Graf was sentenced on August 3, 1948, by a French military court in Rastatt to 15 years for crimes against humanity.\(^7\)

The Holleischen prisoners were driven every morning to work in Factory II, which lay in a forest. They worked in 12-hour shifts. Toward the end of the war, the prisoners had to construct fortifications such as antitank ditches. The food consisted of 0.5 liter (2 cups) of black coffee and 200 grams (7 ounces) of bread in the morning, soup at lunch, and in the evening again, coffee and a piece of bread.

The prisoners were beaten with bowls by the camp personnel for the slightest infractions of the camp rules, or the dogs were set on them. Three French women, Noemi Suchet, Helene Lignier, and Simone Michel-Levy, each received 25 blows with a stick for supposed sabotage and were transferred back to the Flossenbürg main camp, where they were hanged on April 13, 1945, shortly before its evacuation.\(^8\) Eleven prisoners were buried at the local cemetery in Holleischen.

On September 13, 1945, three Polish prisoners, Stanisława Świergoła, Anna Fabicki, and Irena Cholewa, succeeded in escaping from Holleischen. Their fate is not known.\(^9\)

Little is known about the men’s camp at Holleischen. According to the International Tracing Service (ITS) Arolsen, it was mentioned for the last time on January 31, 1945. The last mention of the women’s camp is a work allocation list from the main camp on April 13, 1945; this gives the number of prisoners for the Holleischen camp as 1,091. In the last weeks before the end of the war, it was scarcely possible to use the women’s labor, as the destruction of the rail network meant that supplies could no longer be delivered to the factory.

Polish partisans liberated the Holleischen subcamp on May 3, 1945. Two days later, American troops arrived. The prisoners remained there until they were repatriated to their home countries, about five weeks later.

**Sources** Despite the size of the Holleischen camp and its function as a training ground for SS female wardens, it has not been intensively researched. The Czechoslovak research is largely in an older general overview titled Tábory utrpení a smrti, by Růžena Bubeníčková, Ludmilla Kubátová, and Irena Malá (Prague, 1969) or in the strongly political work Hrdinové protifašistického odboje, by Vojtěch Láštovka, Václav Němec, and Rudolf Stránský (Plzeň, 1985). As for newer research, Jörg Skriebeleit’s essay “Die Aussenlager des KZ Flossenbürg in Böhmen,” DaHe 15 (1999): 196–217, and Václav Jířík’s investigation into the People’s Courts in postwar Czechoslovakia
for a central SS Troop Training Ground Bohemia. Numer-
leave by September 1943 so that the area would be available
Initially about 17,600 people from 62 communities had to
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exschau, a small community on the eastern boundary of the
restricted military area. An SS Assault Gun School (Sturmg-
geschützschule) was established in Janowitz-Markt (Vrcho-
tory to Janowice) on the southern edge of the training area.
There was also a Flossenbürg subcamp at Janowitz. An SS
training camp, consisting of an SS-Junker- und Unterführ-
er-School (Cadet and Noncommissioned Officer School),
training regiment, and various SS pioneer battalions,
was located in Hradischko, on the northwest corner of the
site.
Prisoners were used for various purposes on the site, once
the military training ground had been established. In 1942,
a labor education camp (Arbeitserziehungslager) was established
near Hradischko. The prisoners had to work at the training
ground. After this camp was dissolved, the barracks were
occupied in November 1943 with prisoners from Flossen-
bürg. Additional barracks, guard towers, and a small roll-call
square were constructed so as to make the camp more suit-
able for the increased security required for concentration
camp prisoners. It is not exactly clear which SS unit based at
the troop training ground requested prisoners from Flossen-
bürg. It was probably the central command in Beneschoj, as
is suggested by a list of the first prisoner transport. On No-
over 17, 1943, 70 male German prisoners were transferred
“at the request of the SS Business Administration Main
Office [WVHA] on 11.11.43 to the Truppenübungsplatz
Beneschau near Prague” and sent to the barracks camp at
the village of Hradischko. The leader of the subcamp, Alfred
Kus, was the only Flossenbürg guard to be transferred to
Hradischko.
As Kus stated when questioned in 1947, he had arrived in
the Bohemian village only a few days before the prisoners
from Flossenbürg, to “take over the preparations for part of
the Flossenbürg camp that was to be transferred there.”
The camp organization, command, and security structure were
multilayered. This made judicial investigations after 1945
into the crimes committed there all the more difficult.
The commander of the SS-Troop Training Ground, SS-
Brigadeführer Karrasch, had primary responsibility for the
use of the concentration camp prisoners. Kus, as camp leader,
did have responsibility. Security was not provided by the SS
from Flossenbürg but by the various SS units who were sta-
tioned at the Truppenübungsplatz—initially, a training unit,
SS-Lehrregiment Hradischko; later, the SS-Pioneer Battal-
ions “Germania” and “Das Reich”; and for a short time, the
2nd SS-Wachbattalion from Prague.
The first prisoner transport of 70 prisoners reached Hra-
dischko on November 17, 1943. The camp strength of 500
prisoners was made up from these 70 prisoners, 66 German
prisoners who arrived from Buchenwald on November 26, 55
German prisoners from Flossenbürg who arrived at the camp
on Christmas Eve 1943, and 325 prisoners who arrived in
Hradischko on March 3, 1944. This last group was mostly

NOTES
1. Vojtěch Laštovka, Václav Němec, and Rudolf Stránský,
2. Křížena Bubeníčková, Ludmilla Kubátová, and Irena
Máša, Tabory atropení a smrtí (Prague, 1969), p. 109. Also Re-
cord of Interview of the Former SS Female Warden Martha
Pinner by the Dillingen Police on May 17, 1969, ZSL-1.,
AR-Z 175/75, Band II, S. 305.
3. SÚA, Prag, NSM, Sign. 110-4-88.
4. CEGESOMA, Brüssel, Microfilm Nr. 14368.
5. SÚA, KT-OVS 110-9-12.
6. SHStA-D, 11722 (Zeiss-Ikon AG), Nr. 319 Factory
Kitchen. According to a note on 11.28.44, a member of the
Goehle factory management informed Dresden shortly after
the establishment of the subcamp “on the occasion of a visit to
the Holleischen metal factory and the camp located there on
25 and 26.10.”
8. Record of Interview of B.F., August 3, 1948, to the Mili-
tary Court in the French Occupied Zone Germany, Rastatt in
9. NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3, 000-50-30-46, Box 337.

HRADISCHKO [AKA BENESCHAU]
The Flossenbürg subcamp in Hradischko (Hradíštko) is known
by a number of names. The SS administration files refer to it as
the “Beneschau labor camp,” and in fact this Flossenbürg sub-
camp was located in Hradischko, a small community about 40
kilometers (25 miles) to the southwest of Prague. The history
of this subcamp is directly related to the construction of a large
SS troop training ground in occupied Bohemia.
In November 1941, the SS-Troop Training Ground Ben-
eschau (Truppenübungsplatz Beneschau) was opened. It was
located close to Beneschau. A large expansion was planned
for the following year. On July 13, 1942, public notices in two
languages were distributed in the area around the city of
Neweklau (Neveklov), ordering the evacuation of all inhabit-
ants in an area of about 44,000 hectares (108,726 acres).
Initially about 17,600 people from 62 communities had to
leave by September 1943 so that the area would be available
for a central SS-Troop Training Ground Bohemia. Numero-

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945
French, but there were also Spaniards, Italians, Russians, and Poles. There were no Jews. The concentration camp prisoners were put in detachments of various sizes and set to work on just about every part of the Truppenübungsplatz.

The prisoners had to excavate ditches for the shooting range, lay water and sewerage pipes, build roads, and prepare buildings for military purposes; and from April 1945, they were almost exclusively engaged in building trenches and tank ditches. By this point, at least 20 prisoners had died because of the murderous working conditions. The Flossenbürg Nummernbücher (Numbers Books) record for the period March 20 to March 26, 1944, 19 deaths in Hradischko. Details of the transport lists are incomplete, and entries in the Numbers Books are not always clear. There is also an almost complete lack of information for the period November 1943 to March 1944. For these reasons, it is likely that the 20 recorded deaths for the period from March 1944 to April 1945 are too low. The prisoners died as a result of exposure to extreme working conditions, systematic food deprivation, and totally inadequate hygienic conditions. Their corpses were transported by truck to Prague, where they were cremated and the ashes disbursed.

In April 1945, there began a systematic execution of the prisoners. At this point, the Truppenübungsplatz had prepared its defenses in the face of the advancing Red Army. SS-Sturmbannführer Erwin Lange, commander of the SS-Pioneer Battalion “Germania” and local military commander at Hradischko, ordered the camp leader, Kus, to evacuate the concentration camp prisoners. However, there was no transport, and it was decided to liquidate the prisoners. Planted weapons were discovered during a search of the camp. The discovery provided the justification for the decision to murder the prisoners, who had supposedly planned an uprising.

The prisoners were ordered on April 9, contrary to the usual practice, to form groups of 100, with the non-German prisoners to the rear of the groups. Members of the SS-Pioneer Battalion “Germania” fired into the rear of the groups as they were on their way to work. In this way, at least 9 prisoners on April 9, 12 on April 10, and 27 prisoners on April 11 were murdered. It has not been explained why the shooting suddenly stopped on this date. The murders were noticed by the Czech civilian workers at the Truppenübungsplatz, the community of Hradiště published, in four languages, a small volume of the history of the subcamp, Hradiště—Koncentrační tábor (Hradiště, 2002).

Czech and German authorities after the war investigated in detail the mass executions that occurred between April 9 and 11, 1945. The four volumes of documents collected by the ZdL (now BA-L) also hold the investigation results of the Czech authorities. What is remarkable is that the witness statements by Czech civilian workers and forced laborers differ markedly from the statement of German civilians. In particular, the Czechs, unlike the Germans, provide details about the murders (ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 59/67). In Czech communities, local and district archives are widely held sources that primarily deal with the local events and have a catalog of single and mass graves. See, for example, the collections in SpkA-B.

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NOTES
1. Transport lists, November 17, 1943, CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14368.
3. Häftlingsnummernbuch, NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3.

Vienne publicist and social critic Karl Kraus could never have imagined when he wrote his monumental antiwar drama *The Last Days of Humanity* between 1915 and 1918 in the Bohemian town of Janowitz that the inferno he created would only a few years later take place in the vicinity of the gardens of the Janowitz Castle, the inspiration for his work. Before the Czechoslovak Republic was occupied by the National Socialists, Janowitz (Vrchotovy Janovice) was a small but not insignificant market town. It lies about 65 kilometers (40 miles) to the south of Prague. During the period of the dual Austro-Hungarian monarchy, Janowitz Castle was the home of the family of Baroness Sidonie Nádherný. With its expansive gardens and its milieu, the castle was a refuge for Austrian and Czech intellectuals such as Rainer Maria Rilke,
Karel Čapek, and Karl Kraus, who for many years was the partner of Nádherný.

Many castles were seized after the occupation of the Czechoslovak Republic by German troops. Camps, places of detention, and SS bases (for example, the Flossenbürg subcamps Eisenberg and Schleckenwerth) were established in the seized castles. The occupiers’ eyes likewise fell on the idyllic Janowitz Castle. The distinctive buildings and facilities were not to be the residence for National Socialist officials such as in Jungfern-Breschan. They were required for the expansion of the SS-Troop Training Ground Bohemia (Truppenübungsplatz Böhmens), which was opened in 1941. The village of Janowitz and its castle were located within a restricted area. Beginning in June 1942, 30,000 inhabitants were forced to relocate. Baroness von Borutin had to evacuate the castle, which was then made available for the SS, in 1944. Numerous SS units and bases were established on the 44,000-hectare (108,726-acre) military area. The command for the SS-Truppenübungsplatz Böhmens was based in Beneschau, a village on the eastern border of the restricted area. In Hradischko, on the northwest corner of the area, there was an SS-Cadet and Non-Commissioned Officer School (Junker- und Unterführer-Schule), an SS-Training Regiment (Lehrregiment), and a number of SS-Pioneer Battalions (Pionierbataillonen). Janowitz, on the southern edge of the training ground, was the base for an SS-Assault Gun School (Sturmgeschützschule). In 1944, after the confiscation of Baroness von Borutin’s property, the command of the SS-Sturmgeschützschule was accommodated in the castle. The stables and administrative buildings served as tank garages and workshops.

In 1943, a Flossenbürg subcamp was established on the troop training ground in Hradischko. The use of the prisoners was obviously beneficial for the SS because, as part of the expansion of the SS-Sturmgeschützschule, additional labor was needed, and the SS-Truppenübungsplatz Böhmens administration resorted to the use of the “resource” of concentration camp prisoners. On July 24, 1944, a transport of 100 prisoners, the majority of whom were French and Polish, left Flossenbürg in the direction of Janowitz. They arrived there on July 26. The prisoners were accommodated in wooden barracks near the village pond not far from Janowitz Castle. They were distributed to different work detachments: they had to work in the quarry at Schebanowitz (Šebáňovice) and at the numerous SS “settlements” (Höfe) on the training grounds in Mrwitz (Mrvice), where on weekends they did the harvest as well as expanding the tank and truck garages on the grounds of the castle. They were also required to build a sauna in one of the castle’s administrative buildings for the SS members stationed there.

There were several commanders in charge of the prisoners. The senior commander of the SS-Sturmgeschützschule was Obersturmbannführer Friedrich Graun. Graun, a young but highly decorated veteran of the Eastern Front, had been severely wounded in Russia. Following the amputation of a leg, he was named as the head of the SS-Sturmgeschützschule in Janowitz. The actual leaders of the subcamp were SS-Oberscharführer Richter and SS-Hauptscharführer Christel. The guards were members of the Sturmgeschützschule. The feared Kapo Helmut Lindner was also sent to Janowitz so as to maintain strict camp discipline.1

A second transport of 102 prisoners from Flossenbürg arrived at Janowitz on October 28. The transport consisted mostly of Soviet Russians and Poles. With this transport the Janowitz subcamp reached its maximum number, 202 prisoners.2 A few days after the arrival of this transport, the first death was registered. On November 9, 1944, 36-year-old Ukrainian Andrej Tarakanow died. His death marked the beginning of many more deaths. By March 1945, at least 60 others had died. They died from the heavy work on the Truppenübungsplatz, the lack of food, and the completely inadequate accommodation, which at the end of November 1944 resulted in the first case of typhus. By January 1945 the disease had broken out into an epidemic and infected just about all the prisoners. From February 1945 prisoners were dying daily from it. The death rate in Janowitz was so high that the camp administration did not report all the deaths to Flossenbürg, noting the deaths only in its prisoner book.3 The corpses were taken to the Prague crematorium in Straschnitz (Strášnice) for cremation.4

Despite the epidemic, the prisoners had to continue working for the SS-Sturmgeschützschule. Indeed, the pace of work was increased, as the front was getting ever closer, and tank traps and slit trenches had to be excavated. The Truppenübungsplatz was going to be a defensive position. By the middle of March, even the SS had to admit that the seriously ill prisoners could no longer work. The Janowitz camp was dissolved, and the prisoners were transferred to an SS Höfe at the western part of the Truppenübungsplatz Krschepenitz (Křepenice). A provisional camp was established in great haste in agricultural buildings there. Many lists state this was also a Flossenbürg subcamp. However, it was not a new camp or an existing camp but the alternative quarters for the prisoners of the Janowitz subcamp. In Krschepenitz, the mass dying of the prisoners continued.

By the end of April 1945, the Flossenbürg main camp had been liberated by U.S. troops. At this time the dissolution of the camp at Krschepenitz began, which was to be a terrible odyssey for the prisoners. About 120 prisoners were loaded onto trucks and taken to the nearest railway station at Mieschenschin (Měchesenín). In Mieschenschin, the Janowitz prisoners and the prisoners from the subcamp at Hradischko, who likewise had been taken to this railway station, were crammed into goods wagons. The train headed in the direction of Prague. In a southeastern suburb, Wirschowitz (Vršovice), the wagons were coupled onto an evacuation train from other camps, probably from Buchenwald and a few Gross-Rosen subcamps, and together they headed in a southerly direction. On May 1, the train stopped at the tiny village of Olbramowitz (Olbramovice) and was shunted onto a branch line in the direction of Selcan (Sedlčany). The prisoners were close to Janowitz, from where they had been evacuated at the end of March. What is noteworthy is that the Czech prisoners who were in this transport were released on May 3.
A bloodbath took place among the thousands of other prisoners squeezed into the wagons. On the command of the Janowitz commander, SS-Obersturmbannführer Graun, many of the prisoners were shot near the village of Kreschitz (Křesíček). The estimate of prisoners murdered before Germany’s unconditional surrender varies between 100 and several hundred. Karl Kraus’s last days of humanity, conceived 30 years before in the nearby castle park at Janowitz, had become a terrible reality in 1944 and 1945. Part of the transport remained close to the district town of Wotitz (Votice) and was liberated there on May 8 after the SS units had fled. A few wagons were taken on May 7 in the direction of southern Bohemia, where the survivors were liberated by Czech partisans in the vicinity of Weleschin (Velešín), near Krumau (Český Krumlov).

**SOURCES** Early Czech publications deal with the Janowitz subcamp. Noteworthy is the book by Antonín Robek, *Lidé bez domova* (Prague, 1980), which primarily focuses on the establishment of the SS-Truppenübungsplatz Böhmen. On the sixtieth anniversary of the forced resettlement of the Czech population from the Truppenübungsplatz, the community of Hradištěk published, in four languages, a small volume on the history of the subcamp, *Hradištko—Konzentrační tábor* (Hradištěk, 2002). It is only recently that the connections between the Flossenbürg subcamp at Janowitz Castle and the family history of Sidonie Nádherny have been the subject of public attention. The most detailed work is the book by Alena Wagnerová, *Das Leben der Sidonie von Nádherny* (Hamburg, 2003), which focuses in detail on the Janowitz subcamp.

The files that deal with the establishment of the SS-Truppenübungsplatz Böhmen are held in the SUA in Prague. From these files it is possible to get a general overview of the resumptions that took place so that a military training ground could be formed. There are few details here on the Flossenbürg subcamp. More useful are the files of the ZdL at BA-L (IV 410 AR-Z 62/67), which contain a few witness statements from Czech prisoners and Czech civilian workers at the training ground. The handwritten list of prisoners of the Janowitz subcamp is a vital source, as it contains detailed biographical material on the prisoners. It also provides a record of the deaths up to May 3, 1945 (AN, CHP, F/9/5567).

**NOTES**

2. Janowitz detachment transfer lists, July 24, 1944, and October 28, 1944, CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14368.
4. List of Cremations, Crematorium Strašnice, Funeral Service of Prague (Pohřební služby hlavního města Prahy).

**JOHANNGEORGENSTADT**

The Janneorgenstadt subcamp was formed on December 1, 1943, within the framework of the plans to decentralize the aerial armament operations. The prisoners were put to work for the Erla Maschinenwerk GmbH (Erla Flugzeugwerk) Leipzig, in the buildings of the Gotthold Heinz office furniture factory in Johanngeorgenstadt, which had been confiscated for these purposes. The first prisoners, a transport from Buchenwald concentration camp with 450 men, were registered on December 8, 1943. The subcamp grew with additional transports in December 1943, January 1944, and others through 1944.

Because of a continual exchange of those unfit for work with new prisoners, the number of prisoners to pass through this camp might have been many more than 1,000. On January 31, 1945, there were 988 prisoners in the camp; on February 28, 1945, there were 855 prisoners; on March 31, 1945, the number went down to 845; and on April 13, 1945, 842 prisoners were identified. Although the subcamp had existed since December 1943, the deaths were only regularly reported at the camp beginning on October 10, 1944. In fact, there were deaths at the camp before this date. For example, recaptured escapee Konstantin Fedorenko was executed on August 26, 1944. The list of dead that was kept in Johanngeorgenstadt is, however, just as incomplete as the entries in the Flossenbürg registration book. In both, entries are missing for prisoners whose deaths are known.

During his questioning, witness Heinrich W. testified about the killing in the Johanngeorgenstadt camp: “It often happened that one of the prisoners would be beaten to death with a truncheon or shot for a trivial reason, like not working fast enough, for example, or for no reason at all. This usually happened at the end of the camp in a type of quarry. The prisoner had to run there and would be beaten to death or shot. The SS guards often did this, but Kapos were also often called to do this quickly under the threat of being shot themselves.”

The names of 73 dead have been established for the Johanngeorgenstadt subcamp. Those who were unable to work and were transferred to Flossenbürg or other concentration camps, where they often soon died, are not included in this record. Infirmary clerk Jakob Wennel describes how the prisoners, physically totally ruined, were brought back to the main camp:

> Tuberculosis rages in the camp! The hunger turns the faces into ghosts! Death grins at everyone. Lord, have mercy on us! Daily the dead are crammed into boxes and brought out of the camp on a cart... The camp is constantly replenished. It’s always a thousand—a thousand dead souls... We know that it’s more, that they’re also there, those that death has marked, the “chosen” who are brought to the Flossenbürg main camp and exchanged... When the “chosen” go away every month, we say, “They’re going through the chimney!” The SS says it as well... Today they chose again. Many hid. They stand barefoot on the cement with thick rubbery legs. Some cry, others beg for mercy. They’re kicked...
and defiled—people whom a mother bore with pain. It is unbearable! Day follows every night, and every day becomes night. It is night over Germany.7

The enormous number of victims during the evacuation transports has not been precisely determined. According to a strength report from February 28, 1945, prisoners from 13 nationalities were in the camp. Soviet citizens, all described as Russians, formed the largest group with 394 prisoners, followed by 192 Poles, and 131 French. In addition, there were 60 Germans, 23 Czechs, 22 Lithuanians, 12 “Red Spaniards” (members of the Spanish republican forces who fell into German hands after the occupation in 1942 of the previously unoccupied part of France), 7 Luxembourgers, 7 Italians, 3 stateless persons, and 1 Belgian, Greek, Croat, and Slovak each in the Johanngeorgenstadt camp at this time.8 A large portion of the Germans and Czechs were Sinti and Roma (Gypsies). According to SS documents, there were no Jews in the camp.

Among the prisoners, there were more than 100 youths and children, who were labeled “trainees” at work and for whom the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) charged the lower daily rate of 1.5 Reichsmark (RM) in the accounting of the Flossenbürg management with the Erla Works. The Flossenbürg concentration camp charged for adult prisoners at the daily rate of 6 RM for “skilled workers” and 4 RM for “auxiliary workers.” The monthly sums on the request for payments increased from 26,446 RM in December 1943 to 108,368 RM and 6,634 RM for “trainees” in December 1944.9 In Johanngeorgenstadt, the 72-hour workweek was in effect with rotating day and night shifts of 12 hours each. The prisoners had to manufacture fuselage paneling, fore flaps, and vertical and horizontal tail assemblies for the Messerschmitt (Me) 109 fighter.

The top floor above the factory room and the basement served as housing for the prisoners. On three-story platforms, two prisoners slept per platform with awful, thin mattresses made from rotten, bug-infested, and lice-ridden straw. In stuffy, stale air the prisoners eeked out a miserable existence between the work shifts and overcrowded rooms. On the top floor, gallows were put up on which prisoners would be hanged for hours with their hands tied to their backs for the smallest of offenses, like smoking cigarettes, speaking without permission at work, or, in the judgment of the SS men, not displaying an adequate greeting. Their agonizing groaning was supposed to psychically cudgel the physically exhausted prisoners.

The factory courtyard served as a roll-call square, where counting-offs, selections, punishments, and executions took place. The entire factory grounds were fenced in with electrified barbed-wire fence. Guards stood on two watchtowers equipped with machine guns. The guard unit initially consisted of 30 guards and later of 10 SS-Unterführer and 46 SS guards.10 The commandant was SS-Hauptsturmführer Kornelius Schwander, who at the beginning of 1945 was transferred to be camp leader at Oberschlabendorf.

At the Flossenbürg Trial, Schwander was sentenced to death; he was executed in 1948.11 SS-Oberscharführer Gottfried Kolacevic was his successor, beginning on January 24, 1945. The preliminary proceedings initiated against him for killing through neglect were closed by the Frankfurt am Main District Court in 1976, as the case by then fell under the statute of limitations.12 SS-Scharführer Wenzel Fink, who received the characteristic nickname “the killer” from the prisoners, played a substantial role in killings. In 1945, he died in custody in Prague.13 Infamous Kapo Hermann Denninger, who with other Kapos often behaved more brutally than the SS guards toward the prisoners in order to offer their services to the SS and thereby procure favors, was not caught. The responsible operation manager of the Erla Works Johanngeorgenstadt, Kamprath, was imprisoned in 1945.

In order to avoid the hated slave labor for the Fascist armaments, Russian prisoners in particular repeatedly tried to escape. German and Czech political prisoners established contacts with German civilian workers, who won their trust while they helped them. In this way, milk and medicine could be procured for the sick. Packets with food were received at cover addresses in town and smuggled into the camp. The father of a Czech prisoner, disguised as a bricklayer, was assisted in meeting his son at the camp. Before the evacuation, the prisoners made out a written testimony to the German boilerman’s willingness to help because he had made possible an illegal meeting in his boiler house.14 In the electric workstation, the foreman allowed the prisoners to listen to foreign broadcasts. French prisoner Roger Boulanger emphasizes that these connections made survival easier.15 He also pointed out that the “trainees” were surprisingly pulled out of production and combined into a type of training unit.16 Was this similar to the example in Buchenwald, where political prisoners organized measures to rescue the children that were declared by the SS as the “training of skilled labor for the post-war period”? It is possible, as many political prisoners who came to Johanngeorgenstadt from Buchenwald were familiar with the Buchenwald example of the children’s bricklaying training.

With other prisoners from the Zwickau and Lengenfeld subcamps who had been marched to Johanngeorgenstadt, the subcamp was evacuated on April 16, 1945.17 A total of 1,123 prisoners, 822 of whom were from the Johanngeorgenstadt subcamp, were evacuated to Theresienstadt (Terezín), initially by rail transport, then from Neurohau (Nová Role) by foot. Grave sites located where mass killings had taken place during the evacuation were found along its path, with the help of 2 former Czech prisoners from Johanngeorgenstadt who were on the march. In the summer of 1945, a Czech investigating committee exhumed 935 bodies, 96 of whom had bullet holes indicating they were shot from behind, 13 of whom showed bullet holes in the thorax, and 109 showing head injuries from beatings, possibly from rifle butts.18 The protocol read, among other things: “On numerous corpses . . . an unusual decay was ascertained. Upon opening the abdominal cavity and the stomach the bowels were without exception
completely clear, so that it is certain starvation was the cause of death for all of these people.”

**SOURCES** Information on this camp is available in Jakob Wennel, *Tausend tote Seelen hinter Stacheldraht* (Frankfurt am Main, n.d.). Some information may also be found in Toni Siegert, “Das Konzentrationslager Flossenbürg: Gegründet für sogenannte Asoziale und Kriminelle,” in *Bayer in der NS-Zeit*, ed. Martin Broszat and Elke Fröhlich (Munich, 1979), 2:429–493.

Archival sources can be found in the ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg; BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 (F) AR-Z 18/68; AN, F 9 5566, 31 Flo 12, Hommel report; and StA-Lg, Erla-Werke.

**NOTES**

1. BA-P, Film WF-01/4015, Bild 792, Forderungsnachweis No. 298, December 1–31, 1943.
2. AG-B, Transportmeldung, December 4, 1943.
5. BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 (F) AR-Z 18/68, Schlussvermerk, p. 984.
6. Ibid., p. 985.
9. BA-B, Film 14430, Bl. 1270.
11. NARA, Complete List of War Crimes Case Trials.
19. Ibid.

**JUNGFERN-BRESCHAN**

On the way from Prague to Theresienstadt, about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) from the town of Odolenswasser (Odolena Voda), is a large property, the Jungfern-Breschan estate (Paneské Brázany), consisting of two castles, agricultural buildings, and large parks. The site, part baroque and part historized, was owned by Jewish industrialist Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer. The estate was “aryanized” following the occupation by German troops of the first Czechoslovak Republic. Because of its excellent conditions and favorable location, it was chosen to serve as the official residence for the highest SS commanders. At Easter 1942, just six months after Reinhard Heydrich took office as the Reich Protector for Bohemia and Moravia, he moved his family from the Prague Castle to the country castle. Countless studies on Heydrich show that Heydrich maintained Jungfern-Breschan both for official occasions and for his private life and recreation. His wife Lina permanently resided there. He used the 7-hectare (over 17-acre) park for sports, and his wife used the over 30 rooms for social occasions.

The daily trip to work from Jungfern-Breschan to Prague presented itself as a favorable opportunity for assassinating him. The history of the Flossenbürg subcamp at Jungfern-Breschan is an indirect result of the successful assassination attempt on Heydrich. On May 27, Czech agents Jan Kubiš and Jozef Gabčík, who had earlier parachuted into the northern Prague suburb of Libči, injured Heydrich in a bomb attack just as he was coming out of Jungfern-Breschan. On June 4, 1942, he died as a result of wounds received. At the state funeral for Heydrich at the Prague Castle, Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler promised Lina Heydrich special attention and care: “To his wife and children goes our total sympathy and loving care. They will be well cared for in the great SS family.” In the early summer of 1942, Heydrich’s widow was permitted by Himmler to continue to use the Jungfern-Breschan estate without charge, and preparations were made to transfer to her the title to the estate. On Himmler’s initiative, Lina Heydrich was given prisoners to work the estate. From July 1942, a 30-man Jewish work detail from the Theresienstadt ghetto was deployed on the estate, doing gardening and repair work. The prisoners were accommodated in stables and guarded by an SS unit stationed at Breschan.

The detachment was to be withdrawn from Jungfern-Breschan on September 1, 1943, as part of the deportations from Theresienstadt to the death camps in the East. However, in view of the incomplete gardening work and the fruit harvest in the castle gardens, Himmler expressly permitted the postponement of the deportation by a few weeks. From October 1, no more Jews from Theresienstadt were to work for Lina Heydrich. However, they remained there until January 1944 when Himmler directed: “Der Reichsführer-SS requests that the Jewish work detachment at Jungfern-Breschan be replaced as quickly as possible by six female and four male Jehovah’s Witnesses.” On February 10, 1944, six months later than planned, 15 male Jehovah’s Witnesses—10 Germans, 3 Dutch, 1 Pole, and 1 Czech prisoner—from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp were sent in the direction of Prague to replace the Jewish ghetto prisoners. They arrived at Jungfern-Breschan on February 14, and on February 15, they were put to work on a variety of agricultural and forestry tasks. From this point on, the estate Jungfern-Breschan was a subcamp of the nearest concentration camp, Flossenbürg.

VOLUME I: PART A
The transfer of the Jehovah’s Witness prisoners to small subcamps and work detachments marked a change in SS policy. The SS leadership had learned that the Jehovah’s Witnesses—to the extent there was no conflict with their religious convictions in the concentration camps—complied with the camp rules and exactly performed the work allocated to them. They made no attempts to escape, as they saw their imprisonment as a divine intervention against which they could not rebel. For these reasons the Bible Researcher prisoners (Bibelforscher-Häftlingen) in the eyes of the SS were destined for work at Jungfern-Breschan.

The subcamp at Lina Heydrich’s estate is a good example of how SS propaganda was deliberately used to mislead the international press about conditions in the concentration camps and how this group of prisoners was manipulated. Himmler personally wrote to Pohl and the head of the SD in Berlin on January 14, 1945, and ordered that security be removed from these prisoners: “As part of the process of allowing Bible Researchers to be held as groups on individual estates with unconditional freedom and obtaining the best political effects in other countries I wish that the Bible Researchers who are at Mrs. Heydrich’s estate, Jungfern-Breschan, to be released from prison. They are confined to the local area. The two Czech Bible Researchers will not be released. They must be removed.” That this was purely a propaganda move is shown by the fact that even following their release the prisoners still appeared in the monthly strength reports of the Flossenbürg concentration camp until May 8, 1945, when the estate was liberated.

A serious dispute arose between Lina Heydrich, the Flossenbürg administration, and the SS-Business Administration Main Office (VVHA) after the concentration camp office assumed responsibility for the use of the prisoners. The dispute had nothing to do with the treatment of the prisoners but with the usual practice of paying a monthly fee for the prisoners’ use to the responsible concentration camp. After tough negotiations, Lina Heydrich was permitted, after the intervention of the Reichsführer-SS, to use the prisoners without charge. The monthly demand for prisoners for the Jungfern-Breschan estate was sent directly by the Flossenbürg work office to the Reichsführer-SS, Persönlicher Stab, Berlin SW 11.

The 15 Jehovah’s Witnesses in the Flossenbürg subcamp at Jungfern-Breschan had to work in the orchards and vegetable gardens of the castle as well as in the expansive forest. Unlike the Jewish work details at Theresienstadt, where a prisoner was killed by a falling tree while working in a forest, there are no records of such incidents or mistreatment of the Flossenbürg prisoners. One prisoner’s testimony states that the food supply was completely inadequate but that the nature of the work allowed plenty of opportunity to obtain additional food. All 15 prisoners who were transferred in February 1944 from Sachsenhausen to Jungfern-Breschan survived the work at Jungfern-Breschan and were freed by the Red Army on May 8, 1945.

**SOURCES** The history of the Flossenbürg subcamp Jungfern-Breschan is closely connected with the family of Reinhard Heydrich and his role as Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia. However, while there are numerous essays and studies on Heydrich of varying quality, Jungfern-Breschan receives almost no attention. The only publication that deals in detail with the concentration camp and ghetto prisoners in Jungfern-Breschan is the speculative essay by Anna Maria Sigmund on Lina Heydrich, which suffers from a lack of source references, *Die Frauen der Nazis II* (Vienna, 2002), pp. 45–84.

Lina Heydrich’s refusal to pay a fee for the use of the Flossenbürg prisoners to the WVHA resulted in a compendious correspondence, which is held by the BA-B (collection NS19). The ZdL (now BA-L) investigated Lina Heydrich on suspicion of the murder of a Theresienstadt ghetto prisoner. From these investigations it is possible to obtain some details about the use of the prisoners in Jungfern-Breschan (BA-L, ZdL, AR 419/63). The personnel files in the AG-F allow the chronology and identity of the use of the prisoners to be traced in detail.

**NOTES**


3. RFSS Feldkommandostelle to Pohl SS-WVHA, January 12, 1944, BA-B, NS19/18.

4. BA-B, NS4/Fl 274.

5. BA-B, NS19/18. Himmler’s naming of the nationalities of the prisoners is erroneous. There was only one Czech Jehovah’s Witness from Prague who was held in Jungfern-Breschan. Himmler mistook a Polish prisoner for a Czech.

**KIRCHHAM BEI POCKING (AKA POCKING, WALDSTADT, POCKING-WALDSTADT)**

Kirchham is located close to Pocking, not far from the Lower Bavarian spa town of Bad Füssing in the Rottaler spa triangle (currently incorporated within the town of Waldstadt). According to the International Tracing Service (ITS), a subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp was established there on March 6, 1945. About 400 prisoners, almost three-quarters of them Jews from Poland and the Soviet Union, as well as individual prisoners from other countries, according to other sources, many of them political prisoners, were brought to Pocking on this day, probably on foot. The prisoners found themselves housed in the workers’ barracks of Flying School (Flugschule) No. 3 on the nearby Pocking airfield (known as the Alter Horst). The construction of this military air base was started at the end of 1936, and emergency landing fields were also located in the neighboring communities of Mittich and Kirchham.
All 400 prisoners were probably housed in a single barrack, which was only intended for 40 people. Since there was no possibility to wash, dirt, lice and other parasites, as well as the inadequate hygienic conditions, caused diseases to spread rapidly. Officially, the prisoners were supplied from the kitchen of the flight school; however, survivors report that the SS and corrupt prisoner-functionaries enriched themselves from the food rations, such that hardly anything remained for the prisoners: in the mornings, there was some bread and a hot broth; in the evenings, a further portion of hot broth. Within the few weeks that the camp existed, most of the prisoners fell seriously ill as a result of malnutrition. At least 200 died due to the conditions in the camp but also because of daily physical mistreatment. Many of the survivors who were interviewed described the conditions in Pocking as worse than in Auschwitz or other camps, in which they were in before.

The prisoners were guarded by six SS guards, probably Hungarian Arrow Cross men. Author Anna Rosmus indicates, however, that the guards also consisted of Luftwaffe soldiers who were unfit for service at the front and who were less brutal to the prisoners than the SS. The prisoners were escorted to work every morning through Pocking, and from there it was a long route march through the forest. Survivors report that they were deployed in order to prepare the airfield for the arrival of dive bombers (Stukas) and to construct defense works. Fighter Squadron 101 of the Hungarian Air Force was stationed at the Pocking air base, which conducted combat missions on the ever-approaching Eastern Front. Toward the end of March, the entire Hungarian Defense Ministry was relocated to the area around Pocking, with the High Command of the Hungarian Air Force located in Pocking itself. The last Hungarian troops, schools, and staff offices were to be concentrated west of the Inn River in preparation for a desperate counterattack. During work there were frequent attacks by low-flying Allied aircraft. How many, if any, prisoners were killed in these attacks is not known. It is not certain whether some 200 to 400 prisoners from the subcamp were deployed to the nearby airfield at Kirchham for the construction of a planned V-2 launch pad, as indicated by Rosmus.

Romek Reibesien, one of the survivors of the camp, recounts that he arrived in the camp on April 1, 1945, with a transport of 400 prisoners. That this really could have been a second transport—of precisely the same numerical strength as the first—is doubtful. Yet the testimonies of other survivors, such as Abraham Elboszyc, confirm that additional prisoners were brought to Kirchham in April 1945.

At this time, the living conditions in the camp had already reached rock bottom. Each day up to three inmates died of malnutrition and mistreatment. According to the recollection of Kirchhamer prisoner Abraham Rosmarin, in the last weeks of the camp’s existence, Magnus Huber, a parish priest from Austria who had emigrated to Kirchham on political grounds, came almost daily into the camp. He prayed with the Christian prisoners and smuggled pickled cabbage into the camp, distributing it as a source of vitamins among the prisoners infected with typhus—regardless of their confession. After he became infected with typhus himself, Huber died in May 1945. Several prisoners mention that food was repeatedly prepared for them by the local farmers—especially after the local priest in Kirchham publicly preached to those attending religious services that they should help the prisoners. By bribing the guards with food, the farmers were able to supply the prisoners. Eyewitnesses from the community also remember, however, the brutal conduct of the guards, who swore at and beat the prisoners when they made the least attempt to gather up the bread that had been thrown to them.

Men of the 761st Tank Battalion, of the U.S. Third Army—one of the first armored units of the U.S. Army comprised solely of African Americans—liberated the surviving prisoners of the camp on May 2, 1945.

Up to the liberation of the camp on May 2, according to newspaper reports from the immediate postwar years cited by Rosmus, about 200 inmates of the camp had died from the terrible detention conditions to which they had been subjected. Immediately after the liberation, about 100 further prisoners reportedly died.

In a trial, Kirchham Kapo Ernst Friebe, a gardener by profession, was sentenced to four years in a labor camp for the physical abuse of the prisoners. Friebe, who came to Kirchham from Flossenbürg, was even beaten up once by the other Kapos in the camp for his brutality to the prisoners. During the liberation of the camp, he initially managed to escape in civilian clothes. However, he was arrested in June 1945 and interned in Moosbach before being tried in 1947.


Rosmus has published a collection of sources and testimonies regarding the end of the war and the reconstruction period in Pocking (on both the subcamp and the subsequent DP camp), titled Pocking: Ende und Anfang; Jüdische Zeitzeugen über Besiegte und Befreite (Konstanz: Labhard-Verlag GmbH, 1995). Evelyln Zegenhagen trans. Martin Dean

**KÖNIGSTEIN**

The Königstein subcamp was formed out of a prisoner transport from the Böhlen subcamp of the Buchenwald concentration camp. On November 15, 1944, 200 men arrived in
Königstein. The Flossenbürg main camp assigned them the registration numbers 38771 through 38970. Initially they were housed in the inn of the neighboring city Struppen and had to erect a provisional camp out of pressed cardboard, the so-called round Finnish tents, within the Königstein Fortress.\(^4\) With another transport of 768 men from the Buchenwald subcamp of Böhlen on November 28, 1944, and with the addition of the occasional new prisoner, the subcamp grew to almost 1,000 prisoners.\(^5\) With the expansion of the subcamp, the Finnish tent camp became completely overcrowded, and the prisoners were thus moved further into the forest to a barracks camp, which was fenced in with barbed wire, equipped with watchtowers, and consisted of 10 prisoner barracks, a kitchen, and an infirmary. The second transport received the registration numbers 38971 through 39738; the individual prisoners received the numbers 43880 through 43888.

The prisoners were employed on a project of the Geilenberg-Staff, cover name “Schwalbe II,” to move fuel-manufacturing facilities underground.\(^6\) The expansion of the project was overseen by the special building management in the Organisation Todt (OT), the office of professordoctor of engineering Rimpf from the Mineralölbau GmbH.\(^7\) The construction, disguised with the marking “Orion,” was carried out on the Elbe River side of Königstein in the sandstone wall on Niederen Kirchleithe, where several tunnels were driven into the mountain parallel to the foot of the wall. As a communication from November 3, 1944, by board member of the Braunkohlen-Benzin (Brown Coal-Gasoline AG, Brabag) SS-Oberführer Fritz Kränefuss, who worked as the executive secretary of the “Circle of Friends of Reichsführer-SS Himmler” (Freundeskreis Himmler), shows, Himmler had already ordered the moving of underground facilities for fuel manufacturing in 1943: “Reichsführer, after the visit of the Circle of Friends at the field commando office in December of last year [1943] by the Circle of Friends, you spoke with me about the possibility, due to the increasing danger from bombing raids, of moving the fuel works underground or to sites where a large degree of natural protection exists. In this context you mentioned above all the Elbe Sandstone Mountains [Elbsandsteingebirge] and gave me the task of conveying your ideas to Professor [Carl] Krauch, head of the responsible authority.”\(^8\) After Kränefuss had initially spoken about Krauch’s negative stance toward Himmler’s suggestions, he informed Himmler about both underground moving projects of the Brabag: “It concerns here an underground move into the so-called Kirchleithe, a large wall located immediately on the Elbe, i.e., in the Elbsandsteingebirge. . . . The second project is being implemented at a river bend near Gera, and in fact with the active help of the SS, i.e., the employed construction units of SS-Obergruppenführer Pohl and SS-Gruppenführer Kammler.”\(^9\)

The 977 prisoners whose names have been determined were of the following nationalities: 559 Soviets (described as Russians in SS documents), 167 Poles, 61 French, 57 Italians, 53 Czechs, 25 Germans, 14 Dutch, 12 Yugoslavs, 11 Belgians, 9 Croats, 3 Lithuanians, 3 stateless, 1 Albanian, 1 Spaniard, and 1 Turk. The Turk was the only prisoner in the camp identified as Jewish.\(^7\)

Prisoners unfit for work were deported to the Flossenbürg and Bergen-Belsen main camps in several transports, the last on March 8, 1945, with 227 prisoners. After it became clear that the property could not be completed in time for applicable production in the course of the war, the SS transferred prisoners still fit for work to the S III/Ohrdruf subcamp of the Buchenwald concentration camp; Ansbach, Dresden Deutsche Reichsbahn, and Leitmeritz subcamps of the Flossenbürg concentration camp; and 9 prisoners to a subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp.

Some 68 prisoners died at Königstein, 41 died after the evacuation to the Flossenbürg subcamp at Leitmeritz/Litoměrice, and 38 prisoners died shortly after being transferred back to the Flossenbürg main camp.\(^8\) Several prisoners report on the danger of working in the mountains and the killings by the SS guard personnel. For example, Czech Oldrich K. states:

The prisoners worked in sand stonecliffs, where earth and tunnel work were carried out. We were constructing an underground factory installation. . . . We had to work in dangerous areas where, as a result of thawing, stones fell from the cliffs. I know that prisoners were wounded, in fact even killed from these stones. . . . Sometime in January 1945 it came to a shooting of a political prisoner of German nationality. This prisoner escaped from the camp but was caught again and then had to stand barefoot for three days on the roll call square; he suddenly ran toward the door and was shot with a rifle by a member of the SS. . . . Also in the winter of 1945 it happened that one of the prisoners hid himself in a locomotive on the work site and then fled. He was not caught, but reprisals were taken against the other prisoners. We had to stand in frost through the entire night on the roll call square and we went to work without food.\(^9\)

As the work site was complex and a few kilometers away from the accommodation camp, some prisoners attempted to escape, of which six prisoners succeeded. German prisoner Josef K. said during his questioning in Gelsenkirchen after the war: “I myself saw in Königstein how the SS-Oberscharführer Becker . . . shot two Russian prisoners. We were in the process of putting up a new camp fence. Doing this, both of the Russian prisoners tried to escape. They were already outside of the fence as Oberscharführer Becker shot them with a submachine gun.”\(^10\)

Employed guarding the prisoners were Wehrmacht soldiers and SS personnel, whose large total number of 40 Unterführer and 123 guards can be explained by the relatively long distance between the accommodation camp in the forest and the very expansive and complex work site.\(^11\)
Whether the camp leader is identical with SS-Oberscharführer Becker, whom a prisoner named, could not be determined. Camp elder (Lagerältester) Heinrich S. described an SS-Hauptscharführer as camp leader (Lagerführer) without, however, mentioning his name. A Dutch prisoner worked as a prisoner orderly. After construction had been stopped, the camp was closed. On March 17, 1945, the remaining 642 prisoners were transferred to the Flossenbürg subcamp at Leitmeritz and further driven to strength-sapping work there on the expansion of an underground property “Richard” for a tank motor factory, which claimed more victims. Regarding this, the camp elder made the following statement:

The evacuation of the camp took place on March 17, 1945. . . . We prisoners were led to the Königstein train station and loaded into open cars there. We were then taken to Leitmeritz, Czechoslovakia, by train, where we went to camp. During the evacuation the guard personnel consisted of Wehrmacht and SS members. . . . No sick prisoners stayed behind in the camp. The sick in the camp all came along, as they also were all able to walk. There were no seriously ill in the camp. There were no shootings of prisoners during the evacuation. There were also no prisoner escapes. Also as far as I know no prisoner died from the strain of evacuation, as we were in Leitmeritz within one day."

On May 8, 1945, as the Soviet troops approached, the prisoners in Leitmeritz were provided with release papers by the SS camp leadership and officially set free. Information on this subcamp can be found in Hans Brenner, “Eiserne ‘Schwalben’ für das Elbsandsteingebirge: KZ-Häftlingseinsatz zum Aufbau von Treibstoffanlagen in der Endphase des zweiten Weltkrieges,” Sächsische Heimatgeschichte 45.1 (1999): 9–16.

Archival records are available in ZdL at BA-L, IV 410 AR-3032/66, 3249/66, IV 410 AR-Z 177/75, 234/76, Bd. 1 und 2; NARA; and in the ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg.

NOTES

1. BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 234/76, pp. 45, 46, statement by the former Czech prisoner Rudolf K. (prisoner no. 38865) before the district court in Jicín/C.R., pp. 262, 263; statement by the former Czech prisoner Oldrich K. (prisoner no. 38851) before the magistrate court in Prague.
4. BA-B, Film 1204, Roll 11, Forderungsnachweis Flo No. 677.
5. BA-B, Film 3351, Ifd. No. 6223/6224.
6. Ibid.
7. NARA, T-580, Reels 69–70; NARA, T-1021, Reel 9; see also Hans Brenner, Archiv, Akte Königstein.
8. Ibid.
15. A copy of the release certificate is in the possession of the author. (Release certificate of the former Polish prisoner Witold Wilga, prisoner no. 37836, October 28, 1944, from Auschwitz to Leitmeritz.)

KRONDORF-SAUERBRUNN

The first Flossenbürg subcamp in the present-day Czech Republic was located at Krondorf-Sauerbrunn (Korunni) to the east of Karlsbad (Karlov Vary) in northwest Bohemia. The construction detachment located there from August 1942 to July 1944 consisted of between 50 and 120 prisoners. Its task was to tap a mineral spring.

The work was done for the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Arbeitsgruppe W (Economic Activities), Amt W III (Nutrition). Amt W III/3 operated the SS-owned Sudetenquell GmbH, the producer of drinks in Krondorf-Sauerbrunn, Heinrich Mattoni AG. Construction was done under the auspices of Amt W III of WVHA, which was also responsible for payment of all accounts. Heinrich Mattoni AG was responsible for the care of the prisoners. A government building officer, SS-Unterstürmführer Horst Köhler, was in charge of construction.

The construction was to be done within four months. However, a first extension for six months was sought at the end of November 1942. Technical problems and arguments as to responsibility among various SS authorities lengthened the period of construction to two years. During the winter months, construction ceased, and the prisoners were used to maintain the railway under the control of Heinrich Mattoni AG. An advance detachment of 50 men from the Flossenbürg main camp began preparatory work on August 19, 1942. As of September 7, 1942, there were 100 prisoners at the Krondorf-Sauerbrunn subcamp. By the end of 1943, the number had dropped to 50 but would increase to 80 by June 1944. The prisoners were accommodated in a villa or castle, which had been acquired by Heinrich Mattoni AG and was close to the building site. Witnesses state that the building was surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by SS men. There were delays in acquiring this building, so the prisoners initially were housed in mobile barracks owned by Sudetenquell GmbH. The majority of concentration camp
prisoners in Krondorf-Sauerbrunn were Germans, Austrians, and Czechs. There were three prisoner transports during 1943—April 30, May 1, and June 15—whereby a total of 47 prisoners were transported from the Krondorf-Sauerbrunn subcamp to the nearby Flossenbürg subcamp at Neurohlau.5

There is no evidence to suggest that prisoners were killed at Krondorf-Sauerbrunn, but they were mistreated. A former prisoner, A.K., stated during investigations into conditions at the Krondorf-Sauerbrunn subcamp: “Within the camp area there was a stream. During the winter prisoners who were not liked by [SS-Scharführer Johann Baptist Kübler und Hartung] were forced to strip even on the coldest days, break open the ice, and bathe in the pond. I had to do that a few times.”6 According to former prisoners J.W. and K.L., a small group of prisoners was able to escape from the camp in the autumn of 1943. Two of them were caught and brought back to the camp at Krondorf-Sauerbrunn; then they were transferred back to Flossenbürg main camp. It is thought that they were publicly hanged in Flossenbürg.7

The commander of the camp between August and December 1942 was SS-Scharführer Johann Baptist Kübler (born January 17, 1914, in Klingsmoos-Pöttmess). From April 1943 to October 1943 he was the commander of the Flossenbürg subcamp at Pottenstein. At a trial by jury in Weiden on July 8, 1937, he was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment for murder and accessory to murder. He also forfeited his civil rights for five years.8

Kübler was replaced by SS-Untersturmführer Zippe. According to witnesses, the head of the construction site, government building officer SS-Untersturmführer Horst Köhler, unlike the camp administrators, lived outside the castle and protected the prisoners from mistreatment. In addition to the commander and his deputy, the SS personnel consisted of 20 men.9

Once the spring had been tapped and a springhouse and storage tank completed in the summer of 1944, the number of prisoners was reduced on July 1, 1944, from 77 to 20. The Krondorf-Sauerbrunn subcamp was finally dissolved on July 15, 1944. The prisoners were taken by rail back to the Flossenbürg main camp.10

Although Krondorf-Sauerbrunn was the first Flossenbürg subcamp on Czechoslovak territory, it is hardly referred to in the research. Only two studies deal with the camp: the dated Czech overview by Růžena Bubeníčková, Ludmilla Kubátová, and Irena Malá, eds., Tábory utrpení a smrti (Prague, 1969); and Jörg Skriebeleit’s essay “Die Aussenlager des KZ Flossenbürg in Böhmen,” DaHe 15 (1999): 196–217.

The main source on the subcamp are the investigation files of the ZdL in BA-L, collection IV 410 AR 3031/66, as well as the building files and accounts contained in the BA-B collection NS4/FL. The transfer lists between Flossenbürg and Neurohlau are located in the CEGESOMA, Microfilm Nr. 14368.

LEITMERITZ

In the spring of 1944, the first steps were taken to create a subcamp at Leitmeritz. It would quickly become the largest Flossenbürg subcamp, and its prisoners would call it the “death factory.” The reason for the establishment of the Leitmeritz camp was the construction of underground production facilities for the German armaments industry. In two
connected but competing construction sites, gigantic subterranean production and assembly facilities, several kilometers long, were to be built in Radobyl Mountain near Leitmeritz. The facilities were constructed for the Auto Union AG from Siegmar near Chemnitz, which was to manufacture tank engines, and for the Osram Company from Berlin, which would produce wolfram and molybdenum cables for the aircraft industry. Thus, two construction sites were established at Radobyl Mountain—Project “Richard I” to assemble tank engines for Auto Union and Project “Richard II,” the future production site for Osram.

From the beginning of the spring of 1944, several thousand concentration camp prisoners in countless work detachments were deployed in the construction sites for Richard I and Richard II. Their task was to excavate the underground tunnels. Even though construction of Richard I was not complete in November 1944, a prisoner detachment, with selected skilled workers, known as “Elzabe AG,” commenced the assembly of tank engines for Auto Union. The first tank shells from Elzabe AG were delivered on November 14, 1944. However, subsequent production remained well behind the expectations of the SS-Führungsstab (Leadership Staff) and the company. The continuing inability to get fresh air into the caverns resulted not only in corrosion of the production machines and production falling behind target but also in a rapid deterioration in the health of the prisoners and the civilian workers.

From May 1944, preparations were made to relocate part of the Berlin Osram Company to Leitmeritz. The company was to be known under the cover name “Kalkspat K.G.” However, the construction project Richard II never got beyond the planning stage. Construction work for Richard II was constantly delayed because Osram’s demands that civilian workers and concentration camp workers be transferred from Richard I to Richard II were rejected by the SS-Führungsstab. By the end of 1944 and the beginning of 1945, it had become clear to the responsible people within Osram that Germany’s defeat was inevitable. Internal considerations for a relocation of production facilities to Bohemia were considered less and less. Officially, however, various Osram employees still tried to obtain healthy and strong concentration camp prisoners for the planned production facility, which was intended to commence operations on April 1, 1945. Even though Osram senior management had decided at the beginning of March 1945 to relocate the majority of its production facilities to subterranean facilities within the “Old Reich,” with at least 40 percent of cable production to be relocated to the “Doggert” tunnels near Hersbruck, another Flossenbürg subcamp, Osram still demanded that the SS-Führungsstab accelerate production and increase the number of prisoners and their output.

The size of the Leitmeritz camp and the number of prisoners there constantly grew due to the demands of the SS-Führungsstab, the Armaments Ministry, the companies, and the German war situation. Leitmeritz developed into a gigantic Flossenbürg subsystem, which had its own subcamps, such as in nearby Lobositz. With the implosion of the concentration camp system and the dissolution of the camps, Leitmeritz from 1945 was the collecting point for countless prisoners from the Saxon and north Bohemia subcamps of the Buchenwald, Gross-Rosen, and Flossenbürg concentration camps. The Leitmeritz subcamp continued to exist after the liberation of the Flossenbürg main camp on April 23, 1945. It continued to operate as an independent camp system until the end of Nazi rule in Europe. It was not liberated; it was officially dissolved after the unconditional capitulation of the German Reich on May 8, 1945.

The first transport connected with the construction projects reached Theresienstadt from the Dachau concentration camp on March 24, 1944. It consisted of 500 male prisoners. At this time, part of the Kleine Festung (Small Fortress) in Theresienstadt functioned as a Flossenbürg subcamp. Due to a lack of other detention facilities, the prisoners were initially accommodated in the Gestapo prison in the Kleine Festung. This first prisoner detachment, together with other Gestapo prisoners in the Kleine Festung, was to convert the former Artillery Barracks in Leitmeritz into a camp for concentration camp prisoners. It was planned that this camp would hold 4,000 prisoners. The camp command, together with the SS guards and part of the construction project team, established itself in the former Czechoslovak barracks. After the site had been provisionally fenced in and seven guard towers had been constructed, larger transports of more than 1,000 prisoners began to arrive in Leitmeritz at the end of May. The Kleine Festung in Theresienstadt, which accommodated Flossenbürg prisoners, was likewise overcrowded. In August 1944, there were more than 2,800 prisoners in Leitmeritz. On November 16, 1944, the prisoner population had reached nearly 5,000; and on February 15, 1945, almost 6,660; by the end of April 1945, the prisoner population had reached around 9,000—almost the same number of prisoners that were in the Flossenbürg main camp itself.¹

The prisoners represented the complete spectrum of prisoners in the National Socialist concentration camps. There were men from all European countries, in just about all prisoner categories, including a relatively large number of Jewish prisoners. In Leitmeritz, they were used as slave laborers. Some 770 women and girls were imprisoned in Leitmeritz between February and April 1945. The prisoner conditions in Leitmeritz were a disaster from the beginning. The capacity to accommodate the masses of prisoners who were transported to Leitmeritz did not grow, sustenance was completely inadequate, and the hygienic conditions and conditions of the air in the camp and caverns were catastrophic. Illness and epidemics soon broke out among the prisoners.

Above all, the conditions on the construction sites, where until the commencement of the production of tank engines in November 1944 most of the prisoners were deployed, were murderous. There were repeated accidents in the underground passages because the construction project team and the SS-Führungsstab, as a result of time pressures imposed by the companies and the Reichs Armaments Ministry,
neglected the most elementary safety precautions. There were almost daily collapses of the roof within the extensive branch-like tunnel system. In May 1944, 60 prisoners in the morning shift were crushed to death when a roof, which had not been secured, collapsed. Conditions scarcely changed when the first assembly lines for the production of tank engines began operation. The Auto Union had to intervene repeatedly with the SS camp command and complain about the condition of the prisoners. "As a result the Gestapo ordered that all camp inmates be X-rayed. This took place between Christmas and New Year’s 1944/45 in the Leitmeritz civilian sanatorium." The results were shattering: "forty-five percent had tuberculosis," recalled Svetozar Guček, a Slovenian survivor.1

At the end of 1944, the separation of the prisoners into construction and production units was complete. This resulted in a gradual functional gradation of the work detachments, which in turn influenced the survival chances of the prisoners. In the initial stages of production, there was scarcely any difference in the misery for a skilled prisoner worker from a construction prisoner—they were quickly "Richard-ized" (richardisiert). It was only from February 1945 that the camp command began to accommodate the production prisoners in their own blocks, to improve the catastrophic hygienic conditions for these prisoners, and to reduce camp rituals to a minimum, such as roll call. For thousands of prisoners the improvements in living conditions, which ultimately were motivated by the considerations of wartime economic rationality, came too late. Only 4,500 of the almost 18,000 concentration camp prisoners who were held in Leitmeritz during the three and one-half months of its existence survived; most of them were construction prisoners. Countless died as a result of working in the camp or at other camps. In the final stage of the National Socialist regime, Leitmeritz operated as a transit camp. Countless death marches from other camps were combined in Leitmeritz. From there they were put on almost 100 goods wagons and "evacuated" in a southerly direction. The number of dead from these last transports from Leitmeritz is unknown.2

The strength report from January 31, 1945, shows 859 prisoners for the Leitmeritz camp, while the one from March 31, 1945, reports 755 prisoners.3 The decline in the number of prisoners by 100 within two months indicates the high rate of mortality during this time period at the camp. In February and March of 1945 alone, the SS reported 98 dead.4 In the strength report from April 2, 1945, 20 deaths are cited for the Lengenfeld camp.5 Some 162 of the dead were cremated in the Reichenbach V crematorium. An additional 27 dead prisoners were buried at Reichenbach and 57 at Lengenfeld.

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The history of the Leitmeritz subcamp is extensively documented in several collections of source material, which to date have not been exhaustively commented upon. An almost complete documentary collection on the prisoners in the Leitmeritz subcamp is to be found in the archives AG-T and AG-F. Both archives hold documents on the use of the prisoners as well as the SS guards. The SHStA-(C) holds documents relating to the relocation of the Auto Union AG to Leitmeritz. The relocation files of Osram are held in the LA-B. The SÚA has a number of disparate collections on the Leitmeritz complex. In addition, there are extensive investigatory and judicial files held in the BA-L (formerly ZdL).

NOTES
1. Lagerstärke 1944–1945, SÚA, OVS, Karton 27, Nr. 34.
2. Erinnerungsbericht des slowenischen Häftlings Svetozar Guček, AG-F, Erinnerungsberichte.

LEGENFELD

On October 9, 1944, the Magdeburg pump construction factory of the Reich-owned Junkers group, which had received the code name "Leng-Werke" from the Armaments Ministry and in 1943 had been moved to Lengenfeld in Vogtland, was allocated prisoners from the Flossenbürg concentration camp. The allotted 300 prisoners were transported by train from Flossenbürg to Lengenfeld, where they arrived on October 12, 1944. This first prisoner transport had Flossenbürg registration numbers between 5000 and 27000. The exchange of prisoners unable to work, the replacement of the dead with new prisoners, and periodic transports of new prisoners kept the number of prisoners in the subcamp constant at around 800. In November 1944, a transport of Hungarian Jews arrived at the camp and received registration numbers between 33000 and 34000. The last transport was the prisoner group from the closed Plauen (Horn GmbH) subcamp, which arrived in Lengenfeld on March 31, 1945.2

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The strength report from February 28, 1945, conveys a picture of the national composition of the Lengenfeld subcamp at the time: 413 Poles, including 6 Jews; 191 Russians; 78 Hungarians, all Jews; 29 Czechs; 24 French, including 1 Jew; 23 Italians, including 1 Jew; 19 Germans; 7 Croats, including 4 Jews; 5 Yugoslavs, including 1 Jew; 3 each of Bulgarians, Greeks, and Dutch; 2 Belgians; 2 Lithuanians;

SOURCES
The prisoners' work sites were in a lower room in a cotton-spinning mill cleared out for air armaments production and in tunnels that had been expanded into underground workrooms. They were "primarily employed in twelve-hour shifts on machine tools such as lathes, milling cutters, grinding machines, etc." A number of the prisoners had to perform the heaviest work of ongoing tunneling, through which the area of the underground production rooms was to be expanded. Former Ukrainian prisoner Vladimir K. reported about this work: "I went to Flossenbürg concentration camp and received there the camp number 27799. Then I went to Lengenfeld, a Flossenbürg work camp. Here I worked in tunnel construction. That was deathly difficult work. Hard rock, no food. Prisoners died in masses." German foremen, engineers, and master craftsmen, some of whom behaved in an extremely hostile manner toward the prisoners, supervised the prisoners during the manufacturing process. Pole Adam Z. said in his statement: "In the light metal group, department 'Rühmann,' master craftsman Beyer distinguished himself as a sadist. In the department of automatic and revolver lathes, the German Cebulinski, also from Magdeburg, was a dogged Prussian." By contrast, a few German workers and some of the residents, before whose eyes SS brutality took place every day, attempted to slip the prisoners something at work. At garden fences and wall corners on the march path, they left bread or cooked potatoes in transport crates and hid cigarettes or apples.

SS-Oberscharführer Albert Roller functioned as camp leader (Lagerführer), under whom were 5 SS-Unterführer and 48 SS guards. In addition, several German "greens," career criminals kept in concentration camps, served him as denouncers and henchmen. Former Czech prisoner Josef Jokl wrote: "As camp Kapo, a career criminal by the name of Rudolf Schulmeister is his most important denouncer. Once while at work I sharpened a spoon a little, in order to slice bread, and upon return was immediately beaten to exhaustion with truncheons." On April 10, 1945, a bombardment hit the "Leng-Werke," wounding many prisoners. During the bombardment, prisoners tried to escape. They were, however, cornered by dogs and brought back to camp. One of those escaping was shot, and Roller let him hang for days on the camp gate as a deterrent. A few days later, on April 13, 1945, the evacuation of the camp began with the onset of darkness at around 8:00 p.m. On this day the strength report for Flossenbürg reported that there were still 744 prisoners at the Lengenfeld camp. Already on the first night the SS mercilessly began to murder exhausted prisoners; 21 of them were shot shortly before reaching Rodewisch. More were killed near Wernesgrün. By Johanngeorgenstadt there were 92 dead. During this night, however, several prisoners were able to escape, such as a group of 10 Polish prisoners who were, however, caught again and remained in the Klingenthal prison until their liberation on May 7, 1945. The SS shot 4 other escaped prisoners near Werda.

On April 15, 1945, a rail transport with 1,123 concentration camp prisoners, 188 of whom were sick prisoners from the Lengenfeld subcamp, set out from Johanngeorgenstadt. On this, the investigative report on the Lengenfeld camp states: "It is to be assumed that the evacuation of the subcamps Johanngeorgenstadt, Lengenfeld, and Zwickau were carried out together from Johanngeorgenstadt to Karlsbad. Near Karlsbad various march columns were formed from the collective transport. The various details or parts of them separated again and continued the evacuation by foot in different directions. The Lengenfeld subcamp, with the exception of 188 prisoners who were apparently joined up with the column destined for Theresienstadt, set off toward Flossenbürg, but only made it to Tachau." The larger part of the Lengenfeld subcamp, namely, the more than 400 remaining prisoners, were driven by the SS, together with part of the Zwickau subcamp with whom they had already met on April 14, 1945, at the sports field in Schönheide, by foot through Karlsbad—Talper—Petschau (Bečov)—Marienbad (Mar. Lázne)—Planá—Tachov—Písařovy Vesce. Here, the SS must have received the news that U.S. troops were approaching Flossenbürg. After a massacre, apparently out of fury about the failure of their plan to bring the prisoners to Flossenbürg, the SS changed the direction of the column. On April 22, 1945, they marched the prisoners through Tachov—Staré Sedliště—Doly—Stráž, ultimately in order to carry out another massacre among the last prisoners of this column in the area around Přímá. On April 21, 1945, as the column came to the country road between Martinov and Holubín near Marienbad, low-flying planes attacked them early in the morning. Instead of giving them aid, the SS mercilessly killed all the wounded. In the
evening, the German population brought the dead by cart to Pistov and buried them in a pit in the forest, 100 meters (328 feet) away from a graveyard.18 As the death march arrived in the town of Doly near Bor on April 24, 1945, only around 200 prisoners were still living from the Lengenfeld subcamp. After an air raid, the 17 Czechs in the column, as they had planned, played dead. The SS did not take any more time to count and drove the rest of the prisoners on.19

SS camp leader Albert Roller, one of those responsible for the crimes committed at the Lengenfeld camp, was sentenced to death in the Flossenbürg Trial and executed in 1947.20


Hans Brenner

trans. Eric Schroeder

**NOTES**

1. AK-IPN, I-8187, Protokoll der Aussage des ehemaligen polnischen Häftlings Adam Z. (Häftl.-Nr. 27 575), March 30, 1946.
2. Ibid.
4. NARA, Film T 580, Rolls 69–70; Film T 1021, Roll No. 9; see also Hans Brenner, Archiv, Akte Lengenfeld.
5. BA-B, Film Nr. 41820, Aufnahme-Nr. 787–791.
6. ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg, Nr. 4, Bl. 98.
8. Reports from the former Polish prisoners Józef Müller (prisoner no. 27 548) and Jan Szopa (prisoner no. 27747); quoted in Peter Schmoll, *Die Messerschmitt-Werke im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Regensburg: Mittelbayerische Druck- & Verlagsgesellschaft, 1998), p. 189.
10. AK-IPN, statement by Adam Z.
14. BA-B, Film 14430, Bl. 1264.
15. ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg, Nr. 1, Bl. 93, Bericht des ehemaligen luxemburgischen Häftlings Albert Hommel v. 09.05.1946—“Marches de la Mort.”
16. AK-IPN, statement by Adam Z.
17. BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 (F) AR-Z 18/68, Schlussvermerk, pp. 977–979.

**LOBOSITZ**

In 1939, the National Socialists established several prisons, ghettos, and camps at the picturesque junction of the Eger and Elbe rivers, at Leitmeritz (Litoměřice), a north Bohemian district town and bishop’s residence. The camps in this region are exemplary for showing the complete dimension of Nazi Germany’s racial and political persecution. Except for their close proximity, these camps had little in common with each other. The prisoners were victims of a variety of different measures. The establishment of the camps in turn was based on a variety of different “racial political” or war economic motives. The prison conditions varied between the camps. Shortly after the rest of the first Czechoslovakian Republic was occupied in 1939, a Gestapo prison was established in the Kleine Festung in Theresienstadt, a southern suburb of the former Habsburg garrison city. It was a Gestapo prison for Czech resistance fighters. The Kleine Festung continued to be a place of internment and execution of political opponents until the end of the war.

In November 1941, the remainder of the city area of Theresienstadt was declared to be a Jewish ghetto. Jewish families from Bohemia, Germany, and other West European states were crammed into the Theresienstadt ghetto and from October 1942 deported to Auschwitz, where they were murdered. In nearby Leitmeritz, what was to become the largest Flossenbürg subcamp was established in the early summer of 1944. More than 15,000 concentration camp prisoners from all over Europe were used on a gigantic construction project to relocate underground the armaments firms Auto Union and Osram. One-third of the prisoners, including many Jews who had been determined in Auschwitz as capable of working and had escaped the gas chambers, were not to survive the Leitmeritz camp. There was another camp only a few kilometers from the camp complexes in Theresienstadt and Leitmeritz. Here the prisoners’ survival chances in the Lobositz (Losovice) subcamp were much higher.

The establishment of a subcamp in Lobositz had nothing to do with the camps established in Theresienstadt and Leitmeritz. It had more to do with the relocation of the SS-Hauptamt C-I, the SS office for troop care, from Berlin-Lichterfelde to a region less threatened by bombing raids. In 1943, after several bombing raids on Berlin, numerous SS offices that were based in the “SS District Lichterfelde” were relocated. One of these was the SS-Kleiderkasse (Clothing Sales Store), which was relocated to Schlackenwerth (see Flossenbürg/
May 20, 1944, 10 prisoners—3 Germans, 2 Poles, a Belgian, few specialists from the Flossenbürg concentration camp. On the title of radio technician—were transferred from Flossenbürg from there they were taken to work at Lobositz, barely eight kilometers (five miles) away. The reason for this is that, as established by the Amt C-I as a radio workshop, there were work places in Lobositz. Detachments from Lobositz were repeatedly summoned to Leitmeritz to construct tunnels or to help with the work. After a short period of time, most were returned to the murderous work in constructing tunnels, as that work was regarded as more important for the war effort. Notwithstanding the rather privileged position of the prisoners in the Lobositz subcamp, there is one recorded death in the camp. The 46-year-old Belgian prisoner Vinzenz Schlepmann died a few weeks before liberation, on March 16, 1945. The SS prisoner list, however, gives the place of death as Leitmeritz and not Lobositz. Units of the Red Army liberated the remaining 18 prisoners in Lobositz on May 7, 1945.

SOURCES
The small Flossenbürg subcamp at Lobositz has only been more closely examined in publications of the Theresienstadt Memorial. In a short essay, Miroslava Langhammerová-Benešová tries to document completely the names of the prisoners: “Práce vězňů pro SS Hauptamt C I v Lobosicích,” *TL* 29 (2001): 53–59.

There are only a few source documents for this subcamp. It is possible to accurately reconstruct the number of prisoners in the Lobositz subcamp. This information is based on the relevant sources such as the *Häftlingsnummernbuch* and transport list, which are held in the CEGESOMA; and in NARA, with copies in the AG-F. Less revealing, on the other hand, are the investigation files of the ZdL at BA-L (ZdL, 410 AR 3041/66).

Jörg Skriebeleit
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

NOTES
1. Transport lists, May 20, 1944, CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14368.
2. Forderungsnachweis für die Zeit vom 22. Mai bis 31. Mai 1944, June 1, 1944, BA-B, NS4/FL 393/1.
3. Häftlingsnummernbuch, NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3.
MEHLTHEUER

On September 29, 1944, the Army High Command, in agreement with the armored car main committee, ordered the moving of a subsidiary of the Vomag AG at Plauen/Vogtland to the net and curtain factory at Mehltheuer. This company, on the basis of its request for additional workers, was allocated a prisoner group of 200 women and girls from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp on December 2. They were primarily Polish Jews, most of whom had been sent from the Łódź ghetto to Auschwitz and from there, after about two weeks, to Bergen-Belsen. Several German Jews, such as the camp elder (Lagerältester) from Mehltheuer, Eugenia L., were also recorded as Poles on the transport list. The women and girls received the registration numbers 59454 through 59653 from the Flossenbürg main camp. The prisoners had the following composition, broken down by age: 14 born between 1900 and 1909, 65 born between 1910 and 1919, 80 born between 1920 and 1924, 38 born between 1925 and 1929, 1 born in 1930, and 2 with no information.

The female prisoners were housed in the company’s warehouse, a shed, and on the top floor of the factory, in whose lower rooms they were brought in to work on machine tools. Sara K. reported:

We worked in a factory which belonged to the “Vomag” company. . . . Earlier they possibly produced curtains and net curtains there, but as we arrived machines were being fit in on which we were employed producing parts: long bolts, screws, and various other parts. Back then I was not even 18 years old and was already working on a large revolving machine and for a while also on inspection. The German foremen in the factory did not harm us. They demanded work but did not torment us. My foreman was an old man—quiet and gentle. There was a foreman there, not old, around 40—it appeared to me he was a resident of Mehltheuer. He helped us a tremendous amount. He brought bread and sometimes he caused defects in the machines so that we could rest a bit. 1

An expansion of the Mehltheuer subcamp took place on March 9, 1945, with the arrival of a group of 146 female prisoners from the closed-down subcamp at the Siemens-Schuckert Werke (Siemens-Schuckert Works, SSW) in Nürnberg. It was these female Hungarian Jews who, after the deportation to Auschwitz, had been brought to Nürnberg, specifically to the Flossenbürg subcamp Nürnberg (Siemens-Schuckert Werke). They already wore the Flossenbürg registration numbers from the series 55573 through 56290. They received their accommodation in a barracks on the factory grounds, although some of them were also employed in production outside the Vomag factory.

The factory grounds were fenced in and equipped with guard towers. Chaja-Hela G. testified about the guards: “The SS camp personnel consisted of SS members, who guarded the camp from the outside, and SS women (Aufseherinnen), who guarded us in the camp and at work. I remember the camp leader. Only after the camp had been liberated, when the Americans interrogated him, did I learn that his name was Fischer.” This was the SS-Unterscharführer Fischer, to whom 2 SS-Unterführer, 19 SS guards, and 18 SS-Aufseherinnen were subordinate. The female prisoners all agree in their assessments of the SS-Aufseherinnen. Sara K. testified: “I remember Marianne. She had a limp in one foot. Was young—around 20 or so. It seemed to me that she was a nurse. She broke my nose. Marianne and also the ‘Zwiklinska’ tormented especially older women. ‘Russian gems,’ that was the speaking style of ‘Zwiklinska,’ which is how she was called by the older women K. and L., who really were victims of these two SS women. They were beaten and tormented by Marianne and the ‘Zwiklinska.’”

Chaja-Hela G. also expressed herself similarly during her witness questioning: “There were rather a lot of SS Aufseherinnen in the camp, but they changed often—only a few were stable from the beginning to the end. There were the SS women ‘Marianka,’ ‘Zwiklinska,’ and ‘Hohe Genändel’—those were nicknames. Among the SS women were those that beat us for every little thing and also without any reason, and there were also good ones, that means those that did not do anything bad toward us. . . . I’ve seen how Marianne beat other female prisoners. The other two also beat.”

The German camp elder, Eugenia (Jenny) Lerner, played a special role in the camp, about whom Sara K. testified:

Concerning conditions in the camp, I must say that due to the Jewish camp elder, Frau Lerner, things were orderly with us in the Polish camp—the rations were equally distributed and, although it was very little, it was nevertheless better than in other camps. Only as the end approached did the hunger come—that was really a difficult time. . . . After the liberation Frau Lerner told us that she had personally seen a document at the commandant’s—an order—that he showed only to her. According to this order he was supposed to lead us all to the forest nearby and there we would be shot. He said to Frau Lerner that he would not carry out this order. Two days before liberation he opened the camp and allowed us to take food from the stockrooms, which were near the train tracks. . . . He stayed in the camp and the Americans took him into custody.”

The SS camp leader (Lagerführer) Fischer also prevented a staff of Hungarian Arrow Cross Fascists, which appeared on

4. Rücküberstellung, August 31, 1944, CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14368.
5. Häftlingsnummernbuch, NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3.
the scene shortly before the occupation by U.S. troops, from carrying out the shooting of Jewish prisoners.9

During the entire life of the camp, despite the inadequate food supply, there was only one fatality. After the liberation of the women by the U.S. troops on April 16, 1945, they were brought, on May 1, 1945, to another camp, the Rentenschmühle on the Elster River, which the Americans had set up as a hospital.

SOURCES
Some information on the Mehltueher camp is available in Hans Brenner, Frauen in den Aussenlagern des KZ Flossenbürg (Regensburg: Arbeitsgemeinschaft ehemaliges KZ Flossenbürg, 1999).

Archival sources may be found in ZdL at BA-L, IV 410 AR 3069/66; and ITS, Hist. Abl., Flossenbürg.

Hans Brenner
trans. Eric Schroeder

NOTES
4. BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 AR 3069/66, Bd. 1, p. 100, testimony by Chaja-Hela G. (prisoner no. 59596); see also BA-B, Film Nr. 14430, p. 1266.
6. BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 AR 3069/77, Bd. 2, p. 204, testimony by Sara K.
8. BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 AR 3069/66, Bd. 2, pp. 203, 204, testimony by Sara K.

MEISSEN-NEUHIRSCHSTEIN

The Neuirschtein Castle, which was built in the thirteenth century and lies along the Elbe River approximtively 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) from Riesa and 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from Meissen, had been owned by the Busse family since 1892. In a letter dated October 7, 1943, the head of the administration in the Meissen district confiscated “the entire castle Neuirschtein . . . including the park and garden for a high-ranking prisoner of the state and his entourage.”1 The owner, Louise Busse, was allegedly given a house in the “Weisser Hirsch” villa district in Dresden in return.2 The above-mentioned high-ranking prisoner of the state was Belgian King Leopold, who had been confined in the Laeken Castle near Brussels since the occupation of Belgium.

Before the royal family was brought to the castle, which was now called “Haus Elbe,” it had to be secured. Also on October 7, 1943, the special unit for this task, headed by the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) in charge of this project, received about 150 prisoners who were transferred from the Dachau concentration camp to Neuirschtein and had to do construction and reinforcement work under the command of the SS-Construction Department in Dresden. The prisoners were almost exclusively Italians.3 There is evidence that 23 prisoners were also transferred from the Ravensbrück concentration camp on October 31 and December 26. Prisoners were also transferred to Neuirschtein from the subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp at Dresden (SS-Pionier-Kaserne), where especially skilled workers were interned. The Neuirschtein subcamp is noted only a few times in the Flossenbürg prisoner register because the prisoners were transferred afterward either to Dresden, to Flossenbürg, or to other camps. Some transfers from and to Neuirschtein are verifiable, such as the transfer of 16 prisoners from Neuirschtein to Sachsenhausen, on December 4 and 5, 1943, as ordered by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA).4 Out of the 16 prisoners—5 Germans, 5 Slovenes, 3 Poles, 2 Russians, and 1 Frenchman—5 were locksmiths, 3 were construction workers, 1 was a farmer, and 7 were unskilled workers. It is possible that they were transferred in exchange for 14 prisoners who had been transported in November from Sachsenhausen to Neuirschtein.5

As reported by local chronicler Walter Kuntze, the prisoners had to set up reinforcement work and wire enclosures. They also had to build, within a short period of time, a guardhouse for the SS, with stones delivered over the Elbe River. An indirect proof of the strain caused by this project is provided in a letter sent from the SS-Pionier-Kaserne subcamp in Dresden to the commandant in Flossenbürg: “The labor detail which has been assigned to the Neu-Hirschstein Haus Elbe has used more potatoes than allocated in the budget because of additional work and night work.”6 As witnesses from that time report, some prisoners were also lent short term to local businesses. For example, two prisoners, one of them an American, supposedly worked in a carpenter’s workshop in nearby Bahra.

The prisoners were housed in stables and barns around the castle and had to suffer under the most brutal conditions. At least four shootings of prisoners are known to have taken place between November 10 and 20, 1943, for apparent escape attempts. Two Italian prisoners, who missed the evening roll call, were found and shot the next day by canine officer SS-Rottenführer Helmut Fritzschte. A Russian and a Polish prisoner were also shot dead, as attested to by the morgue certificate issued by the garrison physician from the SS-Pioneer Replacement Battalion in Dresden.7 The brutality of the guard force was investigated after the war in various court proceedings: Fritzschte was sentenced by an American military court to 15 years in prison.8 SS-Oberscharführer Artur Abe, who worked as a guard from July 1939 at Flossenbürg, then later in the first Flossenbürg subcamp in Stulln as well as in Neuirschtein, was sentenced in 1949 by the jury in Amberg to 14 years in prison. Among other things, he was sentenced for proven participation in the killing of an Italian. The dead prisoners were supposedly wrapped in sheets and transported in trucks to the

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Meissen crematorium. However, their actual cremation cannot be proven. There are no documents available about the makeup and strength of the guard force except for a transport list with 12 SS-Schützen and SS-Rottenführer Kiehl from December 12, 1944.9

Some labor allocation receipts of the command headquarters in Flossenbürg show the extent of prisoner deployment.10 The construction department of the Waffen-SS and police in Dresden was charged for 220 prisoners for the "construction project Haus Elbe" in December 1943, about half of which were skilled and half unskilled workers. From the middle of the month until December 25, 24 unskilled workers and 74 skilled workers were assigned. After the middle of February 1944—in the meantime, work was possibly stopped—the SS-Special Building Detachment "Haus Elbe" was charged first for 20, then for 50, prisoners. The remaining 30 prisoners were pulled out on March 4, 1943; the labor allocation receipt to the construction inspectorate "Haus Elbe" notes the "ending of the detachment." However, according to the International Tracing Service (ITS), prisoners had to have worked in Neuhirschstein until May 23, 1944. Fees for prisoners were charged to the Dresden construction department until September 1944.11 Strong fluctuation in prisoner numbers, prisoner heterogeneity, the time limitation of prisoner deployment, and the strict secrecy of the SS all constitute reasons why there is relatively little known about actual prisoner deployment.

On June 6, 1944, immediately after the Allied invasion of Normandy, King Leopold was transported via Erfurt and Weimar to Neuhirschstein. His wife, Princess Liliane, as well as his children, Josephine-Charlotte, Baudoin, Albert, and Alexander, left the following day. They arrived there on June 11, 1944, and had to remain, together with their personnel, in the castle, which was secured by barbed wire and under the guard of SS men.

The reports concerning the strength of the guards and prisoners of the work camps in the area of responsibility of the HSSPF Elbe received after January 1945 point to 50 SS guards doing guard duty but no prisoners.

The Belgian royal family was taken south on March 5, 1945, and finally liberated by U.S. troops close to Salzburg. The castle, which had, for example, an impressive porcelain collection, was looted by the local population after the departure of the royal family.

**Sources** The AG-F has at its disposal the Flossenbürg main sources and excerpts from a writing by local historian Walter Kunzte. Two proceedings of the central authority of the ZdL at BA-L (410 AR 3038/66 and 410 AR 2629/67 as well as collective papers 501) contain mainly copies from the process papers of the Amberg jury court. They are available in print form as Lfd. No. 181 of the *Justiz u. NS-Verbrechen*. The investigation reports of the prosecuting attorney's office in Weiden of the Neuhirschstein subcamp can be found in the ASr-Ang.

Ulmich Fritz
trans. Mihaela Pittman

**NOTES**

1. See also Herbert Kuttner, "Auf höhere Weise beschlagenahmt," newspaper article, n.d., AG-F.
2. As reported by the contemporary witness Mrs. Lieselotte Nauck to the writer of the report, January 19, 2002. At the time the subcamp operated, Mrs. Nauck worked as housekeeper at the neighboring manor Rissel.
3. See also Toni Siegert, "Zusammenfassender Bericht für das Schloss Neuhirschstein," in AG-F. Siegert could rely on sources at ITS. The prisoner's list of the Dachau concentration camp shows 144 prisoners were transferred on October 13, 1943, to Flossenbürg (source: AG-D).
4. CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14787 (the WVHA letter from November 29, 1943, and undated transfer list).
5. BA-B, NS 4/FL 390, telex of the Flossenbürg Kommandant Kögel from November 3, 1943.
7. Postmortem certificates for Aleco Fiarravanti, Waclaw Stepien, and Jarosowski, copies in AG-F.
8. United States vs. Helmut Fritzsche, Case No. 000-Flossenbürg-4.
10. Ibid., 393, vol. 1: Reports of requirement for the months of December 1943, February and March 1944.
11. ITS, Hist. Archiv, Hängeordner Meissen Schloss Neuhirschstein; copy of Toni Siegert in AG-F.

**MITTWEIDA**

The Mittweida subcamp was formed on October 9, 1944, with a transport of 503 women and girls from the Auschwitz II-Birkenau concentration camp.1 Of these prisoners 286 came from the Soviet Union (all recorded as Russians in SS documents), 177 from Poland, 22 from Italy, 8 from Yugoslavia, 2 from Croatia, and 1 from Germany. There is no information on 7 of these women. Among the Poles were also a group of about 50 women who had taken part in the Warsaw Uprising of August 1944 and had been incorporated into the transport at Auschwitz.2

The women were employed on the presses for making synthetic and iron parts in the radio equipment works of C. Lorenz AG, which had been moved from Berlin to Mittweida. In addition, this company, which was almost 100 percent owned by the Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG), deployed concentration camp prisoner labor for its radio equipment production in two subcamps of Gross-Rosen, one in Guben with 1,000 women and another in Ober-Hohenelbe (Horejsi Vrchlaby) with 450 women. In contrast to Mittweida, where there were officially no Jews in the camp, in both of these other subcamps for C. Lorenz the prisoners were primarily Jews.3

As of the fall of 1944, the decision for distributing the concentration camp prisoner labor force had been passed on to Albert Speer’s Armaments Ministry and the “personal responsibility of the industry” with their groups and committees.
Anton Freiheit von Massenbach, acting as representative of C. Lorenz and as leader of the Aircraft Radio Equipment Committee, may have influenced the allocation of concentration camp prisoners to Mittweida. Furthermore, the fact that Emil Helfferich and Kurt Freiheit von Schröder, as members of the Circle of Friends of the Reichsführer-SS Himmler (Freundeskreis Himmler), were on the board of C. Lorenz, and met with the head of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), Oswald Pohl, at the Freundeskreis gatherings, also could have influenced the transport of concentration camp prisoner labor units to C. Lorenz.

The women had to make their way from the accommodation camp to the factory rooms in the cleaned-out spinning mill on a path fenced in by barbed wire, a type of “lion's path,” like in the circus. They worked in two alternating shifts. The day shift was from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.; the night shift was from 6:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M. The work was very demanding and dangerous due to the high temperatures around the presses and the resulting steam. Workers often got burned.

The management of the Flossenbürg concentration camp claimed a “slave lending fee” of 4 Reichsmark (RM) per day per prisoner worker. The value of the products that the female prisoners produced was many times more than the price the workers were paid. For the month of December, the Flossenbürg claims resulted in 41,940.85 RM after deductions for provision costs, which the company covered.

The daily 12-hours of work increasingly exhausted the physical strength of the women and girls, especially as all the questioned female prisoners agreed that the food ration was completely inadequate. The clothing often consisted only of thin, worn clothes, on which, in order to prevent escape attempts, a piece of material of a noticeably different color was put on the back of the clothes. The women owned hardly any underwear so that they themselves made primitive substitutes. They wore wooden shoes, with the upper part made out of cloth.

In the factory section where the female prisoners worked, there was an explosion at the beginning of 1945, and a fire followed on the floor. It can be assumed that it might have been an act of sabotage by the prisoners.

The only prisoner who attempted to escape was a Pole. Yugoslav Danica B. reported on the accommodation: “The camp consisted of a total of five or six barracks. We prisoners were housed in two barracks, the outpatient department with the washroom and showers was located in one, the third was empty. A barracks inside the camp served as housing for the SS personnel, the camp guards.” The possibility to shower and wash clothes was viewed by the women as one of the few advantages of Mittweida in comparison to other camps such as Auschwitz and Krakau-Plaszow. Initially, SS-Oberscharführer Teichmann was the camp leader, who was relieved by camp leader (Lagerführer) Wiss. Hana U.F. testified about them: “The first detail leader was an older person. He was a decent man. He did not say much. The second detail leader was in his forties. The guard personnel consisted of SS men from Yugoslavia and Croatia; they were not Germans, maybe ethnic Germans. The SS Aufseherinnen [female guards] were from Germany. The camp doctor was a Russian named Vera, and her orderly was also Russian, both prisoners.” In addition to the camp leader, 10 SS guards and 27 Aufseherinnen belonged to the guard personnel.

Pole Irena Jeruszka reported on the conditions at the camp: “On Sundays and holidays we stood for hours at roll call because the SS Aufseherinnen thoroughly inspected our barracks. If they had found anything a punishment was imposed in addition to beatings—which a young blonde, who we called ‘Katze’ [cat], especially enjoyed. As punishment our hands were tied or we were sent to the cellar, where one had to stand in water.” Yugoslavian Darina B. testified:

As far as the abuses are concerned, the SS members used the tested punishment method—all for one, one for all. Thus for everyone’s mistake, we had to spend several hours at roll call kneeling in file after we had had twelve hours in the factory behind us. One time we had to stand the whole night through because a Pole had written a letter to Poland and had given it to the post office via the foreman of the factory. The address could not be found and the letter was returned to the factory. So that this would not happen again we were punished in advance and the Pole disappeared from the camp. We thought she had been killed, but after a few weeks she showed herself again, pale, emaciated, and sheared to the skin. In confidence she told us that she was in a cellar where she had to stand for three weeks and as soon as she moved, drops of water fell from the room onto her shaved skin. In addition she was beaten a lot and tormented with hunger. In the same way, kneeling in file, we were punished because three female prisoners—Jehovah’s Witnesses—did not want to work on Saturdays for religious reasons.

Several women testified about the camp evacuation, which began on April 13, 1945: “One morning Dora came in and told us that the Americans are very close and that we would be liberated. We should just behave calmly. We were brought back to the camp and locked up. There was no food left. In the evening we were counted. A fellow prisoner had a nervous breakdown. The detail leader took her to a remote corner of the camp and shot her. We looked at him and heard the shot. The one [prisoner] shot was from Warsaw.” “Not only our camp was being moved; during the march they put us together with another women’s camp. We marched day and night. Those who could not go any further stayed behind. I do not know what happened to them. At a train station we waited for the train. Like everyday there was another air raid there. When the train came, coal was taken off and we were loaded on. We made it to southern Germany without rations.” The transport went to Leitmeritz. There the Jewish
prisoners were taken out and sent by foot to Theresienstadt. The SS joined up the women of the Mittweida camp with a transport of male prisoners, which traveled to Prague via Kralupy. “We arrived in Prague on May 1, where many people were expecting us at the train station. Red Cross ambulances came immediately and took the sick away. Trucks brought bread, soup, coffee, and cooked potatoes. We were allowed to get out of the cars and receive food. Then we could, for the first time, in the truest sense of the word, fill ourselves up, but we could not hold the food down in our stomach and intestines and we had to regurgitate everything again and the hunger did not end. Those who wanted to could move freely about the train station.”

From the testimony of Irena J., we can gather how confused the SS must have been: “As the commandant went to the telephone the Czechs said to the Aufseherinnen that he ran away because the Russians and allies were approaching. The Aufseherinnen opened the cars and let us out. They took their uniforms off. Underneath they had on normal clothes. As the commandant came back he threatened to kill us and had us driven back in the cars. With the help of Czechs I was still able to escape.”

At Prague-Bubeneč, many of the prisoners of this transport were freed and hidden in hospitals and apartments by members of the Czech Red Cross and groups of the Czech resistance, who openly rose up against the German occupation a few days later. The transport continued on, and only after passing Budweis (Ceske Budjovice) did the prisoners experience liberation on May 9, 1945, near Velemín.

**SOURCES**

Information on this camp may be found in Katharina Losikowa, “Konzentrationslager Flossenbürg—Kommando Mittweida,” in Kasematten des Todes (Moscow, 1996). The following archival collections are also important:


**NOTES**


3. Hana U.F., who used a fake name, was the only Jew in the camp. Her prisoner name is not known. See also ZdL at BA-L, IV 410 AR-Z 106/68, Bd. 1, B I. 121.


6. BA-B, Film Nr. 4053, Forderungsnachweis Flo Nr. 802.


8. Ibid.

9. It was the Pole Maria S. (prisoner no. 55632).


11. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 106/68, Bd. 1, p. 121, testimony by Hana U.F.


15. Pole Poroska Fedasiuk was shot (prisoner no. 55310).


17. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 106/68, Bd. 2, p. 278, testimony by Darinca B.

18. Irena Jeruszka, report.

**MOCKETHAL-ZATZSCHKE**

The destruction of the German fuel production facilities by Allied air force raids in the early summer of 1944 forced the managers of the German armament and war industries to take desperate countermeasures. In connection with the oil safe-guarding plan, underground fuel production facilities were also planned from August 1, 1944, in the Herrenleite and in the Alte Poste, valley walls in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains near Pima. On September 21, 1944, the planned object was named for the first time: “Dachs VIII,” a large refinery for producing lubricating oil. In addition, construction of four small distillation plants, which were planned in the Alte Poste under the code name “Ofen,” was begun.

For their expansion, General Commissioner for Immediate Measures Edmund Geilenberg requested from the SS to employ concentration camp prisoners as labor, in addition to the units from the Organisation Todt (OT). Construction management and construction execution would be transferred to the OT, which had requested concentration camp prisoner labor from the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). The location was designated concretely in a report from October 18, 1944: “Pima—Alte Poste.” It would be a production factory of the Deutsche Gasolin AG, from which the planning had also come. The time schedule was: October 19, 1944, begin construction; December 1, 1944, begin the mining work in the rock; February 15, 1945, begin the installation of the tunnels; June 1, 1945, facility ready. Prisoner employment at this and similar properties did not result in any finished facilities, but many concentration camp prisoners were senselessly sacrificed for the fanatical survival politics of the Fascist leadership.

On January 10, 1945, the first group of prisoners arrived from the original Flossenbürg camp in Mockethal near Pima. Former prisoner Paul K. testified: “I came with a vanguard of about sixty prisoners to Pima. We had to build a barracks camp for about two thousand prisoners. When we arrived, a makeshift barrack already existed for us. As we began with
the work there was still snow on the ground. The prisoners designated for the camp were to work in the Elbe Sandstone Mountains. Tunnels were there in which factories were housed. The factories needed more people; for this reason the accommodation was expanded. Among this first group of prisoners, about 100 strong, were 32 Italians, 30 Russians, 13 Poles, 8 Germans, 7 French, 2 Belgians, 2 Bulgarians, 2 Croats, 1 Yugoslav, 1 Czech, and 1 Hungarian.3 After the bombing of Dresden, prisoners from the Dresden (Bernsdorf & Co.) subcamp were transferred to Mockethal-Zatzschke on February 14, 1945, followed a few days later by prisoners from the Dresden (Universelle) subcamp.6 Former Polish Jewish prisoner Baruch R. testified: “After the large air raid on Dresden, which took place during the night from 12 to 13 February, 1945, the camp inmates were transferred to Pima, and the SS members from Bernsdorf came with us as well. The first group of camp inmates were brought back after about two weeks, the rest were brought to Bernsdorf after approximately ten to fourteen days, but a few weak prisoners stayed in Pima, including my brother Feiusch, who was shot at Pima in an extremely debilitated condition.”7

In March 1945, several Yugoslavian prisoners arrived from the Flossenbürg/Porschdorf subcamp, as the property there was given up in view of the war situation. On April 13, 1945, 131 prisoners were still recorded as being in the camp, following the strength report. The barracks camp, which contained 8 to 10 barracks and was located in a disused sandpit, had a fence around it and guard towers. Until the end, it remained incomplete. Three women of the Dresden (Universelle) subcamp, who were transferred to Mockethal-Zatzschke, reported:

We were brought to the Zatzschke reserve camp. There were already four hundred prisoners there (men and women, even children). In our barrack rooms there were neither beds nor washing facilities or toilets. Here we also had to sleep on the floor, provided with only a thin blanket. There was also no regard for the ill, they were not even provided with either straw or a bed. The Jewish prisoners did not even have a blanket. In our room an old wagon was just set up, without cover, in which we had to relieve ourselves. In this foul air we had to sleep, as the windows were not allowed to be opened. Even water was allocated to us; we each received a cup of water from which we also had to drink. We also did not receive clothes to change. We were forced to remain in our clothes constantly. It was a picture of horror, to see the emaciated and sick people lying on the floor.8

As a result of the unhygienic conditions, the hunger, and the difficult working conditions at the tunnel construction, there is one count of the dead in the camp, primarily from the prisoners who were transferred from Dresden. At least 7 dead from the Mockethal-Zatzschke camp were buried in the Pirnaer graveyards, and 47 were buried in the graveyard in Lohmen. (The determination of the dead is difficult because Pima was an intermediate stop for several evacuation marches and transports of various concentration camps, from which a number of dead, not precisely known, were buried in the Pirnaer graveyard.9) Several prisoners reported on the fatalities: “Prisoners were always dying in the camp. Several really folded, they became more and more emaciated. Once a German prisoner died, he was buried in the Pima graveyard. All who died there were buried in the graveyard at Pima. Even a priest was there.”10 “As a result of the poor nourishment and lack of medicine many prisoners fell ill and several died every day. They were simply stripped of all their clothes, laid before the barrack windows, and remained lying there for days until several more were added again. Then they were brought to Lohmen for burial, body laid upon body. In the end they did not even bother, but rather simply laid them behind the provisionally constructed lavatory, where, after days, they were burned in the open or buried in neighboring bushes.”11

The camp leader responsible until March 1945 was SS-Oberscharführer Plager, afterward, SS-Oberscharführer Erich von Berg, who had already left his mark in the Flossenbürg subcamps at Neurohlau, at Mülsen St. Micheln, and at Dresden (Universelle). In his youth, he belonged to the militaristic Kyffhäuser Jugend, and he joined the SS in 1933. In Mockethal-Zatzschke, 2 SS-Unterführer and 12 SS guards, as well as, temporarily, several female guards (SS-Aufseherinnen), were subordinate to him.12 For his reign of terror in the camp he used brutal camp elder (Lagersältester) Karl Popowski and the Kapos. Former Italian prisoner Sergio P. testified: “I know that a prisoner, I don’t know whether he was German or Austrian, actively worked with the Germans and abused the prisoners. It is highly possible that he killed other prisoners.”13 Former Polish Jewish prisoner Samuel L. also testified: “The ‘camp leader’ (camp elder) was an Austrian prisoner. He was terrible. I saw twice how he beat prisoners to death. One prisoner he simply beat under the heart so that he fell over dead. This beaten prisoner was called Rosenblum. We had to work very hard and were hungry.” Samuel L. continued, “If prisoners were admitted into the infirmary, an empty room in a barrack, we carried them out dead the next morning. I estimate that twenty-five to thirty men and women died in this way. I can still remember the names of the prisoners Glicksman and Korn. They were both from Łódź.”14 There are several testimonies about another crime committed, however, not against a camp inmate from Mockethal but rather against women on an evacuation march in the Mockethal camp: “I remember that on the morning of April 15, 1945, a barrack, which was occupied by imprisoned female Poles, was cleared. Immediately after the clearing I continued a job that I had started myself in the barrack. Shortly thereafter four imprisoned female Poles came into the barrack who said to me that they were not able to go by foot due to their physical condition. Two soldiers came in; they spoke to each other and went out. Immediately
thereafter one of the two came back into the barrack and with his machine gun killed the four women, one after the other, before my eyes. A young Frenchman and I continued working, full of terror. Another former prisoner testified: “On the morning before the evacuation from the camp around six to seven women were killed. These women belonged to a group of about one hundred and twenty to one hundred and thirty, primarily Jewish, who arrived in the camp on the night before and already had hundreds of kilometers behind them. The women spent the night in the camp and on the following morning those who could not go any further were brought to the latrines and killed by the guards, i.e., the old guards (who were older than sixty), who had recently been fetched for this auxiliary service. I saw myself how the women were killed with shots that were fired into the abdomen at the closest distance.”

On April 16, 1945, the camp was cleared of most of its prisoners. On May 8, 1945, Soviet troops liberated 45 prisoners in the camp—men and women, those ill who remained behind, and prisoners who had tried to escape but were again apprehended and brought into the camp after the evacuation.

Some of the evacuated prisoners were driven on a foot march to Leitmeritz, whereas the feeble were killed. “I remember,” testified Mario T.,

that during our march due to the transfer to Leitmeritz, a man from Friaul could not go any further as he was at the end of his strength; he went to the side of the street and an SS soldier killed him on the order of the Austrian sergeant. Later a young man from Valvolciana (close to Görz), threw himself to the side of the street because he was finished, and he was also killed by an SS soldier on the order of the Austrian sergeant, who commanded our column.”

The Leitmeritz camp leadership sent the Jewish prisoners to the Theresienstadt ghetto by foot.

Another group of prisoners who had been evacuated from the Mockethal-Zatzschke camp and were not able to march were brought to boats on the Elbe River, on which were already prisoners who had been evacuated from subcamps of the Gross-Rosen concentration camp. The number of victims on these boats must have been especially high. Samuel L. testified about this:

I myself could hardly still go at this time, I was totally swollen. I still belonged, however, to the “healthy.” We were brought to the Elbe boats. There, we “healthy” had to care for the sick. The conditions there were indescribable. I remember that Mr. Reingold from Łódź died there. He was literally eaten by the lice. I heard that the Elbe boats were subordinate to a special SS detail that had the task of drowning the sick. It did not come to that, however. . . . The transport consisted of three or four boats. The sick from many camps were gathered on the boats. In front, as well as in back, was a ship with SS. There were also SS guards on every boat. The journey went into the Sudetenland, to the Czech border. There, the SS officer on the boat up front saw that the war was over. In any case he turned around and disappeared. The other SS members also left us. I went down off the boat and fled into Czechoslovakia. The Russians were already there.

**NOTES**

1. BA-B, Film 5768, Aktenvermerk v. October 25, 1944, p. 4; see also BA-K, R 3/1907, p. 249.

**SOURCES**


The following archival collections are also important: ZdL at BA-L, IV 410 AR-Z 57/68; IV 410 AR-Z 8/76; ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg; ASt-Pi, Akten Mockethal-Zatzschke;

Chamin Werebejczyk, report to the author from October 2000.

1. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 57/68, p. 159, Testimony by Baruch R. (prisoner no. 38502). The murdered was Feiwus R. (prisoner no. 38503).
6. Mario T. (prisoner no. 40325). The murdered was Feiwus R. (prisoner no. 38502).
16. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 8/76, Bd. 2, p. 383, testimony by Sergio R. The differences between the two representations lead to the conclusion that they could concern two different killing actions.
MÜLSEN ST. MICHELN

As with the formation of the Johanngeorgenstadt subcamp in December 1943, the Erla Maschinenwerke GmbH Leipzig (Erla Airplane Works) sought, with the establishment of the Mülsen St. Micheln subcamp in January 1944, to continue the decentralization of its aircraft production in the Leipzig area, which was in danger of air raids.\(^1\)

The first group of prisoners arrived at Mülsen from the Buchenwald subcamp Leipzig-Theka on January 27, 1944.\(^2\) Erla Maschinenwerke pushed the Flossenbürg command to finish setting up the camp as soon as possible. On March 5, 1944, the detail leader from Mülsen reported to the camp commandant in Flossenbürg about the work and remarked: “On Saturday Mr. Wend from Leipzig was here and visited the common room, which is to be used to accommodate an additional five hundred prisoners who should be transferred here as soon as possible.”\(^3\)

With transports arriving from the Buchenwald camps throughout March and April 1944, the number of prisoners in the Mülsen subcamp had grown to 472 by the end of April.\(^4\) The prisoners were housed in the basement of the C.H. Gross textile factory, which had been seized for airplane production.

On the night of April 30–May 1, 1944, a fire broke out in this prisoner housing, claiming 198 prisoners as victims. The former camp Kapo, the infamous “green” Georg Weilbach, testified in court that the fire “broke out because of a rebellion by the Russian prisoners, who lit straw sacks on fire.” And the rebellion was aimed “against the Polish, Czech, and French fellow prisoners.” In addition, he remarked “that during the fire the fl iers (Luftwaffe guards) shot into the camp.”\(^5\) The former factory boiler man, however, gave another perspective of the fire in his report:

I was a boiler man for the C.H. Gross company, in which the Erla Maschinenwerke GmbH were set up during the war. Thus I had access to the camp as the boiler room was located in the factory building within the camp area. I could observe a lot and I also knew the SS members and Erla people. . . . Before the fire there had already been an escape of two prisoners. A few days before the fire several new prisoners arrived, maybe thirty or more, among whom were Soviet officers. They supposedly organized the uprising. After the fire, an SS detail came from Flossenbürg. The Soviet prisoners were loaded into trucks, bound together with wire around the neck as they were considered escape risks, and brought to Flossenbürg. Weilbach, the beast, was especially active in the process. Also, a Polish officer, “Staczek,” who was manager of the skilled workers’ barrack (tailors), was brought to Flossenbürg after the fire due to sabotage. After the fire new prisoners arrived from Flossenbürg.\(^6\)

The reports of the Fighter Staff (Jägerstab) meetings show how shocked the leading powers of the German air arma-

ments were about the uprising in Mülsen. The conclusion that SS-Gruppenführer Hans Kammler came to was especially murderous: “It is because the people have noticed that they are no longer treated hard enough. I let thirty people hang in special treatment. Since they’ve been hanged, things are somewhat in order again.”\(^7\) Two days later, another Jägerstab meeting concerned itself once again with the Mülsen case. Generalfeldmarschall Erhard Milch asked the question whether what was really wrong at Erla had been clarified. The remark by Albert Speer’s representative Karl Otto Saur— “This has to be closely scrutinized. A clarification about the weak leadership at Erla must come from the main or special committee”—shows what particular roles the committees of the “personal responsibility of the industry” played in influencing the armament industry, including the employment of the concentration camp prisoners.\(^8\)

Residents of Mülsen reported on the fire and the victims among the prisoners:

As the doors were opened, a mountain of bodies and unconscious people laid behind them. Many could have been saved, but the gendarmerie and the military had blocked off the entire factory premises, only a few were allowed in. . . . The prisoners, lying on the ground, some unconscious from the smoke, died in the water, which was quickly half a meter [almost 20 inches] high. After around three hours of conflagration a large section of the roof collapsed, burying fire and people underneath. From around 600 prisoners, 189 dead were counted the next day, and another 9 died on the following days from their injuries and fire wounds. . . . The selfless rescue work of several ﬁremen and local residents, who despite all dangers broke off the window bars at two places and thus saved over thirty prisoners, is especially to be emphasized. A Polish doctor entered the basement and carried the unconscious to the window, where a ﬁremen from Mülsen St. Niclas took over in order to bring them out. Unfortunately, out of fear of the prisoners the guard units prevented the ﬁremen and the Polish doctor from continuing their work.\(^9\)

Prisoners selected by a commission of SS ofﬁcers were transported to the original Flossenbürg camp and killed there. “About sixty men of those who started the fire were brought back to Flossenbürg. As these sixty arrived in Flossenbürg, I was still there and saw myself how every one of these people had to carry a heavy stone while being beaten by several fellow prisoners with cables and water hoses. That was shortly before I was transferred to Mülsen. That was in May 1944.”\(^10\) Toni Siegert writes that the suspected ring-leaders from Mülsen, at least 40, were executed in the detention building at Flossenbürg between June and September 1944. In order to compensate for lost labor, 712 prisoners from the Flossenbürg camp and the Buchenwald subcamp
Leipzig-Thekla were brought to Mülsen in five transports by the end of 1944. In a strength report from January 31, 1945, 800 prisoners were reported in the camp; on February 28, 775 prisoners; on March 31, 809 prisoners; and on April 13, 1945, 787 prisoners.

A table of the transports to and from Mülsen reveals that 1,424 prisoners were brought to the camp and 462 were transferred out again. But instead of having the number of prisoners resulting in 962, only around 700 started the evacuation march on April 14, 1945. The SS killed 51 prisoners before the beginning of the death march and had them buried in a plot of forest near Mülsen.

Due to the constant change in composition, the breakdown by nationality of the Mülsen subcamp can only be precisely determined at two points in time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>February 28, 1945</th>
<th>March 31, 1945</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovak</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgian</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslav, Croat, Lithuanian, each</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab, Argentinean, each</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jewish prisoners only arrived in the camp with two evacuation groups on March 15 and 16, 1945.

The employment of the prisoners took place on the orders of the Jägerstab, with a 72-hour week of rotating 12-hour day and night shifts. In the framework of decentralization, in which the manufacturing of the Messerschmitt fighter plane Me 109, which was built under license by Erla Maschinenwerke, was distributed among several moving factories, only the wings were produced by the prisoners at Mülsen. This specialization meant a rationalization of the manufacturing process and thus higher productivity, which went together with a brutal slave-driving system. Not only the SS guards and Kapos but also some of the Erla personnel constantly drove the prisoners at work. Erla production engineer Pallitza, who personally beat prisoners to the ground with iron bars, especially distinguished himself by abusing prisoners.

In contrast, several Germans helped the prisoners, like the foreman of the electric workshop, Paul Lamer, and boiler man Fritz Pietsch, about whom the former Czech prisoner Dr. Jan Váreka reported: “The company boiler man Max [sic] Pietsch was very willing to help us prisoners. He let us bathe in the boiler room, gave us food, and supplied us with news.”

According to claim proofs of the Flossenbürg command, Erla paid 398,945.60 Reichsmark (RM) between February and September 1944 for prisoners working in Mülsen. This represented only a minor fraction of the production costs. The prisoners, who like slaves had to perform this production work—the penalty for refusing to work was death—with completely inadequate food, miserable hygienic conditions, and without any rights, received nothing for their work. The Erla Maschinenwerke could thus pocket millions.

The SS camp leaders (Lagerführer) were primarily responsible for the crimes committed against the prisoners in the camp. From the establishment of the camp, it was SS-Hauptscharführer Johann Baptist Kübler, who was replaced after the fire in May 1944. He had already been employed in the Flossenbürg Krondorf and Pottenstein subcamps and also served temporarily as roll-call leader in the Flossenbürg main camp, then as detail leader at the Flossenbürg Zschachwitz subcamp until it was closed in April 1945. Among the prisoners, Kübler was considered a brutal thug lacking self-control.

In contrast, several Germans helped the prisoners, like the foreman of the electric workshop, Paul Lamer, and boiler man Fritz Pietsch, about whom the former Czech prisoner Dr. Jan Váreka reported: “The company boiler man Max [sic] Pietsch was very willing to help us prisoners. He let us bathe in the boiler room, gave us food, and supplied us with news.”

The evacuation of the prisoners by foot toward Erzgebirgskamm began on April 14, 1945. This information and details about the murder of 83 prisoners on a sports field in Schlema comes from the testimony of former Slovakian Jewish prisoner Josef W.: “I was evacuated from the Auschwitz camp on January 18, 1945. As a driver always under SS watch, I traveled for about six weeks through various towns and cities until I was delivered into the Mülsen camp. . . . The Mülsen camp was evacuated approximately in the middle of April 1945. On a Sunday, in the morning, we all—guard unit, camp leader, prisoners—the Mülsen camp.” Josef W. testified further about the events in Schlema:

At midday we came to a soccer field in a town, of which I did not know the name. I saw in the town, however, a sign, which showed the direction to Aue. After about a one-hour rest on the soccer field the
camp leader asked those prisoners who were already not able to march further to step out. He said that they would be given over to the Allies. I would estimate the number of prisoners, who stepped out of the column because they could not march, at about one hundred. I saw that afterward the camp leader discussed something with the Scharführer, his deputy, something I could not hear. The Scharführer then came to me and ordered me to step out of the column. He also ordered another three prisoners to step out of the column. The other three prisoners were: Otto P., Jakob S., and Zoltan Z. The Scharführer told us that we—the four prisoners—would give those prisoners unable to march over to the Americans. Under the direction of the camp leader the column left the soccer field. After the column had marched away, the Scharführer, who had stayed behind with three other Luftwaffe soldiers, went into town. After about an hour the Scharführer came back with four or five civilians who brought with them platforms pulled by tractors. During the time that the Scharführer was in town the three Luftwaffe soldiers guarded us. The civilians—armed with weapons across their shoulders—encircled the group of around one hundred prisoners. The Scharführer then ordered that these prisoners should lie on their stomachs and cover themselves with their blankets. On the order of the Scharführer the three Luftwaffe soldiers went among the rows of the prisoners lying on their stomachs and shot them with their automatic weapons [Schmeiser]. The Scharführer also went through the rows and when he saw a prisoner still living he shot him with his revolver.20

Dr. Vařeka also reported on the evacuation:

It took place on April 14, 1945, around 10 a.m. as a foot march toward Ortmannsdorf. The “Muselmänner” [ill prisoners] were deceived with the fictitious comment “You will be brought to the train station.” “Richard” we were again loaded into cars and transported to Prague-Bubenec via Kralupy and Rostocky, in a long train with many cars containing male and female prisoners. We were guarded by Vlassov soldiers. At Prague-Bubenec we were partially freed by Czechs, could flee, and were hidden and cared for with the help of doctors.21

The other prisoners in this transport were not freed until May 9, 1945, in southern Bohemia near Velemin.

**NOTES**

8. BA-B, Film 390/538, Fall II, Milch-Prozess, Aufn.-Nr. 88.
10. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 2/70, Bd.2, p. 137, statement by the former Ukrainian prisoner Josef W. Actually 131 prisoners were brought to Flossenbürg from Mülsen on May 13, 1944, 53 of whom were shot in the bunker at Flossenbürg.
17. BA-P, Film W. 30.18/1.
Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary) in what is today the Czech Republic. From the end of 1942 until the end of the war, over 1,000 women and, on average, 60 men were forced to work in Neurohlau in a porcelain factory, knitting mill, construction detachment, and an armaments firm.

The porcelain firm Bohemia—Keramische Werke AG in Neurohlau had fallen into economic difficulties. Following the annexation of the Sudetenland by Germany, the firm was taken over by the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) Amtgruppe W: Commercial Undertakings (Wirtschaftliche Unternehmungen), Amt W I: Stone and Soil (Steine und Erden) (Reich). Once it was taken over by the SS, it produced mostly canteen cutlery for the Wehrmacht. The monthly report for March 1942 complained that “the Bohemia factory . . . is at the limits of its production capacity due to the shortage of workers and coal.”

The order to establish a subcamp at Neurohlau for men and women followed on October 27, 1942. The first indication of the male camp is to be found in a strength report dated December 7, 1942, with a reference to 40 prisoners. The report is held in the archives of the International Tracing Service (ITS). The detachment was reinforced in December 1942 with 18 prisoners from the Flossenbürg subcamp at Krondorf and again in April 1943 when its numbers increased to 110. The numbers then began to wane, reaching 30 prisoners in the autumn of 1943. The male detachment was used largely in the construction of the camp.

The first strength report from the Neurohlau female camp is from January 6, 1943, and refers to 50 female prisoners. The prisoners came from the female camp at Ravensbrück, which administered Neurohlau until August 31, 1944, even though, in terms of the work, it was already responsible to which Neurohlau was subordinated. Since January 6, 1943, and refers to 50 female prisoners. The prisoners came from the female camp at Ravensbrück, which administered Neurohlau until August 31, 1944, even though, in terms of the work, it was already responsible to which Neurohlau was subordinated.

The Neurohlau subcamp was visited by Minister for Bohemia and Moravia Karl Hermann Frank on August 11, 1944. At this point there were 575 female and 59 male prisoners at Neurohlau, who were guarded by 26 SS men and 8 female wardens. Close to the subcamp was a camp with Russian prisoners of war (POWs). The camp was within sight and calling range of the women in Neurohlau. This was the subject of criticism in Frank’s report, and a strengthening of the SS guard was ordered.

The number of female wardens increased to 20 in October; 9 of them came from Ravensbrück and 2 from the Flossenbürg subcamp at Holleischen, where a further 9 completed a training course.

The director of Bohemia was Heinrich Hechtfischer, who was arrested on October 3, 1945, in Karlsbad and sentenced to death by the Extraordinary People’s Court in Eger (Cheb) on February 15, 1947.

While the number of prisoners in the male camp remained relatively low with an average of 60, the numbers increased quickly in the female camp to about 600 prisoners. Following the evacuation of Ravensbrück and its subcamps shortly before the end of the war, the numbers of female prisoners at Neurohlau increased to over 1,000. The composition of the various nationalities is revealed in a summary of February 28, 1945. The male prisoners included 24 Germans, 1 Albanian, 1 Belgian, 1 Bulgarian, 3 French, 1 Italian, 23 Poles, 5 Russians, and 5 Czechs (for a total of 64 prisoners). The female prisoners included 109 Germans, 1 French, 2 Italians, 34 Yugoslavs, 194 Poles, 204 Russians, 1 Swiss, 10 Czechs, and 1 stateless woman (for a total of 556 prisoners).

According to several witness statements, female prisoners were whipped mercilessly for the slightest infringement. The last camp commander, Bock, is said to have excelled in gruesome excesses: “Bock was not a refined person and personally beat the female prisoners, especially the Russians. He often ordered roll call and in winter when there was a strong frost he left us standing for a long time. During the strong frost he ordered the cleaning of the latrines and the pottery shards that had been thrown into the latrines had to be cleaned in cold water.”

There were other punishments—for example, isolation in windowless bunkers. The commander Düren is said to have sexually molested the prisoners. Since there was no work in Bohemia on Saturday afternoon and Sunday, on these days the prisoners were forced to do useless tasks.

Food was very poor, consisting only of cabbage-turnip soup and bread. The prisoners were sporadically able to receive food packages from home, which helped them to survive. A kiosk was established in the factory where so-called premium slips could be exchanged by the prisoners to buy fruit, sour gherkins, and toiletries. There was no infirmary in the Neurohlau camp, and the sick prisoners were sent back to Flossenbürg. Deceased prisoners were buried at the camp’s nearby cemetery. The corpses were exhumed in 1945, and 48 were reburied at the local Neurohlau cemetery. There are no definitive figures on the total number of prisoners who died in Neurohlau.
The last Flossenbürg strength report dated April 13, 1945, refers to 61 males and 1,047 females in the camp.

On Tuesday, April 17, 1945, an evacuation transport from the Flossenbürg subcamp at Johannegeorgenstadt arrived at the railway station in Neurohlau with 800 male prisoners. The train could not travel any further because the rail lines had been bombed. The commander of Neurohlau, Bock, refused to accept the prisoners, who had to remain on the train during the night of April 19–20, 1945. They were then marched in the direction of Karlshad. During this time, 60 prisoners died on the railway premises. They were buried by Neurohlau prisoners at the camp cemetery. Seven of the burial party compiled a report on May 10, 1945, in which they accused SS-Rottenführer Riess of shooting 3 prisoners from the Johannegeorgenstadt transport pursuant to an order by Bock. They were shot in the head and left lying on the ground. The report also states that 3 women from a transport from the Flossenbürg subcamp Zwodau were buried in the camp cemetery. They died the day after they arrived in Neurohlau.11

The Neurohlau camp was evacuated on April 20, 1945, and the prisoners were sent in two groups on a death march. Many exhausted women collapsed during the march and were shot and buried on the spot. A number managed to escape. The remaining prisoners were released shortly before the arrival of the Americans.12

**NOTES**

1. ZdL, AR 174/76, statement of the former prisoner A.K.
2. SOA, OVS, Inv. c. 83, Carton 163, report of the Státní národní bezpečnosti Chodov from May 15, 1946.
3. SOA Plzeň, trial files of the Extraordinary People's Court in Eger, MLS 3/47, Karton 92, Hechtfischer, Jindrich.
4. ZdL, AR 174/76, record of interview of the former prisoner W.K.

**SOURCE**


The main sources for information on the Neurohlau subcamp are the investigation files of the ZdL at BA-L in Ludwigsburg Collection IV 410 AR 721/73 and AR 174/76 and those in the BA Collection NS4/FL of the Administrative Files of the Flossenbürg Concentration Camp. The files of the SS-owned Bohemia—Keramische Werke AG are held in the BA Collection NS3/1347. Transfer lists between Flossenbürg and Neurohlau are located in the CEGESOMA, Ministere des Affaires Sociales, de la Santé Publique et de l’Environnement, Brussels, Microfilm Nr. 14368. The SUA in Prague holds important SS documents from the last stages of the Neurohlau camp in Collection NSM, Sign. 110–4–88. Postwar Czechoslovak documents are in the same archive, Collection OVS, Inv. c. 83, Carton 163. In SOA in Plzeň are the trial files of the Extraordinary People’s Court and Eger Collection MLS.

**NOTES**

1. BA, NSI/1347, p. 199.
3. ITS, Collected Files Flossenbürg, copy from Toni Siegert Collection in the AG-F.
7. SUA, KT OVS-110/9/12.

**NOTES**

The Nossen subcamp was established on November 5, 1944. The SS-Führungsstab B 5 emerged as the first employing institution, whose actual task, as part of the SS special construction organization of SS-General Hans Kammler, consisted of expanding the underground production sites for the tank motor works of the Auto Union AG in Leitmeritz.1 The connection with the company Nova-Gesellschaft Nossen, which later emerged as a firm employing prisoners, and Ehro Works Rosswein possibly lies in the fact that the manufacturing of casting parts by prisoners in the foundry E. Broer in Rosswein needed to be established in the underground production sites of the Elsabe AG (the code name for the underground tank motor factory of Auto Union in Leitmeritz), starting in October 1944, and that this was also to take place under the direction of the SS-Führungsstab B 5.2

Ehro Works—the code name for the E. Broer foundry—was, after the successful transference of the company back from Amsterdam in 1944, installed in a closed-down steel foundry in Rosswein, where it produced aluminum castings and other cast-metal products. A former prisoner testified: “From the camp [Nossen] we traveled every day by train—about an hour and a half—to a factory, where we had to cast various forms from lead. SS members escorted us to this factory, where ethnic Germans were our foremen.”3

**NOTES**

1. 2. BA, NSI/1347, p. 199.
3. ITS, Collected Files Flossenbürg, copy from Toni Siegert Collection in the AG-F.
7. SUA, KT OVS-110/9/12.
10. SUA, OVS, Inv. c. 83, Carton 163, report of the Státní národní bezpečnosti Chodov from May 15, 1946.
11. SOA Plzeň, trial files of the Extraordinary People’s Court in Eger, MLS 3/47, Karton 92, Hechtfischer, Jindřich.
12. ZdL, AR 174/76, record of interview of the former prisoner W.K.
The Nowa-Gesellschaft, which had been founded by former aircraft captain and Oberstleutnant Warsitz, established its manufacturing sites in the former mill of the historic Altzebra monastery near Nossen. The type of production that was planned is not exactly known. The personnel manager was the SS leader Hellmuth Woelke, who came from Zinnowitz near Peenemünde. Whether this company was brought into the V-2 production operation before its transfer from Antwerp, and was then to continue this in Nossen, has not been clarified.\footnote{\textsuperscript{3}}

The prisoners arrived initially in several small transports from the Flossenbürg main camp. After the arrival of a transport of 142 prisoners from the Sachsenhausen subcamp of Lieberose on January 27, 1945, the number of prisoners had increased to 482, among them 90 Jews.\footnote{\textsuperscript{1}} Due to many fatalities, the number of prisoners continually declined. On February 28, 1945, there were still 471 prisoners; on March 31, 1945, the number of prisoners continually declined. On February 28, 1945, there were still 471 prisoners; on March 31, 1945, the strength report of April 13, 1945, recorded only 419.\footnote{\textsuperscript{4}} The strength report for Nossen from April 2, 1945, alone provides evidence of 6 deaths.\footnote{\textsuperscript{5}} The names are known of 86 dead prisoners from the Nossen-Rosswein subcamp who were buried in a mass grave at the Nossen cemetery.\footnote{\textsuperscript{6}} An additional 20 to 25 prisoners were cremated in the Meissen crematorium. The realization that actually 1 in 5 prisoners of the Nowa Gesellschaft and could observe the events taking place there: “One prisoner, who took three potatoes because he was hungry, was beaten with them by the Kapo Münch, who had wrapped them up in a towel. Afterwards the Kapo gave the prisoner a kick in the stomach. The abused person died.”

The prisoner population at the Nossen subcamp was composed of the following nationalities:\footnote{\textsuperscript{11}}

\begin{tabular}{lrrrrrrrrr}
\textbf{Nationality} & \textbf{February 28, 1945} & \textbf{March 31, 1945} \\
\hline
Poland & 207 & 198 \\

Russia (Soviet citizens) & 138 & 135 \\

Germany & 30 & 29 \\

Croatia & 27 & 3 \\

Hungary & 16 & 13 \\

Czech Republic & 14 & 10 \\

Italian & 11 & 9 \\

Frenchmen & 9 & 8 \\

Greeks & 8 & — \\

Yugoslavs & 4 & 4 \\

Bulgarians & 2 & 2 \\

Lithuanians, Romanians & 1 each & 1 each \\

Slovens, Dutchmen & 1 each & — \\

\end{tabular}

On the other hand, undernourishment and illnesses resulting from the initial completely inadequate accommodations also led to the death of prisoners. At the beginning, some of the prisoners were housed in the basement of the monastery mill, some 200 prisoners in an area only 8×12 meters (26×39 feet). There was water in this basement, and the prisoners had to sleep on soaking-wet straw. Another 60 prisoners had only pitched tents in the gardens of the monastery as sleeping quarters into November 1944. Only following an inspection conducted by the then-SS camp doctor, Dr. Schmitz, was there a change at Nossen. A camp composed of five barracks was built on a valley slope, surrounded with the customary barbed-wire fence and guard towers.

The SS leaders in charge at the Nossen subcamp were SS noncommissioned officers (Unterführer) Bosch and, later, Wetterauer.\footnote{\textsuperscript{12}} A witness reported about Bosch: “The absolute ruler in the camp was certainly Bosch, about twenty-five years old, whose accessory was the riding whip. His principle was that ‘every day twelve must die!’ He tormented the prisoners by exercising them with the orders ‘cap on!’ and ‘cap off!’ Those who did not obey immediately, he beat in the face with his riding whip. The dead were thrown into the meat wagon and brought to the graveyard.”\footnote{\textsuperscript{13}}

On February 28, 1945, the guard unit of the camp consisted of 7 SS Unterführer and 46 SS guards.\footnote{\textsuperscript{14}} Several “greens,” who had come from the Flossenbürg main camp, were installed as Kapos at Nossen and served as henchmen for the SS camp leadership, such as the head Kapo, Fritz Nass, and the Kapos Lorenz Bohnenfeld, Rudolf Gehring, and another named Münch. Gehring was sentenced to four years in prison on 12 counts, among them the torture death of prisoners. At the beginning, some of the prisoners were housed in the basement of the monastery mill, some 200 prisoners in an area only 8×12 meters (26×39 feet). There was water in this basement, and the prisoners had to sleep on soaking-wet straw. Another 60 prisoners had only pitched tents in the gardens of the monastery as sleeping quarters into November 1944. Only following an inspection conducted by the then-SS camp doctor, Dr. Schmitz, was there a change at Nossen. A camp composed of five barracks was built on a valley slope, surrounded with the customary barbed-wire fence and guard towers.

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\textbf{Sources} There are no publications specifically devoted to the history of the Nossen-Rosswein subcamp. Relevant
documentation can be found in the following archives: ZdL at BA-L (IV 410 AR 3176/66; IV 410 AR-Z 105/68); ITS (Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg); and ASt-Ns (Akten ZK-Kommando).

Hans Brenner
trans. Martin Dean

NOTES
1. BA-B, Film 14430, p. 1270: demand for payment (Forderungsnachweis) Flo Nr. 763 for December 1944.
4. Stadtarchiv Nossen, Akte 7, Nachlass Berger. See also extracts from the notes of the former mayor of Nossen, D. Karl Schwarze, in the possession of Gerhard Steinecke in Meissen.
7. BA-B, Film 41820, Frame Nos. 787–791.
8. Stadtarchiv Nossen, death list of the concentration camp prisoner detail from January 25 to April 14, 1945. The priest from Nossen is to be thanked, as he recorded the names despite the threats of the SS camp commander. The list is not complete, however.
12. BA-B, Film 14430, p. 1264.
18. DOW, Nr. 2468: death certificate issued by the LG-ZRS Vienna for Johann Graf, November 13, 1935. Graf was prisoner no. 32281 in the Nossen subcamp. His death is not recorded in available SS documents.

NÜRNBERG (SIEMENS-SCHUCKERT WERKE)

The subcamp in the Siemens-Schuchert Werke (Siemens Schuchert Works, Inc., SSW) was the only subcamp in a Nürnberg industrial facility, existing from October 18, 1944, to March 6, 1945. It was the only Nürnberg subcamp that held Jewish women as forced laborers. The 550 women and girls, aged between 14 and 40, originated from Hungary. They had been chosen in the Auschwitz II-Birkenau concentration camp by representatives of the company and transported to Nürnberg in railway cattle trucks, with completely inadequate food and packed together like sardines. There are two Auschwitz transport lists that include the functions of 580 Jewish women as well as 13 female prisoner-functionaries, but in the Flossenbürg Numbers Books (Nummernbücher), there are only 550 prisoners registered in Nürnberg. The missing 43 women and girls were either not accepted by Nürnberg or died during the transport. In the middle of January 1945, the SS transported a prisoner nurse from the Flossenbürg Neurohau subcamp to Nürnberg.

Siemens-Schuchert was established in Katzwaner Strasse opposite the main entrance of the southern cemetery. It was a barracks camp fenced in with barbed wire. Some of the women worked there. A small group of the women worked in the company’s Trafo- und Zählerwerk and were taken there part of the way in a special tram car and marched on foot the rest of the way. These factories were located in the south of Nürnberg. More than 200 of the prisoners did not work and remained in the barracks. The women who were ill, poorly nourished, and untrained had to shift heavy iron pieces or remove rust from metal. After a period of training, many worked on the production lines. However, the lack of protective clothing resulted in burns and work accidents. The women wore old clothes and coats with prisoner numbers. Mostly, they had no underwear and often no shoes. They had to survive the winter of 1944–1945 in their barracks with only a blanket. In the camp, the usual punishments were to beat the prisoners, to have them kneel for hours on the floor, and to cut their hair. Roll calls were used as a punitive measure, and the prisoners were subject to the arbitrary acts of the wardresses. The commander of the camp was SS-Oberscharführer Theodor St. Mont, who was in charge of 10 armed SS men. The female guards were supposed to be provided by Siemens Schuckert. The company management recruited women who after a four-week training course were deployed as guards in the Holleischen subcamp.

From the company’s side, Dr. Knott, the director of the Nürnberg factory, and Dr. Georg Grieshammer, the company’s official negotiator, were in charge. After 1945, both denied any responsibility for the poor conditions in the camp and the factory. However, Dr. Grieshammer had negotiated with the camp commander in Nürnberg, Koegel, and it was probably Dr. Grieshammer who, with other members of the company, chose the prisoners in Auschwitz. The use of foreign labor was within the area of responsibility of Dr. Grieshammer, as was their accommodation and care.

Investigations during the Nuremberg Trials and later by the Germans in the 1970s did not reveal any deaths in the camp or other prosecutable offenses. It is known, however, that three prisoners died in the subcamp, as the Flossenbürg Numbers Books list the deaths of Rosa Kuhn, Bertha Katz, and Helen Klein. Klein’s ashes, together with those of six other female concentration camp dead, were buried in the Nürnberg Western Cemetery. Five of them are listed in the cemetery files as “unknown Hungarian Jewesses” (unbek. Ung. Judin”), and one of them has probably been given the incorrect name of “Koschi Kochau.”

VOLUME I: PART A
The consequences for those responsible, and the firm's history of Siemens-Schuckert Werke subcamp had no noteworthy trials and at the beginning of the 1960s, the history of May without the planned death marches taking place. The prisoners were used there to remove rubble—two of the three dead in the Numbers Books died during this period.

The Nürnberg 13a Zeltner School Subcamp (Aussenarbeitslager Nürnberg 13a Zeltnerschule) was for a fortnight a Flossenbürg subcamp, a transit station for prisoners. On March 3, in chaotic conditions during an air raid, 146 prisoners were taken to the Flossenbürg Holleischen (Holysˇov) subcamp and 144 to the Flossenbürg Mehltheuer subcamp. Another transport followed on March 5, with 259 prisoners being sent to Holleischen. The transport in open rail coal cars was sheer torture and resulted in some cases of frostbite. The two subcamps were liberated in the middle of April/beginning of May without the planned death marches taking place.

Despite the preparatory investigations during the Nuremberg Trials and at the beginning of the 1960s, the history of the Siemens-Schuckert Werke subcamp had no noteworthy consequences for those responsible, and the firm's history gives a harmless picture of the camp. As a result of negotiations by the Jewish Claims Conference and several German firms, a few of the women received financial compensation from Siemens at the beginning of the 1960s.

Forced labor and the Siemens-Schuckert Werke subcamp in Nürnberg were only focused on in the 1980s. The site of the subcamp on Katzwanger Strasse is presently the site of houses. There is no memorial. The graves of the seven dead were relocated in 1960 to the Cemetery of Honor at the Flossenbürg Memorial.

Sources


Records pertaining to this camp may be found in BA-L, AG-F, BA-B, CEGESOMA, Sta-A, and NARA.

Notes

2. AG-F, interviews with two prisoner eyewitnesses, Suzanne Perl and Eva Kesler.
3. NARA, Microfilm FC 6280 (Transportliste Auschwitz II-Birkenau-Nürnberg von 550 Jüdinnen [with 580 names] and Transportliste Auschwitz II-Birkenau-Nürnberg with the names of 13 prisoner-functionaries); Nummernbücher des KZ Flossenbürg Nr. 55741-56290, NARA, Washington, RG 338, 290/13/22/3, 000-50-46, Box 537 (Microfilmkopie im AG-F).
4. CEGESOMA, Brussels, Film 14368 (Übersand Stoffnummer nach Nürnberg, January 1, 1945), Häftlingsnummer 59953.
9. NARA, Washington, RG 338, 290/13/22/3, 000-50-46, Box 537 (Mikrofilmkopie im AG-F), Häftlingsnummern 56000, 56034, und 56044.
10. Städtisches Bestattungsamt Nürnberg, Ordnerr KZ-Gräber (Kopie im AGFl).
11. CEGESOMA, Film 14368 (Transportliste Zeltner-schule-Holleischen 28.2.1945).

Nürnberg (SS-Kaserne)

On May 12, 1941, 58 prisoners from Dachau were taken to the Nürnberg SS-Kaserne (Barracks) at 204 Frankenstrasse. This was the first subcamp in Nürnberg, city of Reich Party Congresses, and was established to fulfill the needs of the SS. It existed until 1945, originally as a Dachau subcamp. Commencing in February 1943, however, individual prisoners from Flossenbürg were transferred to the SS-Kaserne subcamp, and from June 16, 1943, the camp operated under the administration of Flossenbürg.1 The prisoners were held in the cellar of an auxiliary building in the SS barracks, which—due to its shape as the letter H—was known as the H-Bau (H-Building).

The SS barracks were built between 1936 and 1939 on the edge of the Reich Party Congress grounds, according to a design by architect Franz Rauff. It was to be quarters for the men at the National Party Congresses as well as a neighboring structure to accommodate the higher SS ranks. During the war, there were no National Party Congresses, and the barracks were used as training barracks for SS intelligence units.

From the beginning, the administration of the subcamp in the SS barracks was split: most of the prisoners worked for the Arbeitsgemeinschaft SS-Unterkunft (Work Association SS-Accommodation) or the Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei Nürnberg (Waffen-SS and Police Nürnberg Building Administration), with the remainder of the prisoners working...
for the SS-Nachrichten-Ersatz-Abteilung (Intelligence Auxiliary Unit), a unit of the Waffen-SS responsible for intelligence training.

The prisoner numbers recorded in the admittedly fragmentary transfer lists vary between 41 and 175. Prisoners later put the numbers as between 100 and 300. The main task of the concentration camp prisoners was at first to complete construction work in the SS barracks, which were not yet complete. One of the prisoners of the subcamp, Kapo Hugo Jakusch from Munich, recalls that young men, especially tradesmen, were chosen for the subcamp. They constructed garages, laid electrical cables, and built roofs in the barracks area. On their arrival in Nürnberg, the population is said to have thrown stones at the prisoners so that the SS had to protect the prisoner column. In the first prisoner detachment from Dachau were 28 Germans, 16 Poles, 10 Czechs, a PSV (Polizeiliche Sicherheitsverwahrung, Police Protection) prisoner, and an AZR (Arbeitsswang Reich, Forced Labor Reich) prisoner. Several extant transfer lists show that prisoners who were assigned to the SS-Intelligence Auxiliary Unit were primarily cobblers, tailors, and barbers.

With the beginning of the air raids on Nürnberg, the prisoners were used outside the SS barracks in removing rubble and reconstructing armaments industries. Hugo Jakusch and Jan Předkí, both from the first prisoner transport from Dachau, recalled that in August 1942 the detachment was deployed at the heavily damaged Nürnberg Truck Company Faun in Wächterstrasse. Armaments Minister Albert Speer had promised when visiting Nürnberg that because the site was rebuilt within four weeks, the prisoners would be set free. Despite the quick reconstruction, the prisoners did not get their freedom. In August 1943 the Faun factory was destroyed a second time. It was not rebuilt.

Prisoners from the Flossenbürg subcamps at Pottenstein and Hersbruck were transferred to Nürnberg in 1944–1945 to assist in the work. After the large air raid on Nürnberg on January 2, 1945, Höherer-SS und Polizeiführer Benno Martin secured for himself a detachment of around 20 prisoners for his official Nürnberg villa at 19 Virchowstrasse, which had been hit in a bombing raid for the first time in 1942.

In general, prisoners questioned after 1945 have described the conditions in the SS-Kaserne subcamp and the work detachments as comparatively good. They had a roof over their heads, they were halfway decently fed, and the work was not beyond their capacity. No murders by the SS in the subcamp could be proved after 1945. However, in cleaning up after the bombing raids and during the bombing raids, a few prisoners lost their lives.

Of the 10 leaders at the SS-Kaserne subcamp, only SS-Hauptscharführer Kurt Schreiber is remembered by the prisoners as being brutal. The SS-Kaserne subcamp was evacuated in April 1945. At least nine prisoners were able to escape. On April 26, 1945, the majority of the prisoners arrived at the Dachau concentration camp. Another group was evacuated to the Flossenbürg Hersbruck subcamp and then were driven south in the direction of Dachau. From there the prisoners marched further in a southerly direction.

**SOURCES**

The SS-Kaserne prisoners are listed in the Flossenbürg Numbers Book (Nummernbuch) (originals in NARA, Washington). Details on the subcamp are to be found in the materials of the ZdL at BA-L and in the AG-F. These consist of transfer lists and witness statements collected during investigations.

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trans. Stephen Pallavicini

**NOTES**

1. BA-B, NS 4 341/1, Film 1391.
2. AG-F, Film 14362 (transfers Flossenbürg-Nürnberg); and ZdL at BA-L, IV 410 96/75 (various statements by former prisoners).
3. AG-D, File ITS 139 (lists of prisoners transferred to Nürnberg on May 12, 1941).
4. BA-B, NS 19 14, p. 150 (report Benno Martin on the air raid August 28–29, 1942); ZdL, IV 410 96/75, p. 37, 50r (witness statements by prisoners of the detachment HSSPF).
5. ZdL, IV 410 96/75, p. 181; ZdL, IV 723/73, p. 53.

**NÜRNBERG/EICHSTÄTT**
The Eichstätt subcamp was a very small subcamp and existed for only a few months at the end of 1944. The prisoners were transferred from the Nürnberg subcamp in the SS-Kaserne (Barracks). A section of the Nürnberg SS-Nachrichten-Ersatzbataillon (Intelligence Reserve Battalion) was quartered on the Willibaldsburg in Eichstätt. In November 1944, 10 prisoners had to work here; on January 1, 1945, there were 22 prisoners. The International Tracing Service (ITS) lists the Eichstätt subcamp as a work detachment of the Nürnberg SS-Kaserne subcamp. As a list of labor details from the Flossenbürg concentration camp suggests, it was administered and accounted for by Nürnberg SS-Kaserne.
Cases of death for this subcamp, the first mention of whose existence in the sources is October 1944 and the last January 1945, cannot be confirmed. The prisoners came from Holland, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.

**SOURCES** The Eichstädt subcamp is listed in the ITS List of Prisoners and briefly in the author's essay “Eine unauflägliche Geschichte: KZ-Aussenlager in der Region Nürnberg,” DaHe 15 (1999): 162. A group of students at the Catholic University in Eichstädt made a video on the subcamp in 1993, which is held in the archives of the AG-F.

The Eichstädt subcamp is documented by the files of the ITS (Hanging File Eichstädt), as well as the labor demands from December and January 1945 that are held in the BA-B (Collection NS 4).

**NOTE**

**OBERTRAUBLING**

**[AKA REGensburg-OBERTRAUBLING]**

On February 20, 1945, a subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp was established at Obertraubling (present-day Neutraubling, Landkreis Regensburg, Regierungsbezirk Oberpfalz).

The airfield constructed in 1935 (according to other sources, between 1936 and 1938) to the east of Regensburg at Obertraubling was closely linked to the Messerschmitt factory in Regensburg. Here, at times, the final assembly of planes was carried out but also the flight testing of new Messerschmitt aircraft—especially of types Bf 109 and Me 321 Gigant—and from September 1944 also the final assembly and flight testing of the Me 262. For this purpose, thousands of forced laborers and Soviet prisoners of war (POWs, exclusively officers) were deployed, housed in two camps.

The airfield at Obertraubling itself was only inadequately equipped for the flight testing of aircraft. Especially problematic were the insufficient number of hangers and the grass landing strip. Under the weather conditions prevailing during the winter of 1944–1945, the aircraft were frequently unable to take off from the airstrip, as it became too soft due to snow and rain; dozens of newly assembled Me 262s stood around unprotected on the air base and could not have their testing completed. Since the airfield was under constant observation by Allied reconnaissance aircraft, the growing number of planes visible on the ground did not go unnoticed.

On February 16, 1945, a raid from the 15th U.S. Air Force, comprising 263 B-24 bombers flying from Italy, attacked the airfield at Obertraubling, dropping 515 tons of bombs. The raid completely destroyed 25 aircraft (20 of them Me 262s); 30 others were severely damaged (including 20 more Me 262s).

The deployment of the prisoner detail from Flossenbürg, which arrived in Obertraubling on February 20, 1945, must be seen in conjunction with the inadequate equipping of the airfield and its bombardment. The subcamp consisted of about 600 men of various nationalities, mostly Jews, and was deployed under the authority of the Organisation Todt’s (OT) construction management (OT-Bauleitung). The prisoners were housed in the bomb-damaged shell of the mess building on the air base. Sources differ regarding the composition of the prisoner guard detail; probably men of the SS, the German Home Guard (Volkssturm), and the Luftwaffe were all involved, and individual testimonies note that the latter two groups were less brutal than the SS. SS-Hauptscharführer Cornelius Schwanner was in charge of the subcamp. At first he had 50 SS men at his disposal; early in March 1945, 11 more were added. According to some inmate testimonies, Schwanner apparently tried to improve the situation of the inmates by providing additional food. But other inmates state that Schwanner and his SS men killed inmates for no reason.

By the end of February 1945, the camp held 600 inmates. More than half of them were Jews from different nations. By the end of March, the number was reduced to 484, mainly due to the harsh living conditions. In mid-April 1945, 426 inmates were registered.

Some details about the working and living conditions of the prisoners can be found in the records of the trial conducted in 1953 in Bremen of the camp elder (Lagerältester) Josef Kierspel. Kierspel, who had previously been the Lagerältester in the Golleschau camp and committed numerous crimes there, had been transferred from Golleschau via Loslau, the Heinkel factory near Berlin, on to Sachsenhausen, and then to Flossenbürg, where he was assigned to the Obertraubling subcamp, arriving on February 20, 1945. The camp was only set up in an improvised manner. Kierspel obtained wood, in order to construct beds, stools, and tables, as well as some straw for bedding material. He was responsible for conducting the morning roll calls, as well as assigning the prisoners to the various work details.

Like the forced laborers and POWs already present, the concentration camp prisoners were also deployed on the construction of a new landing strip. As historian Peter Schmoll reports, to this end initially in March 1945 a road passing by the east side of the airfield hangs was extended by 100 meters (328 feet) into the airfield, thereby creating a provisional takeoff and landing strip about 10 meters (33 feet) wide and some 1,200 meters (3,937 feet) long. From March, the prisoners were engaged in preparatory work for the construction of a new landing strip in the southeastern sector of the air base. Prisoners also dug ditches for laying cables and were used for clearing debris in Regensburg after air raids, as well as for improvements at the nearby Messerschmitt factory.

Kierspel behaved less brutally than had been the case in his previous camp assignments, but his hatred of the Jews remained unbridled. He addressed prisoners as “filthy Jews” (Sanjaden) and beat them brutally. At least one Jewish prisoner, Bienenfeld, died from this ill-treatment. Kierspel, who
enjoyed special privileges within the camp such as his own “cabin” and radio, repeatedly ordered that the prisoners be searched for forbidden items and mercilessly punished all infractions. These brutal camp conditions, together with the insufficient supply of food and clothing, caused numerous inmates to die of hunger and cold. In March and April 1945, between 20 and 35 prisoners died on some days. At least 170 prisoners who died in the Obertraubling subcamp were buried just to the north of the mess building. It is likely that some of these were victims of the aerial bombardments. From the records of the Kierspel trial, however, it is also clear that at least one Luftwaffe officer helped the prisoners by providing them with food and not tolerating any beatings by the camp elder, the prisoners’ work supervisors, or the SS guards.

On April 11, 1945, the Eighth U.S. Air Force conducted a further attack in which 79 B-24 bombers dropped a total of 160 tons of explosives. As a result of the attack, all the buildings of the air base were destroyed or bomb damaged. Over the following days, the inmates of the subcamp were engaged primarily in repairing the damage and filling in bomb craters.

On April 15 (according to other sources, on April 21–22, 1945), the prisoners were evacuated on foot toward Dachau. Apparently Schwanner organized a number of trucks to take 180 inmates who were incapable to walk to Dachau; all others had to walk. About 30 to 40 prisoners succeeded in escaping during the death march. Once again, camp elder Kierspel behaved in accordance with the expectations of the SS: he beat the prisoners or denounced them to the guards. On April 27, out of fear that the prisoners might take revenge, he escaped before the transport arrived in Dachau or could be liberated. On April 27–28, 1945 (according to other sources: 97) prisoners arrived in Dachau. In the verdict issued by the Bremen court in 1953, there is, however, a reference indicating that some or all of the remaining prisoners were liberated by the U.S. Army before their arrival in Dachau.

In the Dachau Flossenbürg Trial, Schwanner was sentenced to death; he was executed on October 15, 1948, in Landsberg. Until the end, he maintained his inability to influence the conditions at the subcamp and emphasized his attempts to improve the inmates’ situation. In 1953 and 1955, Kierspel was tried for his crimes as Lagerältester, including the murder of three prisoners (two in the Golleschau and one in Obertraubling subcamp). He was convicted and sentenced to 15 years in prison. The verdict granting him a reduced sentence recognized that Kierspel in his function as camp elder occupied a position for which he was ill-suited, because of his character and temperament, and that granted him suddenly an almost unlimited position of power over many of his fellow prisoners. On the other hand, the court evaluated Kierspel’s cruel treatment of his Jewish fellow prisoners over long periods for no reason as an aggravating factor, although he committed these deeds with only limited personal intent and also treated some fellow prisoners humanely and tried to help them. SS-Hauptscharführer Cornelius Schwanner, who served both as a recruit leader (Rekrutenführer) and leader of the entire prison detachment (Kommandoführer), among other positions in the Obertraubling subcamp, was sentenced to death and hanged in 1946.

**SOURCES**

A description of the camp within the context of the Flossenbürg subcamps in the Regensburg region can be found in the West German Federal President’s history competition “Youths Conduct Local Research” (Jugendliche forschen vor Ort), which was held in 1983 under the motto: “Everyday Life under National Socialism, II (the War Years).” Class 11a of the Berufsfachschule für Wirtschaft in Regensburg received second prize under their teacher Hans Simon-Pelanda. The essay prepared by the teenagers can be found in the AKö in Hamburg under file reference GW 1983-0416, Die Aussenkommandos des Konzentrationslagers Flossenbürg in und um Regensburg, and its punishment was commuted to 15 years in prison. The verdict granting him a reduced sentence recognized that Kierspel in his function as camp elder occupied a position for which he was ill-suited, because of his character and temperament, and that granted him suddenly an almost unlimited position of power over many of his fellow prisoners. On the other hand, the court evaluated Kierspel’s cruel treatment of his Jewish fellow prisoners over long periods for no reason as an aggravating factor, although he committed these deeds with only limited personal intent and also treated some fellow prisoners humanely and tried to help them. SS-Hauptcharführer Cornelius Schwanner, who served both as a recruit leader (Rekrutenführer) and leader of the entire prison detachment (Kommandoführer), among other positions in the Obertraubling subcamp, was sentenced to death and hanged in 1946.

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November 27, 1953) and 2 StR 367/54 (BGH, November 15, 1954). Results of the investigations by the ZdL can be found at BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 (F) AR-Z 93/75. Court trials of the U.S. Army against guards at Flossenbürg and its subcamps were conducted immediately after the war. For events at Obertraubling, see especially the case of United States vs. Friedrich Becker et al., NARA, Case No. 000-50-46, and here the statements of Schwanner (pp. 7081–7112) and Patron (pp. 7021–7028).

Evelyn Zegenhagen
trans. Martin Dean

**OEDERAN**

The subsidiary of the Auto Union AG Chemnitz, the Deutsche Kühl- und Kraftmaschinen (DKK) GmbH Scharfenstein, had been in negotiations with the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), Office D II, under SS-Standartenführer Gerhard Maurer, since the early summer of 1944 about employing, in addition to its prisoner details for its factories in Scharfenstein and Wilischthal, a prisoner detail of 500 female prisoners for the expansion of its munitions manufacturing at the Oederan factory. A communication from the management of DKK Scharfenstein to Maurer reads: “Through our Mr. Illgner, we have already informed you by telephone from Berlin that we could employ around five hundred concentration camp women for our Oederan branch, which is engaged exclusively in the manufacturing of the 2 cm L.Spgr [rifle grenades]. We ask that you view this request as part of the overall request of the Auto Union AG Chemnitz, as we belong to its concern.”

This request was supported by the Special Committee Munition II, one of the organs of the “Industrial Self-Responsibility.” A communication from the DKK company to the SS leadership further states: “We have communicated our goal of covering the current outstanding labor needs with concentration camp women to the responsible special committee in the enclosed copy.”

The DKK wanted to employ the female prisoners for manufacturing 2 cm explosive rounds for aircraft cannon in the Karis cotton thread factory in Oederan, which had been revamped for this purpose. Following authorization by the Special Committee Munition II, the DKK received the go-ahead from the responsible main department D II/1 of the WVHA, whose leader, SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Sommer, was directly responsible for the employment of concentration camp prisoners.

On August 8–9, 1944, a representative from DKK negotiated with the commandant of the Flossenbürg concentration camp, during which the conditions were established for the hiring and training of women who had been recruited as SS-Aufseherinnen (female guards). The first batch would still be trained at the Ravensbrück women’s concentration camp; the other employees would be trained at the Flossenbürg subcamp Hollesichen, near Pilsen. Although the SS commandant from Flossenbürg, SS-Obersturmbannführer Koegel, was reluctant to split the detail for Oederan, which numbered 500 prisoners, the DKK pushed through varying times for the “delivery dates.” The installments requested were for 100 prisoners on September 4, 1944; 200 prisoners on October 15, 1944; and 300 prisoners on December 1, 1944.

The dyeing building in the Kabis factory was designated for the accommodation of the prisoners, where sleeping rooms for the prisoners and the SS female guards were set up on the first and second floors.

On October 9, 1944, the first transport arrived at Oederan with 200 Jewish women and girls from Auschwitz. The Flossenbürg command assigned them the registration numbers 54436 through 54635. In this transport there were 167 Poles, the majority of whom were from the Łódź ghetto and a small part of whom were from Kraków. In addition, 19 from this transport were registered as Slovaks, although several of them were also Poles, as well as 12 Yugoslavs and 1 Austrian.

On October 3, 1944, Armaments Inspection IVa of the Reich Ministry for Armaments and War Production, located in Dresden, made it a condition on DKK that they use the code name “Agricola GmbH,” which the DKK itself had suggested, for the newly founded company for the expansion of its munitions manufacturing. Thus, the name of the famous Saxon mining scientist of the Renaissance had to suffer for this dubious purpose.

On October 30, 1944, a second transport with 300 women and children arrived at the Oederan camp from Auschwitz. They received the registration numbers 59153 through 59453 from the Flossenbürg concentration camp. Women of 10 nationalities were on the transport: 145 Czechs; 70 Hungarians; 31 Poles; 27 Dutch; 22 Germans, several of whom considered themselves Austrians; 1 Italian; 1 Yugoslav; 1 Russian; 1 Swiss; and 1 Slovakian.

Grete Salus, who was also part of this transport, wrote about her prison time at Oederan in an extensive report:

From our transport two hundred surviving women remained at Auschwitz, in contrast to only forty-five men. Altogether eighteen hundred of us came to Auschwitz. Two hundred forty-five were designated, temporarily, to be used, to live; the others were liquidated. . . . Yes, we had only our lives and did not harbor any great expectations after all the experiences in Auschwitz. . . . As we arrived, there were already three hundred women present, mostly Poles and Hungarians. They had been in Oederan for three weeks already and only a small number of them worked. They worked in a weapons factory, manufacturing cartridges, a few steps away from our camp. We were of course locked in behind barred windows; looking outside was strictly forbidden, so that after a short time we wished we could work at least to get out. In addition we were scared about being sent back to Auschwitz if there were no use for us here.4
Regine St., who was originally from Kraków and had already suffered through the Plaszow concentration camp and went to Auschwitz in August 1944, was also among the women who were brought to Oederan. In an interview contrasting Oederan and Auschwitz, she said: “In comparison to Auschwitz it was a paradise, with clean straw mattresses and showers.”

Of the 501 women at Oederan, 58 were born between 1900 and 1909, 173 between 1910 and 1919, 156 between 1920 and 1924, and 110 between 1925 and 1930. Birth dates are lacking for 4 of the women.

In many survivor reports, it becomes clear that the internal camp conditions very much depended on the attitude of the respective camp leader or the Oberaufseherin (head female guard). Miriam Werebejczyk and Sara Honigmann express in their report a powerful recollection of the first head female supervisor in Oederan, who ran the detail until being relieved by another in December 1944. They only remember her first name, Dora, and say that “although she screamed a lot, she was human and was not to be compared with her successor Irma, a sister of the infamous Grese.” Sara Honigmann emphasizes the differences in attitude between the two head female supervisors in her report:

The early days in Oederan was similar to a prison stay; once or twice during the week we received warm water to wash. We ate at tables. Later, under the second Oberaufseherin, we had to clean the eating room with ice-cold water. We laughed and did the work. The supervisor was very mad about that, but we on the other hand were satisfied. Once I received from her such a slap that a friend, who stood next to me, fell to the ground. We sewed ourselves clothing from torn material we had from Auschwitz. During a personal inspection she asked me where I got the dress and when I answered truthfully, “from Auschwitz,” she cried “you’re lying!” Then came the slap. The supervisor even knocked the tooth out of another woman.

On the changing of the supervisor, Salus wrote:

We were assigned a supervisor who, for us, had a frightening history. She was first a supervisor at Auschwitz and she came to us from a concentration camp in Holland. From there she had to flee the approaching Allies. She had a stripe on her sleeve—she received the second one while with us—therefore was an SS officer and well schooled. Now everything had a different feel. Everything was reorganized from the ground up. Above all we had to work. If there was no work, she would conjure something up out of nothing. In addition the factory was already working to capacity—of course hogwash—if there was no material available, the workers had to stand. Even if there was nothing to do they had to stand, sitting was strictly forbidden. At the beginning there was still some material, but as the machines were constantly defective, very little was produced. . . . With the arrival of the supervisor a despondent prisoner—classified as a block elder at Auschwitz—was finally promoted to camp elder due to an old acquaintance from their mutual Auschwitz past. . . . From day to day a forcible personality emerged from that tear-stained face.

There were two female doctors at the camp, a Russian and a Hungarian. The Russian had the courage not to keep quiet about everything and fought for what sanitary measures were possible for the prisoners. She was transferred to another camp, however.

According to SS documents, there were three fatalities in the camp. Helga Kinsky wrote: “I don’t know how many women died in Oederan. Once I lay in the infirmary with a high fever and some women were there in very bad condition and I only wanted to get away from this infirmary and left it after two days.”

Prisoner groups were also deployed for work outside of the camp and factory such as described by Salus:

I belonged to such a group. First, until deep in the winter, we dug a trench for a water main. Then I was assigned with three comrades to a group for construction work. A linen mill was transformed into a weapons factory. The difficult work, like loading bricks and cement sacks, we performed together with several Italians. We four women were helpers for the conversion of a camp for new prisoners. The prisoners never came. . . . It was real men’s work and our hands were sore from the constant handling of bricks and cement. Nevertheless we had it better than the machine workers, as we had more freedom of movement. We brought political news into the camp, including newspapers and leaflets, and were always passionately awaited there. . . . I’ll never forget one leaflet—I learned it by heart in order to recite it exactly. It was headed with “The End is Coming” and the end read “Stay Alive.” The content was the decisive crossing of the lower Rhine. The leaflet was read by every one on external duty, then torn up and thrown away as back then there were constant physical inspections. As I came into the camp I was cheered and had to recite it so often until I was out of breath.

In contrast to the guard, the first SS detail leader was colorless. Miriam Werebejczyk describes him in what was a telling situation for his position: “An elderly Obersturmführer [first lieutenant] gave out cold soup and said in justification that the soup was unfortunately cold as it arrived late.”

After his discharge, the guard personnel consisted of SS-Unterführer Eggers and originally 27, later 33, female guards,
most of whom had before been workers in Oederan and environs.\textsuperscript{14} Salus wrote about the relationship to the German civil population:

We Oederan prisoners cannot say anything bad about most of the workers—they often saved us from collapse with a piece of bread from their hands. I don’t want to belittle their helpfulness, for some individuals it was surely sincere compassion and willingness to help. For most, however, it was the beginning of a guilty conscience, but only under the pressure of events. . . . I myself, however, experienced the miracle of real helpfulness. A small, poor female worker, Else Schröter, took me in and selflessly helped me when I was barely surviving. She herself certainly did not have much to eat and still shared that little with me. . . . The operations manager, when I was alone with him for a second, expressed his regret about our situation, but if somebody was around he gave his orders brusquely and abruptly. Jakob, the head engineer, a Nazi of the worst sort, gave me the most demeaning assignments with enthusiasm, was the creator of our various work punishments, and was also close friends with the head female guard.\textsuperscript{15}

A group of women was transferred from Oederan to the Flossenbürg Hertine subcamp and employed there in the Welboth munitions factory.\textsuperscript{16} On April 14, 1945, the women were evacuated in open train cars. Miriam Werebejczyk reports: “For six days we were under way to Theresienstadt [Terezin]. During our trip we went through Aussig [Usti n. Laben] twice. Once we saw an air battle over Aussig. The guards fled.”\textsuperscript{17}

From Leitmeritz (Litoměřice), where the women were unloaded, they had to march to Theresienstadt, where they arrived on April 21, 1945. Some 442 women were registered before or in Theresienstadt.\textsuperscript{18} As a large number of Czechs left the transport without registering, the number of surviving evacuees from Oederan was larger,\textsuperscript{19} actually the number of surviving evacuees from Oederan was larger, as a large number of Czechs left the transport without registering before or in Theresienstadt.


The following archival collections are relevant: BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 AR 3215/66; ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg; SHStA-(D), Auto Union, Akten “Agricola GmbH.”

\textbf{NOTES}

1. AHM-O, Schreiben der Direktion der DKK Scharfenstein an SS-Standartenführer Maurer, June 24, 1944.
2. Ibid.
3. AHM-O, Reisebericht des Vertreters der DKK Scharfenstein, Noack, über den Besuch im K.L. Flossenbürg/berpf, August 8–9, 1944.
4. Ibid.
5. SHStA-(D), Auto Union, Nr. 1030.
8. Miriam Werebejczyk and Sara Honigmann, report.
9. Ibid.
13. Werebejczyk and Honigmann, report.
17. Werebejczyk and Honigmann, report.

\textbf{PLATTLING}

Plattling is located close to Deggendorf on the Isar River. A subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp was opened there on February 2, 1945, with the arrival of 500 male prisoners. It had taken the prisoner transport 24 hours to cover the journey of 195 kilometers (121 miles) by rail from Flossenbürg; by the time they arrived in Plattling, there were already 20 dead. However, this was not the first group of prisoners to arrive in Plattling: concentration camp prisoners had been used since March 1944 by the Organisation Todt (OT) Bauleitung (Construction Management) and the Klug company on the nearby airfield, mostly in the construction of roads.

Like the camps in Ganacker and Kirchham, Plattling was only established during the last phase of the war and was closely connected to an airfield of the German Luftwaffe. The prisoners who had come from Flossenbürg were used on a military airfield, which had been established at the end of the 1930s in Michaelsbucher Flur, between the town of Michaelsbuch and the Plattling suburb Höhenrain. At the end of 1943, there were plans to expand the airfield by 33 hectares to 183 hectares (by 82 acres to 452 acres). At the end of 1944, Luftwaffe squadrons were based there that were to be equipped with the Messerschmitt (Me) 262 jet fighter. Increasing air attacks meant that steel bunkers buried into the ground were
necessary for the aircraft. The subcamp's prisoners were used primarily in constructing the bunkers. At the same time, they were used to remove bomb damage in the surrounding towns, and sometimes they worked on farms. Historian Michael Westerholz also states that the prisoners were used to build an aircraft base at Hettenkofen, construction of which had begun in March 1944.

Initially, the subcamp was based in the middle of the town, in the old Knabenschulhaus [Boys' School] behind the church of St. Magdalena (later St.-Erhard-Schule). An OT camp had previously been located there. The open mistreatment of the prisoners, whose screams were heard by the local population when they attended church, soon led to protests. For this reason, and also probably because the school was too small to accommodate the prisoners, the group was divided after a few weeks (some sources: after 24 days in March–April), and 220 prisoners (some sources: all the prisoners) were relocated to the edge of the town, in farmer Frohnauer's brickworks at Höhenrain.

The composition of the prisoners was very mixed: Among the first 500 to arrive, there were 350 who had come from Auschwitz via Sachsenhausen. More then 300 of the inmates were Jews, among them 200 Polish Jews and about 50 Jews from Hungary. Other large groups were about 100 Czechs (80 political prisoners and 12 Jews) and about 20 Russians. There were also French and German inmates, as well as prisoners from seven other nations. The youngest was only 16.

In the school the prisoners slept on straw mattresses. There was a kitchen (erected after the camp was established), an office, and an infirmary in the attic. Two prisoner doctors worked there but had no medication or tools available to treat the inmates. Ill prisoners are said to have committed suicide by jumping from the windows in the attic roof.

There were 55 (other sources: 52) SS guards who were accommodated with the prisoners. They were under the command of SS-Oberscharführer Erich Sürensen (also: Sörensen). Sürensen is described by survivors as being humane, whereas his deputy Rudolf Braun was said to be a radical oppressor. One-half of the SS were ethnic Germans (Volksdeutsche) or foreigners in German service, including members of the ethnic German special service (volksdeutsche Sonderdienst), who had murdered up to 500,000 Jews in Galizien. Prisoners have described the brothers Josef and Martin Dewald (born in 1921 and 1920), two Volksdeutsche from Temesvár, who joined the Totenkopf (Death's Head) SS at the end of 1944, as being particularly brutal.

The prisoners had a long way to go to work, and the number of SS guards was insufficient. The head of police in Plattling, Stephan Scheuregger, offered his police to the SS as auxiliary guards; in addition, local inhabitants, including 14-year-old members of the Hitler Youth, also had to supervise the prisoners on their way to work.

The prisoners' workday began at 5:00 A.M. and usually did not end before 10:00 P.M. The prisoners leveled the ground with hoes and dug paths on the airfield and on the approaches to the airfield, relocated drainage pipes, and carried the cement that was necessary to widen the runways. On April 16, 1945, the Plattling railway station and many houses were destroyed during an Allied air raid. The prisoners had to recover at least 2,000 corpses, including dead from refugee, Red Cross, and concentration camp trains; had to rescue more than 100 people under the rubble; and had to work their way through more than 500,000 cubic meters (654,000 cubic yards) of rubble and 20 kilometers (12 miles) of destroyed railway line, 1,400 railway wagons reduced to scrap, and 45 locomotives, some of which were still red-hot.

Food was scarce in the camp: inmates only received cold food such as bread in the camp—never soup or coffee. The inhabitants of Plattling repeatedly interceded on behalf of the prisoners: policeman Eiblmieier lodged complaints and summonses against the SS and the National Socialists. Stangmeier, the owner of a meat factory, protested against the prisoners' treatment and distributed to them a meat soup and meatballs from his own plant.

The prisoners' conditions worsened when they were shifted to the Höhenrain brickworks. The camp was fenced in with a 3.5-meter-high (11.5-feet-high) barbed-wire fence. The brickworks and the barracks in which the prisoners were accommodated were drafty and cold. Many prisoners died from their mistreatment or were deliberately killed. It is said that prisoners who could no longer walk were shot at roll call. Brutal Kapos, both criminal and political prisoners, made the prisoners' life hell. One prisoner was beaten to death because he had taken a beet from a field, a second because he had been too long on the toilet, a third because he had "organized" (stolen) meat. The dying were pushed into the latrines and left to their fate. Survivors claim that Plattling was even worse than Auschwitz. Four attempts to escape from the Plattling camp are recorded in the records of the Flossenbürg main camp; there is no information on their success or failure.

The assistance given by individual local inhabitants continued after the camp was relocated to Höhenrain. Farmers cooked food, bribed the guards with alcohol and money, and put food by the edge of the roads. Some employees of the Klug company, for whom the prisoners were working, including an engineer named Becker, tried to help the prisoners and look after them.

On April 13, 1945, 459 of the 500 prisoners who arrived at the camp on February 20, 1945, were still capable of working. A few days later, on April 18, 200 evacuated prisoners from Buchenwald arrived. At this time the camp was already in the process of being dissolved, and there was no longer a water supply. The Buchenwald prisoners were evacuated on foot on April 23, and the Plattling prisoners left the camp on April 25, 1945. According to Westerholz, 25 (Fritz: 60) prisoners who could not march remained in the camp, while 40 prisoners used the evacuation to escape and found refuge with local
families, 18 with the family Hunsrücker alone. Ten Belgians were hidden by their compatriots (forced laborers) in the Deggendorf quarry. According to Westerholz, 187 of the prisoners were already dead at that time.

The Plattling evacuation march was strewn with dead: a victim in Enchendorf, 1 in Orzing, 3 in Haunersdorf, 2 in Lailing, 1 in Simbach bei Landau, 5 in Arnstorff, 2 in Haunersberg, 10 in Peterskirchen/Schönau, 1 in Unterölt, 1 in Unterhaubach, 1 in Egenfelden, 5 in Hirschhorn, 1 in Mittelkirchen, 1 in Reischach, and 2 in Winhöring. Eyewitnesses say this number is too low; Bundeszentrale also gives the number of dead higher, as 44.

In Winhöring (according to other sources: Haunersdorf), the Plattling column joined evacuated prisoners from Regensburg and Ganacker. Shortly thereafter, Sürensen and several SS men deserted the march. All three columns then marched together via Arnstorff, Egenfelden, and Trosberg, where they joined a death march from Buchenwald. They were liberated on May 2, 1945, by the U.S. Army, close to Traunstein. Many prisoners were able to escape along the way; to these must be counted the 60 prisoners of whom there is no trace. In total, it is estimated that about half of the Plattling inmate population died or were killed in the course of the existence of the camp.

The prisoners who were left behind when the camp was evacuated were transferred to the district hospital after they were liberated, but many died from exhaustion and typhus. Oskar Schindler, who lived in Regensburg, had an important role in repatriating the liberated prisoners to their homes. He organized passports for Jews who wanted to emigrate and convinced U.S. soldiers to make available vehicles to transport food and the sick.

After the subcamp was dissolved, there were isolated cases of self-justice: the liberated prisoners beat a Kapo to death and severely injured a second. Josef Dewald was beaten to death by the prisoners on May 1, 1945; his brother Martin could flee but was shot at by U.S. guards and interned for two years. Another, probably a Ukrainian SS man, was shot by U.S. soldiers on May 4, 1945, in Haslach/Traunstein while trying to escape.

SS-Wachmann Josef Oskar Brauner was sentenced to death in 1947 by a U.S. War Crimes Court in Dachau for crimes committed in Plattling and hanged in Landsberg on May 21, 1949. SS-Oberscharführer August Fahrbauer (also: Fahrbauer), chief of labor allocation (Arbeitseinsatzführer) and deputy camp leader in Plattling, was sentenced after the war to 15 years’ imprisonment. Sürensen was never found; neither was his adjutant Schönberg.

SOURCES In the immediate postwar period, local newspapers published a number of articles on the Plattling subcamp, for example, the PH-Ib of October 8 and 15, 1946; the Mittel Z (Regensburg) of October 17, 1946; and the Don-K-Ing of October 15, 1946. The Deg-Z published a series of articles on the National Socialist era and the Plattling subcamp between 1985 and 1987.


In 1952, the Deggendorf Sta. investigated the death of SS man Josef Dewald. The files are held in the Sta-Lh under File Number Rep. 167/1 St. Nr. 205. According to Westerholz, there are also in the Sta-Lh scattered files on the subcamp, for example, the second infirmary erected in 1944–1945 for foreign workers (Rep. 164/2), the concentration camp cemetery in Plattling (Rep. 5059), and files on the securing of grain for the production of bread in Plattling-Michaelsbuch between 1937 and 1955 (Rep. 6150). In private ownership is a letter from May 28, 1945, in which 18 prisoners confirm their rescue by the Hunsrücker family. Events in Plattling were investigated as part of the Flossenbürg concentration camp trials. The filmed files are held in NARA, RG 338, Records of the United States Army Commands 1942; and NARA, RG 153, Records of the Judge Advocate General (Army), Case # 800-30-141.

In an USHMM collection under RG-09:005*40 is a report from Colonel (Ret.) Richard R. McTaggant of the 13th Armored Division, one of the camp’s liberators. Even in 1981, McTaggant described the event as “an experience I still am unable to describe passionately.”

The Sta-Mu files carry File Number 115 Js. 4910/76. They include numerous survivors’ statements. No charges were laid. At BA-L, see ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 226/75, for information on the Plattling camp.


Evelyn Zegenhagen

trans. Stephen Pallavicini
PLAUPN (BAUMWOLLSPINNEREI UND INDUSTRIEWERKE)

In the last year of World War II, a part of German armaments production took place in textile factories, as civilian production of textiles had been reduced in favor of producing armaments. The Osram KG company, controlled by Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) and Siemens, transferred its armaments production to the supposedly more secure areas of Saxony, Thuringia, and the Sudetenland. Except for the production of molybdenum and wolfram, which were required for the production of tubes important to the war effort, Osram management at the end of 1943 relocated its production of various light bulbs for armaments to Plauen in Vogtland. Osram hoped by this means to gain access to a new source of labor and thereby to expand production. It rented part of a factory belonging to Plauner Baumwollspinneri AG (cotton mill) in Hans-Sachs Strasse and part of a factory belonging to the Industriewerke AG (I-Werke) in Roon Strasse.

The relocated parts of the Osram enterprise were administratively taken over by the Plauner Baumwollspinneri AG and I-Werke AG, which also provided a labor force. Osram retained “technical control” of the light bulb factories “GU 896” (Baumwollspinneri) and “GU 897” (I-Werke). Work was quickly begun on extensive construction and installation. However, there was still a shortage of labor. It was probably during planning for the use of prisoners at Osram that it was decided in the spring of 1944 to use five hundred criminal prisoners. Negotiations began with the SS- Business Administration Main Office (VWHA), Amtsgruppe D. At first, the SS insisted that all the prisoners be held in one camp. Osram was successful in resisting this demand. Rooms that were originally destined for production became the prisoners’ quarters: the second floor of the cotton spinning mill, with a guard room for the female SS guards (Aufseherinnen) on the top floor of the I-Werke. The prisoners had three-tiered bunk beds with straw sacks and one blanket each.

An Osram employee applied at Auschwitz for 250 prisoners. Survivors state that young, healthy women with “dry hands” were chosen. The women, who probably arrived in Plauen on September 16 or 17, 1944, were separated—100 were sent to the cotton spinning mill and 150 to the I-Werke. The prisoners were put to work on September 18, 1944. However, a typhus outbreak on September 19, 1944, in Auschwitz resulted in the prisoners being confined to their quarters as a quarantine measure for three weeks. The SS female guards were inoculated. No other measures were implemented. A second group of prisoners arrived on October 14; 150 women were sent to I-Werke and 100 to the cotton spinning mill. These women were Russians, former members of the Soviet Army, and Poles, together with a few Yugoslavs, Italians, and French. There were probably no Jews in this group.

An unknown SS-Oberscharführer was initially in charge of both camps. He was replaced in March 1945 by SS-Oberscharführer Dziobaka. He was in charge of the super-visory female guards (Oberaufseherinnen) Hildegard Naujokat at I-Werke, and Else Tomaske was in charge at the cotton spinning mill; they, in turn, were in command of 18 and 12 SS female guards, respectively. The overseers are described as strict and brutal. However, there were no deaths reported in the camp. A Russian prisoner who unsuccessfully tried to escape by tying sheets together and scaling down the wall from the second floor of the cotton spinning mill was punished by having her hair cut off. The prisoners were also collectively punished, as their food was withheld. After the attempt, the windows of the dormitory were welded shut. Food is described as poor but better than in Auschwitz. It was cooked by the prisoners in their own kitchen, which was located in the cellar of I-Werke and the ground floor of the cotton spinning mill.

The prisoners had to work day and night in 12-hour shifts. The production of various light lamps was semi-automated and highly segmented. Prisoners were entitled to a premium for good work, but there is no recollection by the prisoners that a premium was ever paid. The firm paid the usual fee of 4 Reichsmark (RM) per day per prisoner. Cost minimization was a high priority as is shown by the rules dealing with payment for prisoners who could not work either because of illness or accident. The company administration was satisfied with the output. Other than for the German craftsmen Fortberg and Reimann, who secretly gave food and newspapers to the women in the cotton spinning mill, the Osram employees were unfriendly, strict, and rude. Shortages of material and energy increasingly hindered production. Finally, an air raid on Plauen on April 10–11, 1945, cut off the energy supply and destroyed the cotton spinning mill. During the air raid, the prisoners were held in cut-down packing crates in the air-raid shelters. There were no casualties. This remained their makeshift quarters, and all the prisoners were set to work cleaning up the damage in Plauen. The camp was evacuated on April 14, 1945, with the prisoners marching via Georgenstadt in the direction of Karlsbad. They were liberated in Tachau.

In the 1960s, the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZaIL) investigated the Flossenbürg Baumwollspinneri and I-Werke subcamps. In 1966, investigations into both subcamps were separated from the main investigations.

SOURCES The most important source for research on the relocation of the Osram company is located in the LA-B. The Soviet authorities seized numerous Osram files, and it was only by chance that they were later returned to the DDR. It is for this reason only that the files are accessible for research. Details about those responsible and negotiations with the SS and Reich authorities can be obtained from the files. Today a wholly owned subsidiary of Siemens, Osram states that it no longer has any archival documents. On the other hand, the files of the Flossenbürg camp administration are relatively intact and provide details of prisoner numbers, death rates, and SS transactions. The files are held today in the AG-F and the BA-BL, together with selected copies of the documents.
relating to investigations by the ZdL at BA-L into both sub-camps. The collective proceedings into the Flossenbürg sub-camps also contain information about both Plauen subcamps.

Once they were handed over to the DDR, East German historians began relatively early to research the Osram documents and the use by Osram of prisoners. However, the value of their research was limited by its scope. It was confined to the supposed influence that large corporations had on state institutions and the war economy. Hans Brenner in the collected volumes *Nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager* incorrectly states that Jewish women were exclusively selected for the Oranienburg camps in Plauen.


**NOTES**

1. See the contract between Osram KG and Vogtländischen Spitzenweberei AG. Plauen i.V., August 15, 1944, LA-B, AREP.231/0.489, p. 18; for details that the contract was concluded on January 3, 1944, see itemization by the VEB Glühlampenwerk Plauen o.D., LA-B, AREP. 231/0.489, p. 1. Both operations were owned by the company Carl Ramig, mech. Baumwollwebereien. See extracts from the Chonon und Geschichte des Werkes Plauener Baumwollspinnerei KG, ed. Curt Röder (Plauen, 1945); The Difficult Post War Years (Plauen, 1998) p. 251; as well as the letter from Carl Ramig, Mech. Baumwollwebereien, Treuen to Fa Osram Drahtwerk, Berlin, Re: Lieferung von Stahlfässern für Treuen und Plauen [Flaschennangel GU 896 and 897], November 14, 1944, LA-B, AREP. 231/0.492, p. 83.

2. See the following on Osram’s core business [Schneider, Wörzczek] Record Re: Besprechung mit SS-Hauptssturmführer Sommer vom SS-WVHA Amtsguppe D Oranienburg, 31.7.44 über den Einsatz von Häftlingen in den Verlegungsbetrieben der OK [Osram-Konzern] [on the Use of Prisoners in Osram Relocated Sites] [August 11, 1944], LA-B, AREP.231/0.502, p. 18.


4. Telegramme Osram KG [Sittel] [Re.: Transport 250 Häftlinge aus Auschwitz in Plauen], LA-B, AREP.231/0.489. See also the interviews with Liliana Drzewicka, Stafania Tomyslak, Dr. Celina Wojnarowiecz, July 23, 2000, in Flossenbürg. Recording in the possession of the writer.


6. See Osram Werk D [Dr. Reeb], DD-Memorandum 29/44 Re.: Besuch in Plauen September 28–30, 1944, and October 9, 1944, LA-B, AREP.231/0.488, p. 320; List Arolsen, Transport Auschwitz-Plauen, Baumwollspinnerei, October 14, 1944, ZdL, 410 AR 3216/66 (B) Bl. 5; Interviews Drzewicka, Tomyslak, and Wojnarowiecz; Witness Statement Miroslava Zg., geb. Va. [06.1921], August 1, 1969, in Bistrica, ZdL, 410 AR 3216/66 (B), p. 106.


9. See interview with Dr. Celina Wojnarowiecz, July 22, 2000, in Flossenbürg. Recording in the possession of the author. Also see interviews with Drzewicka, Tomyslak, and Wojnarowiecz.


11. Interview Celina Wojnarowiecz.

12. See the photos in Röder, *Chronik*, p. 248.


**PLAUEN (HORN GMBH)**

Three Flossenbürg subcamps were established at the end of 1944 in Plauen in the Vogtland. Two of them were located in partly nonoperating textile factories, cotton and wool plants, where women had to manufacture lightbulbs for Osram KG. A subcamp for male prisoners was located at the company Dr. Th. Horn, which had been active in aircraft technology from the 1920s. The company’s office was based on the outskirts of Plauen at 284 Pausaer Strasse.

On November 9, 1944, 50 prisoners were transferred to the Plauen Dr. Th. Horn company. Numbers gradually declined so that in December 1944 there were only 35 men there. They were accounted for as skilled workers. Two Russian prisoners tried to escape on December 6, 1944. The next
day a Pole and a Frenchman died, and the death of another Frenchman is recorded on December 28. In light of the small size of the subcamp and the use of skilled workers, this is an extraordinarily high death rate. Obviously, the prison conditions were poor, which also explains the escape attempts. City documents record two deaths at the Plauen Horn subcamp. A list prepared by the city’s main cemetery includes the grave of a German who died in January 1945 and was cremated in Plauen; another record refers to the death of an Austrian who died of typhus on February 2, 1945, and was buried without a coffin in the main cemetery.  

There are few precise details about the conditions in the Horn subcamp. This is in part because the investigations by the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in Ludwigsburg to a certain extent confused the three Plauen subcamps, with the result that the relevant information is seldom ascribed to a particular subcamp. Only one witness from the Horn subcamp was questioned. This witness came from the Fünfteichen subcamp with the dissolution of the Gross-Rose concentration camp via Flossenbürg to Plauen. According to him, the conditions in Plauen were “incomparably easier than in other camps.” He was the only Jew in the subcamp and was transferred there because of his skills in the manufacture of optical devices. The camp was dissolved following its bombing. The leader of all three subcamps in Plauen was SS-Oberscharführer Dziobaka. A personnel report dated January 31, 1945, lists 13 guards at the subcamp.  

At the end of February 1945, there were still 50 prisoners in the subcamp. There were 15 Russians, 12 French, 9 Poles, and 8 Czechs as well as 2 Germans, 2 Belgians, 1 Italian, and 1 Yugoslav. This picture was practically unchanged by the end of March.  

The dissolution of the camp must have happened at the end of March 1945 because a list prepared by the Flossenbürg department of labor deployment dated April 10, 1945, and sent to the Flossenbürg camp administration office refers to “forty-two transfers from the Plauen subcamp (Dr. Th. Horn) to the Lengenfeld labor camp on March 27, 1945.” This list also includes details of the professions of the Plauen prisoners—for the most part, they were mechanics. Missing from the list are the names of six prisoners who are registered in the Numbers Books (Nummernbücher) for Lengenfeld. A prisoner from Plauen died at Lengenfeld five days after the prisoners were transferred there. Most likely the Plauen prisoners had to march with the Lengenfeld prisoners in a southward direction. This death march, which was via Johanngeorgenstadt to North Bohemia and ended in Pistov, resulted in the death of a large number of prisoners.  

The trustees of the company responded to a request by the mayor, following a query from the Saxon state administration “Victims of Fascism,” by simply stating that “between October 1944 and March 1945” there was a “forced labor camp” that consisted “on average of fifty to sixty concentration camp prisoners.” A handwritten note states that “Dr. Horn is presently in the American Sector. The firm’s manager Senior Engineer Srudzinski is currently under arrest.”  

**Sources**  

Other than the few details in the investigation files of the ZdL at BA-L (ZdL, 410 AR 3214/66), the files in the ASt-Pl (Collection KZ-Gräber), and the Labour Demands in the Flossenbürg-Collection of the BA-B (NS 4/FL), there are no other sources of significance for the Dr. Th. Horn subcamp.

Ulrich Fritz

**Notes**

1. BA-B, NS 4/FL 393, vol 2: Labor Demand Flossenbürg Section Labor Deployment to Dr. Th. Horn in Plauen i.Sa., November and December 1944.

2. ASt-Pl, VA 8718 Ü 6/81—KZ-Gräber: Schreiben des Rates des Stadt Plauen, Hauptfriedhof, an die Betreuungsstelle für die Opfer des Faschismus, December 1, 1948, (p. 140); Extract from a Report to the Office of Social Welfare in a Letter from the Plauen Business Office, Burials to the Secretariat of the Persecutees of the Nazi Regime, December 5, 1950 (p. 120).


4. ITS, Archive, Flossenbürg, Collected File 10 (copy from Toni Siegert’s collection held in the AG-F): Strength report on guards and prisoners in the work detachments under the control of the HSSPF ELBE. Position as at January 31, 1945.

5. BA-B, Collection former ZdL, Dok/K 183/11.

context of the “Geilenberg Program” for the underground transfer of fuel production facilities, the OT employed the prisoners for building and expanding under- and above- ground facilities for the processing of brown coal tar. The building project received the cover name “Schwalbe III.” It was built in the narrow valley of the small Polenz River, which flows into the Elbe River near Bad Schandau, and was to absorb the facilities that had been transferred there from the Hydrierwerk Brüx (Most). The completion of the first construction phase was planned for July 15, 1945; the second, for months later.1

This completely unrealistic time frame shows, on one hand, that the use of prisoners—in breaking up rocks for the expansion of underground manufacturing facilities, the construction of factory narrow-gauge railways, and the construction of concrete foundations—carried out with brutal slave-driving methods, served the desperate efforts of the Fascist leadership to extend the end of its rule for a period as long as possible. On the other hand, it served the principle that “extermination through work” could be carried out in Porschdorf. Although the number of dead in Porschdorf remained relatively low, this is only due to the short existence of the subcamp: 11 Italians and 1 Polish prisoner are buried in the Porschdorf cemetery.

Former Italian prisoner Mario S. testified on killing actions:

There were no real reasons for the killings. The slightest pretext was enough. The victims were prisoners, the executors either SS members or the internal camp supervisors. I remember the following incident: three or four prisoners, who were assigned to load rails onto Elba barges, were killed as they let a rail fall on a slope and slip into the gravel floor of the river. Two Italians, one of them from Genoa or perhaps Liguria, were killed with punches for no reason whatsoever. The prisoner from Genoa was killed with the excuse that he was Jewish, which, in my opinion, was not true.4

SS-Unterführer Göttling was the responsible camp leader. In addition, 7 SS-Unterführer and 21 SS guards reported to him.5 In the Porschdorf subcamp, the SS also relied on several “green” criminals who, as henchmen, did not hesitate in carrying out the beating punishments of prisoners or even their murder. The head Kapo was German prisoner Nikolaus Bintz, and German professional criminal (BV) prisoners Johann Schultz and Werner Lehmann also acted as Kapos.

As even the Fascist leadership recognized that there was no chance of finishing the project in time to be effective for the war effort, the prisoners still considered capable of working were transferred to “Dachs VII” at Mockethal-Zatzschke, while 21 considered unfit to work were sent to the Flossenbürg subcamp at Leitmeritz on March 9, 1945.6 Several of these died a short time later in Leitmeritz.

The number of prisoners had declined by March 31, 1945, to 211 prisoners, and on April 13, 1945, there remained 209 prisoners.7

At the beginning of April, the prisoners who stayed behind in Porschdorf had to begin an evacuation march that led to the Osterzgebirge, where they were stationed in the town of Oelsen and where they worked for a few weeks building roadblocks and defenses.

Mario S. testified about the evacuation:

The transfer took place on foot with an uninterrupted march, day and night, of about two days. In an “elimination march” (“disposal march”), as I was told later, those that fell down were left to die. I personally took part in digging a grave to bury a dead prisoner. The goal was supposed to be the Flossenbürg camp. After arriving at a certain point, it was no longer possible to go further due to the advancing Soviet troops. The survivors were assembled on a type of farm property (more exactly: in a barn) around Oelsen, where we stayed until the Soviets arrived. Around eighty survived. The Germans fled on the morning of May 8, 1945. The Soviets came a day or two after.8

Seven prisoners died at Oelsen, either shot or due to complete debilitation from hunger. From those buried in the mass grave, only the name of Italian Adriano Ansaldi is known.


Further information may be found in these archival collections: ZdL at BA-L, IV 410 AR-Z 148/70, Bde. I and II; ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg.

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POTTENSTEIN

In the hilly landscape of the Fränkische Schweiz in the village of Pottenstein about 40 kilometers (25 miles) to the north of Nürnberg there existed a subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp from October 12, 1942, to April 16, 1945. At first, the prisoners were held in the youth hostel at Mariental. Then, from the spring of 1943, they were held in the barn of brewery owner Georg Mager in Pottenstein.

The prisoners initially had to do construction work for the Waffen-SS and Police Building Administration (Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei) and for the SS-Karstwehr, a specialist unit for war in areas with caves and ravines. Later the prisoners had to work for the SS-Military Fortifications branch (Fortifikationsstelle) and for the SS-Intelligence Replacement Battalion (Nachrichten-Ersatzabteilung), which had its headquarters in the SS barracks in Nürnberg. Pottenstein, in the years 1942–1943, was one of the largest of the Flossenbürg subcamps. Later, in 1944–1945, it was insignificant when compared to the large armaments camps in Leitmeritz and Hersbruck.

The forced labor of the concentration camp prisoners resulted in the construction of a barracks camp for the SS-Karstwehr on the Bernitz, a mountain to the south of Pottenstein. The prisoners had to build or relocate roads and construct a small dam for training purposes. In the nearby caves, called Teufelshöhle, the concentration prisoners worked at opening them up.

At the beginning of October 1942, there were 40 prisoners in the Pottenstein subcamp; in December 1942, around 80; in June 1943, 180; and in March 1945, 359 prisoners. The camp was established in this geographically remote area on the initiative of high school teacher and speleologist SS- Standartenführer Dr. Hans Brand, who had very good personal contacts with Heinrich Himmler. He was able to turn his own scientific interests, passion for the local area, and a project to promote tourism to Pottenstein into an SS project. Dr. Brand was also the impetus for the SS-Karstwehr. The infrastructure for training the specialist troops was such that it could be used for tourism in peacetime.

The heavy physical labor, the poor food, and inadequate winter clothing badly affected the prisoners. Sick and weak prisoners were constantly being sent back to Flossenbürg. Prisoners were also temporarily withdrawn from Pottenstein for other reasons such as cleaning up rubble after a bombing raid in Nürnberg.

The lists of the 40 prisoner transports to Pottenstein and the entries in the Numbers Book (Nummernbücher) of the Flossenbürg concentration camp show that there were 649 prisoners in the Pottenstein subcamp between October 1942 and April 1945. Some 340 of them were transferred back to Flossenbürg in 43 different transports. At least 9 prisoners died in Pottenstein or were shot “while trying to escape.” Of the 340 prisoners transferred from Pottenstein back to Flossenbürg, 102 died, 37 of them within a month of their return. It can be assumed that their deaths had something to do with conditions in the Pottenstein subcamp. One must, therefore, assume that the Pottenstein subcamp caused at least 50 deaths.

Wilhelm Geusendamm, a political prisoner, who shortly before the end of the war was able to have the Oberkapo in the Pottenstein subcamp, a “green” triangle, replaced, was able, with some maneuvering and a bit of luck, to prevent a long death march or the murder of a larger number of prisoners. The prisoners were liberated on April 16 close to Pottenstein, the day after they had left the camp.

Two of the Pottenstein subcamp leaders, Wenzel Wodak and Johann Baptist Kübler, were tried after 1945 but not for their acts in Pottenstein. Wodak was sentenced to death in the Dachau Flossenbürg Trial by an American military court for numerous murders committed in Flossenbürg and executed in Landsberg. Kübler was sentenced by the Weiden District Court in Weiden in 1957 to five years’ jail as an accessory to murder in Flossenbürg. An investigation that began in 1966 ceased in 1976, as perpetrators other than Wodak could not be identified. So the other SS men were able to avoid criminal trial, even though those SS-Karstwehr men who were trained in 1943 and 1944 in Pottenstein (some of them under the leadership of Dr. Hans Brandt, who remains highly regarded in Pottenstein) participated in several massacres in Slovenia.

SOURCES

Archival material on the camp is available at NARA, BA-B, CEGESOMA, and JuNS-V. The following works contain information on this camp: Peter Engelbrecht, Touristenidylle und KZ-Grauen: Vergangenheitsbewältigung in Pottenstein (Bayreuth: Rabenstein, 1997); Wilhelm Geusendamm, Herausforderungen. KJVD—UDSSR—KZ—SPD (Kiel, 1985).

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NOTES


3. Transfer to the Pottenstein subcamp, CEGESOMA, Film 14368; Nummernbücher des KZ Flossenbürg, NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/2, 000-50-46, Box 537.

4. Transfers back from the Pottenstein subcamp to Flossenbürg, CEGESOMA, Film 14368a; Nummernbücher des KZ Flossenbürg, NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/2, 000-50-46, Box 537. This contradicts Engelbrecht, Touristenidylle und
RABSTEIN

Rabstein near Böhmische-Kamnitz in the Sudetenland (present-day Česká Kamenice) originally had three large spinning mills that were owned by the Franz Preidl firm. They were located in a narrow rocky valley. On October 1, 1942, the factories were chosen as the place for the relocation of the Bremen firm Weser Flugzeugbau GmbH (Weserflug). Weserflug was to be relocated so that it could continue production in safety from air raids. Weserflug relocated to Rabstein its cutting process for aircraft parts, and toward the end of the war, the final assembly of propellers took place there. As part of the Fighter Program (Jägerprogramm), which commenced on January 3, 1944, the Fighter Staff (Jägerstab) decided to build a gigantic air-raid safe, underground production facility in Rabstein. The project had the code name “Zechstein.” In order to carry out the program, hundreds of forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) were drafted into action to work for several construction firms. The operation was coordinated by the Organisation Todt (OT).

In the summer of 1944, the first concentration camp prisoners were also put to work on the project. Most probably the Jägerstab directly ordered the establishment of a concentration camp in Rabstein. The camp became a Flossenbürg subcamp. The camp was built between June and August 1944 close to the existing barracks camp for civilian and forced laborers. It consisted of two, two-story and one ground-level barracks. They were to hold about 480 prisoners. There were also a kitchen barrack and an infirmary. The camp grounds were surrounded with a double row of electrified barbed wire. There were three guard towers. Outside were SS barracks and a guards’ room.

The camp commander was SS-Hauptsturmführer Oskar Jung (born 1888 in Schehesten and shot dead in 1945 in Böhmische-Kamnitz); his deputy was SS-Unterscharführer Richard Artur Junge (born 1901 in Eilenberg/Sachsen; died 1946 in Bad Mergenthal in a POW camp. The guards consisted of 67 SS members. A large number of them were not Germans. According to the prisoners, about one-third were Romanians, Ukrainians, Croats, Lithuanians, and perhaps also other nationalities.

The first transport, 400 men from Dachau, arrived on August 28, 1944, at the Rabstein subcamp that had been built by forced laborers; an additional 250 prisoners were transferred on September 3, 1944. Until the end of the war, there were further transfers of individuals or small groups between Rabstein and the Flossenbürg main camp. This resulted only in slight variations in overall prisoner numbers (between 630 and 690). Most of the Flossenbürg transfers were sent to Rabstein as replacement for prisoners who had died or were murdered.

Most of the Rabstein prisoners were in “protective custody” and had been arrested by the Gestapo for minor political matters or were being held in spite of not having been convicted or even found guilty. The second largest group of prisoners were the so-called professional criminals, most of whom had been convicted several times before the war. In Rabstein there was also a small group of homosexuals and a few Soviet POWs.

An overview of the different nationalities, put together after the war on February 28, 1945, reveals the following: German, 173; Russian, 193; Polish, 71; Yugoslav, 65; French, 54; Czech, 32; Dutch, 16; Italian, 10 plus 1 Jew; Belgian, 10; Croat, 4; Lithuanian, 1; Swiss, 1; and stateless, 3—for a total of 634 prisoners. As far as can be determined, this composition, other than for slight fluctuations, remained constant.

The majority of the German prisoners had been convicted for indictable crimes (and wore green criminal triangles), acted as Kapos, and were trusted by the SS guards. They even were sent shopping to the nearby city of Böhmische-Kamnitz. Some of them had told their fellow prisoners that during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising they had fought side by side with the SS and murdered Jews with their own hands.

The only purpose of the camp was forced labor. The prisoners were divided each day into groups and allocated according to the requirements of the companies who were building the aircraft factory. Most of the prisoners worked in 12-hour shifts, excavating underground caverns, digging trenches, unloading material, or assembling a small works railway. A small group of the prisoners was directly involved in aircraft production (chip removal workshops).

Food was not sufficient for the labor demands. The prisoners received black coffee in the morning; at lunch, a bowl of thin beet soup; and the same again in the evening or 300 grams (10.6 ounces) of bread. Once a week there was a small piece of sausage. For a limited time the prisoners who were working underground were given extra rations for the heavy work.

Clothing was also inadequate. The prisoners had only basic underwear and striped concentration camp clothing, which was never washed since there was no laundry in the camp. Instead of shoes, they wore wooden clogs. The heavy work destroyed the clothes and clogs of many prisoners with the result that during the winter of 1944–1945 many partially covered themselves with cement bags.

The combination of heavy labor, inadequate food, and poor hygiene was a death sentence for many. Several died through total exhaustion and some as a result of work accidents (cave-ins). The SS did not implement planned killings.

ENCyclopedia Of CAMPS And GhettoS, 1933–1945

KZ-Gräben, p. 59, who assumes that all the returned prisoners died.


because the prisoners were seen as a necessary labor force. Some prisoners were mistreated by the guards for minor infringements, and in some cases, these prisoners died. The camp deputy, Junge, was especially brutal. He is responsible for the death of Czech farmer Josef Tichý, who fell asleep at work because of exhaustion and did not turn up at roll call. He was beaten to death. Some prisoners were shot trying to escape. Several deaths can be attributed directly to the prisoner-functionaries who beat their fellow prisoners to death either out of greed or bloodlust.

Some 56 Rabstein concentration camp corpses were cremated in the crematorium at Aussig-Schreckenstein. The total number of victims is estimated to be between 80 and 100.3

A typhus epidemic broke out in the camp at the beginning of February 1945. There were about 40 cases. The doctor from Böhmische-Kamnitz in charge of the camp, Dr. Vater, was able to arrange quarantine measures, despite the protests of the camp leader Jung.4 The 9 most seriously ill prisoners were transferred to the Tetschen hospital; 3 of them died, and 4 managed to escape from the hospital. At the time of the outbreak, supplies were critically low, and the camp administration asked for medicine from the prisoners' relatives. Food packages and clothing items were allowed into the camp. It was only during the epidemic that the administration of the company decided to improve the catastrophic hygienic conditions and to establish delousing facilities in the camp. Until then the prisoners had to boil their clothes in tin drums in order to get rid of the lice in the camp.

There was no organized resistance in the camp. This was in part because the prisoners were of different nationalities and had difficulty in communicating and in part because they were spied on by the Kapos. Since the work sites were often far from the camp and on difficult ground, only a few prisoners were able to escape. Letters could be smuggled out of the camp because there was close contact between the forced laborers and some German craftsmen who were kind to the prisoners. Occasionally, a few courageous fellow workers gave the prisoners food.

The aircraft factory at Rabstein operated at full capacity until May 7, 1945. Early in the morning on May 8, a day before the arrival of the Polish Army, the order to evacuate the camp was given. The prisoners were to be handed over to the Americans. Only the seriously ill remained in the camp. The aircraft company decided to improve the catastrophic hygienic conditions and to establish delousing facilities in the camp. Until then the prisoners had to boil their clothes in tin drums in order to get rid of the lice in the camp.

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Beginning in 1945, Czech offices began a search for the Rabstein perpetrators. However, due to inadequate and contradictory prisoner statements, no one could be charged. The state prosecutors in Ludwigsburg, Germany, came to a similar result in 1976.6


**Notes**

1. ITS, Transfer Lists from Dachau to Rabstein (Unknown signature).
5. SOKA-D, Archivbestand Nachlass—Jan Marek (Document Collection Rabstein concentration camp).

**Regensburg [aka Colosseum]**

Regensburg lies to the east of the Bavarian forest and the confluence of the Danube and Regen rivers. A subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp was located there from March 19, 1945. The prisoners were accommodated in the Colosseum in the Stadtamhof, a former hotel, which later became the city’s Bauerntheater. But according to eyewitnesses, concentration camp prisoners had already been working in the city for Messerschmitt for at least a year. Confirmation of the camp’s existence can be found from at least March 1945 through the Flossenbürg transport lists, the International Tracing Service (ITS), and an incomplete burial list from the city’s administration, which contains details of 43 prisoners who died in the Regensburg Colosseum subcamp between March 23 and April 25, 1945. This means that within five weeks more than 10

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percent of the camp’s inmates had died. Probably, the dead were taken from the Colosseum subcamp by truck to the Saal subcamp where there was a crematorium.

There were approximately 400 male prisoners in the subcamp. One-third of them (128) were Jews, mainly from Poland and Hungary. Among the non-Jews, Poles constituted the largest group—84 prisoners—followed by Russians, Belgians, French, Germans, and members of 10 other European nations. Many of the inmates had already experienced other camps; some of them as “civilian workers” had been handed over to the concentration camp authorities by Gestapo offices in southern Germany. By profession, many of them were mechanics, carpenters, locksmiths, farmers, miners, bakers, electricians, laborers, and teachers.

The prisoners were accommodated in the Colosseum’s so-called dance hall. They slept on straw-covered stretcher beds perched together in one room in totally unacceptable hygienic conditions. In the dance hall (Tanzsaal) was the so-called Schlagschemel, where the prisoners were physically punished by the SS either by beatings or whippings. The guards were accommodated on the ground floor, in the so-called small hall in the Colosseum. The owners of the Colosseum also still lived and slept in the building. The camp was commanded by SS-Obersturmführer Plagge and his deputy SS-Obersturmführer Erich Liedtke. Survivors report that both mistreated the inmates on a regular basis and that Plagge was an alcoholic.

About 50 SS men guarded the inmates. They were German or Volksdeutsche (ethnic German) members of the SS but also members of the Organisation Todt (OT) who—as a punishment for minor offenses—had been transferred to guard duty. The high number of SS men in the camp can be explained by the fact that the prisoners worked on a number of locations, and therefore there was a high demand for guards.

According to statements by the local inhabitants, the prisoners’ day began each morning at 5:00 A.M. with roll call. Soon after that the prisoners marched to work. On their way to work the prisoners had to cross daily through the city of Regensburg, across the Steinerne Brücke completed in 1146, one of the world’s oldest stone bridges. The sound of their wooden shoes, according to witnesses, could be heard across the city. The prisoners’ food was miserable. It consisted in the morning and at midday of soup (survivors describe it as water with cabbage leaves), which was supplied by the local pub, the Goldener Löwe, and delivered to them at the sauerkraut factory. In the evenings the malt factory Herrmann Suppe supplied soup with fish bones, a pot for 20 people.

There are different accounts of where the prisoners worked. It is thought that they mostly worked for the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways), where they repaired railway tracks, laying a railway line between the Regensburg central railway station and Prüfening. Furthermore, they worked at the Güterbahnhof (freight station) West. As a rule, the
prisoners’ workday ended between 5:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. Other prisoners worked for Messerschmitt, returning to the camp around 9:00 P.M. The reason for this was the long route of almost 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) to the Messerschmitt factory. Additionally, the prisoners had to clean up after bombing raids, work in the sauerkraut factory, and clean away snow in the Stadtamhof.

Although witnesses speak of many dead, the city administration’s burial list for April 2, 1945, lists four dead, the highest number of dead within one day. The people of Regensburg knew that the prisoners suffered under a brutal SS regime: after work the SS is said to have had the prisoners attend roll call on the windy Steinerne Brücke, and groans, whimpering, and screams of pain were to be heard from the Colosseum and caused the inhabitants to avoid the area. While the majority of Regensburg citizens were indifferent, a few tried to help by providing food. In one instance, as revealed in a work produced in a history competition organized by the president of the Federal Republic of Germany, the persons giving help were put into a concentration camp.

The Regensburg subcamp was evacuated in a hurry on April 22, 1945, four days before the arrival of the U.S. Army in Regensburg. The prisoners marched to Laufen via Neuötting, Abötting, Burghausen, and Tittmoning. Some of the prisoners arrived there on April 1, 1945, and another group arrived at Berg probably on the same date. There were many that died on the evacuation march.

When the camp was evacuated, 27 prisoners who were either dead or could not work were left behind. Prisoner Hersch Solnik stated that he and a few of his comrades dared to venture out on the street and to ask the citizens of Regensburg for food, which was given to them. In the following days, 10 more prisoners died in Klerikalseminar, an auxiliary hospital that had been set up in the Schottenkloster, from the inhuman working and living conditions. According to the Bundeszentrale, 67 prisoners died in the Colosseum subcamp in total.

**SOURCES**


Evelyn Zegenhagen trans. Stephen Pallavicini

**ROCHLITZ**

In the course of the underground transfer of a large part of the German air weapons industry, the Mechanik GmbH, Rochlitz, a subsidiary of the Leipzig Pittler-Werkzeugmaschinenbau
The female camp at Rochlitz also used the Dresden Zeiss-Ikon detail Goehlwerk had been transported to Wansleben and the group of 59 women from (Lufag).\textsuperscript{6} On October 27, 1944, 125 men from the Buchenwald concentration camp arrived. At Rochlitz they were kept in a separate male camp. After training on tool machines, they were transferred to Mechanik’s underground installation, the potassium shaft Georgi, cover name “Biber,” at Wansleben am Sec.\textsuperscript{7} The female camp at Rochlitz also used the Dresden Zeiss-Ikon-Betrieb Goehle-Werk as accommodations for a training group of 59 women, who had been brought from the Ravensbrück concentration camp on December 14, 1944. Flossenbürg assigned them numbers from 60392 through 60450.\textsuperscript{8} After two transports arrived at Rochlitz from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp with 200 women and girls each, the first on December 19, 1944, the second on February 1, 1945, the number of prisoners that had been at the Rochlitz subcamp increased to 786. The women and girls of these two transports received the Flossenbürg numbers from 59955 through 60154 and from 61358 through 61557.\textsuperscript{9} Former female prisoner Helena F. testified during her witness questioning before the Israeli board of inquiry:

I come from the city of Slatsinské Doly in Carpathian Russia. . . . In the spring 1944 a ghetto was constructed there and after about six weeks we were deported to Auschwitz. We went to Auschwitz—mother, father, three sisters and three brothers. Immediately after leaving the wagons, a selection took place. My parents and two brothers died in Auschwitz. My two sisters and I . . . were in Birkenau and from there we were transported out to Bergen-Belsen. After about three months we were sent to the Rochlitz camp. . . . I was fifteen years old then, small, and worked on a large “revolver machine”—one could not see me when I stood behind the machine. I had to work, however, on the night shift. The work was heavy, especially for me. A civilian foreman was in charge of the work.\textsuperscript{10}

On February 13, 1945, the airplane weaponry main committee transferred the group of Hungarian and Polish Jews, which had come to Rochlitz in September 1944, to Calw in Württemberg, where they formed a new subcamp of the Natzweiler concentration camp at the Luftfahrtgeräte GmbH (Lufag).\textsuperscript{11} In the meantime, since the male prisoners had also been transferred to Wansleben and the group of 59 women from the Zeiss-Ikon detail Goehlwerk had been transported to Dresden, there were only 201 female prisoners in the Rochlitz subcamp detail on January 31, 1945.\textsuperscript{12} The counting of February 28, 1945, again shows 402 female prisoners in Rochlitz.\textsuperscript{13} Hungarian inmate Lea F. testified before the Israeli investigating authorities on the selection of the workers in Bergen-Belsen and the treatment in Rochlitz:

At the beginning of the fall 1944 a foreman from a factory came to Bergen-Belsen and selected female employees for his factory. He chose young, attractive women, although he also paid attention to the intelligence of the chosen ones. He took into consideration family members—he didn’t separate them. My sister Hedwa was about fifteen years old, small and weak. He set her aside, but as we explained that she was our sister, he took her along. There were also five sisters there from Marmarossziget—one of them was sick. He took four and promised that he would pick up the fifth later. He kept his promise. I emphasize this because of the humane treatment he gave and continued to give us.\textsuperscript{14}
The women and girls at Rochlitz were assigned to crews on the lathes, milling cutters, drills, and grinding machines, as well as familiarizing themselves with the precision measurement of the parts. The instructions were in the German language. The unusual work with the machines was very demanding for the women, especially for the girls between 12 and 15 years. Several of the younger ones had disguised their real age at Auschwitz in order to escape the selection for the gas chambers. All of them were physically as well as spiritually very exhausted from the loss of relatives at Auschwitz and the constant fear. Furthermore, they suffered in the winter cold in the poorly heated barracks and from the near-daily air-raid sirens, which deprived them of the necessary sleep.

The women of the December transport were initially kept in the Döhlen barracks camp, where the machine instruction also took place, and afterward in the camp at the riding arena in Rochlitz, which had been cleared by the Graslitz transport. For this reason, the February transport went to Döhlen.

The responsible camp leader was the SS-Hauptscharführer Pomorin, to whom another SS-Unterführer and 16 SS and Wehrmacht soldiers were subordinate. Functioning as female guard leader (Oberaufseherin) was Marianne Essmann, who was assigned 17 SS female guards (Aufseherinnen), almost all of whom had previously worked in Rochlitz.

Survivors are all in agreement that they were more or less treated correctly at Rochlitz. Former female prisoner Teresa S. reported: “The SS women did not beat us and behaved correctly. There were no prisoner killings in the Rochlitz camp. There were German foremen there. One was from Bavaria. He was an opponent of the Hitler regime. He taught us sabotage. In the office of the factory there was a German civilian… He had selected us at Bergen-Belsen. He had a leading position. He was strict but fair. There was also an engineer in the factory who was from Prussia. He was helpful to the prisoners. Regarding the prisoners’ functions, there was a half-Jew from Vienna in the infirmary—supposedly a medical doctor—she was a very bad woman.” The closing of the subcamp took place with the removal of 402 women and girls to the Graslitz (Kraslice) subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp on March 28, 1945. From there they had to join the evacuation march in the middle of April 1945.

NOTES
2. Ibid.
5. List of names with places of origin, recorded 1944–1945 by the then-14-year-old Hajnal H. (number. 58008). Copy in possession of the author.
13. Ibid., pp. 70–71.

SAAL AN DER DONAU [AKA RING ME]
Saal an der Donau is located in the Bavarian district of Kelheim, west of Regensburg. A subcamp of the Flossenburg concentration camp, it was located in Untersaal on the road to Teung at the southern exit from the village. The camp began to operate on November 30, 1944, with the arrival of 200 prisoners—one-third of them were Russians, one-third were Poles, and the others were French, Germans, Czechs, and some Dutch and Italians.

Saal had been chosen to become the site for the underground production of the Messerschmitt (Me) 262, the world’s first operational fighter jet. Organisation Todt (OT) had begun to prepare the site on Ringberg Mountain in the summer of 1944—here is the origin of the code name for the project “Ring[berg] Me[sserschmitt].” Messerschmitt, based in Regensburg and Augsburg, was the most important armaments producer in southern Germany and, as the producer of the Me 109 and Me 262, one of the most important manufacturers of fighter aircraft. For OT, the prisoners had to excavate underground caverns, build roads, and work on preparing
an airfield not far from Ringberg Mountain, on the other bank of the Donau at Herrnsall/Karpfelberg. A document signed by SS-Obersturmbannführer Max Koegel, the last Flossenbürg commandant, and in evidence at the Nuremberg Trials, reveals that the SS paid 20,398 Reichsmark (RM) to the OT Bauleitung for services rendered in December 1944.

The prisoners worked in 10-hour shifts, and their living conditions were miserable. The first inmates lived in holes dug into the ground; later a barracks camp was erected for them, at a distance of about 1.5 kilometers (1 mile) from the site. The camp consisted of 4 to 7 barracks. The Saal camp was surrounded with a barbed-wire fence and wooden guard towers. At the camp’s entrance was the inscription “Through Work, Be Free” (Durch Arbeit Frei). The administration and guards were also accommodated in barracks. In the beginning, there were 31 SS men in the camp, under the command of SS-Hauptscharführer Konrad Maier. Some of them were Ukrainians, and Volksdeutsche (ethnic Germans) from Yugoslavia and Hungary. Later, the number of guards increased to 73.

With the arrival of another transport from Flossenbürg, there were 671 prisoners in the camp on March 1, 1945. Many of them were Jews who had already suffered in Auschwitz, Buchenwald, and other camps. On March 13, there were 549 prisoners in the camp. It is unknown whether, in this period of time, prisoners went to other camps or whether more than 120 prisoners had died. Among the inmates, Poles (including Polish Jews) constituted the largest national group, followed by Italians, French, Belgians, Germans, and Hungarians (the latter ones almost exclusively Jews). About half of the inmates were categorized as “civilian workers” and Schutzhäftlinge (“protective custody” prisoners); about 100 inmates were Jews.

Numerous inmates fell victim to the insufficient food supply and the harsh working and living conditions. Starting in February 1945, the number of deaths in the camp increased rapidly, mainly due to epidemics: In February, 33 inmates died; in March, 82; in April, 97 (including 66 who died on one day, April 15). There was a Revier (infirmary) at the subcamp, with a Hungarian inmate as the camp physician, but there was no medication available. Numerous inmates were killed by the guards—for attempts to escape or to steal food, for instance. To deal with the corpses, a primitive crematorium was erected in the camp in which there were two ovens (or one oven with two chambers). The prisoners who died in the camp were either cremated or hastily buried not far from the camp. Possibly also prisoners who died in other camps, for example, perhaps Regensburg Colosseum or Hersbruck, were cremated in Saal.

From February 24, 1945, the camp leader was Willi Wagner. The prisoners’ food was poor and insufficient. Each prisoner received a quarter loaf of bread a day. At times the prisoners received no food, as was the case between March 3 and 5, 1945. On March 5, when freshly baked bread was distributed to the prisoners, 10 prisoners died within 12 days as a result of difficulties in digesting the hot bread in their emaciated bodies. On March 15, 1945, a Landshut bakery was given a contract to send every 10 days a wagon of bread to the camp. But witnesses also state that farmers secretly gave food to the prisoners.

Despite the murderous use of the prisoners on this construction site, the caverns and tunnel could not have been completed before the end of 1945. By the time the camp was dissolved, the excavation of six holes had only begun, each of them 5 meters wide, 3 meters high, and 7 meters deep (16 by 10 by 23 feet). Also, the airfield at Herrnsall/Karpfelberg was never completed.

According to some sources, the prisoners at the Saal subcamp worked also in the Saal quarry and a nearby potassium factory. The quarry was considered one of the most infamous in Germany; the prisoners worked solely with primitive tools. There were no machines. The stone blocks were levered out from the walls with wedges, reduced in size by hand, loaded onto carts, and pulled to the factory. The guards were brutal; prisoners were beaten to death or shot with a “mercy shot” (Gnadenschuss). The death rate among the prisoners was high.

Toward the end of the war, Saal functioned as a transit camp for evacuations from Flossenbürg and other camps toward the south. Around April 20, 1945 (other sources suggest the middle of April), the inmates were shifted in the direction of Dachau, probably in a death march with prisoners from Hersbruck. Prisoners were murdered along the way, for example, in the vicinity of Abensberg.

The number of prisoners who died in the subcamp cannot be accurately determined. After the war, 20 corpses and the ashes of 360 murdered prisoners were found on the camp grounds. The corpses and ashes were initially buried close to the Saal railway station. In 1957, they were reinterred in a new cemetery between Ober and Untersaal. Estimates say that about one-third of the inmates of the Saal subcamp died during the short time the camp existed.

Camp commander Maier stood trial after the war during the Rastatt Tribunal in 1947 but was released due to lack of evidence. The Regensburg district attorney started an investigation in 1955, but there were no results leading to a trial. The same happened with investigations by the district attorney of Nürnberg-Fürth and the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZdL) in the 1970s.

**Sources** Events in the Saal an der Donau subcamp were investigated as part of the Flossenbürg concentration camp trials. The files were microfilmed, and the filmed copies are held in NARA, RG 338, Records of the United States Army Commands, 1942, and NARA, RG 153, Records of the Judge Advocate General (Army), Signatur 000-50-103. The document mentioned above on the use of prisoner labor in December 1944 has the Nuremberg evidentiary number NO-395. In Der Ort des Terrors, ed. Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, Ulrich Fritz describes the subcamp in Vol.4, Flossenbürg, Mauntauens, Ravensbrück (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 247–250. A description of the camp in the context of the Flossenbürg subcamps in the Regensburg area is part of the history competition organized by the president of the Federal Republic of...


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**SCHLACKENWERTH**

The Schlackenwert (Ostrov) subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp was near Karlsbad (Karlový Vary). As with the Flossenbürg subcamps in Jungfern-Breschan, Neuhirschstein, and Eisenberg, it had a particularly characteristic building style. In these locations prisoners were put to work in castles. Their quarters were also in the castles. All these distinctive buildings had been confiscated by the SS for a variety of uses. They either were homes for the highest SS leaders, such as Jungfern-Breschan for the Heydrich family; prisons for prominent prisoners such as Castle Schloss Neuhirschstein near Meissen for the Belgian royal family; or favored sites for SS offices such as Schlackenwerth. The concentration camp prisoners in these castle Kommandos were mostly required for construction or auxiliary labor. These idyllic sites did not mean that there were better working conditions or that the survival chances of the prisoners were higher. The example of Schlackenwerth shows quite clearly that the prisoners were subject at any time to torture, mistreatment, and murder by the SS guards.

Schlackenwerth Castle was built between 1693 and 1696. It had once belonged to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and was later owned by the Princes von Bismarck. Between 1899 and 1918, it was administered as a feudal estate. After the establishment of the first Czechoslovakian Republic, ownership of the castle fell into the hands of the Czechoslovak state. It was confiscated by the SS when German troops marched into the Sudetenland. It was then used for a variety of purposes. Immediately after Czechoslovakia was annexed in March 1939, the Gestapo in Karlsbad established the first camp in the castle. Jews in the area were held there, as were members of the Czech opposition. This camp lasted for just six months and served to establish the SS position for the persecution of political and “race” opponents in the occupied Bohemian territory. A number of Jewish prisoners were murdered between March and the early summer of 1939. However, many Czech publications erroneously state that the camp had a connection at this time with the concentration camp at Flossenbürg.1 Between the summer of 1939 and 1943, resettled Germans from Wolhynia were quartered in Schlackenwerth Castle, and a variety of SS units and offices used parts of the expanded castle grounds. It was only from May 1943 that prisoners were accommodated there and a Flossenbürg subcamp was established on the site.

The reasons for the opening of a subcamp are found in the relocation of a Berlin SS office, which used prisoners from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, as a result of the war. On June 23, 1942, a Sachsenhausen subcamp was formed in the Berlin suburb of Lichterfelde, regarded as an SS suburb. Numerous SS troops and offices were stationed there. The prisoners were mainly used as work detachments in a variety of SS building projects but also in administrative offices such as the SS-Kleiderkasse (Clothing Checkout) in Kaiserallee attached to the Amt BII/3 of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA). Work in the Kleiderkasse was regarded by the prisoners as comparatively privileged work. Because of the regular contact with civilians, there was no requirement to wear prisoner uniforms. This status was to change dramatically when the office was transferred to Schlackenwerth.

After a heavy bombing raid in which part of the office building in the Kaiserallee was damaged, the SS-Kleiderkasse, with some of the prisoners, was relocated on May 17, 1943, to Schlackenwerth. On May 31, it was merged with a Flossenbürg work detachment.2 There was a second transport of prisoners on June 9, 1943, and the numbers reached 100; this would remain the average number of prisoners in the camp.3 Prisoner numbers fluctuated largely in Schlackenwerth as is
shown by the transport reports. While in December 1944 there were temporarily only 69 prisoners in the camp, at the end of February 1945, there were 121 prisoners from 11 nations, including 25 Germans, a Belgian, 8 French, 6 Italians, 5 Yugoslavs, a Dutchman, a Croat, 29 Poles, 23 Russians, 20 Czechs, 1 Hungarian, and a stateless person. There were no Jewish prisoners. The prisoners were chiefly used in rebuilding the castle, in tailoring, and in shoe repair, as well as in loading and transport activities. Although Schlackenwerth was a small subcamp, the conditions are described by surviving prisoners as being particularly horrible when compared with the camp in Berlin-Lichterfelde. The usual Sunday break in many camps almost completely disappeared from Schlackenwerth from September 1944. The prisoners had to work 12 hours a day under rapidly deteriorating supplies and provisions. Particularly when new clothing transports arrived for the SS, the prisoners had to work late into the night without a break.

SS-Oberscharführer Edmund Fieger was responsible for the tighter working and living conditions and for the reduced survival chances of the prisoners. He was born in 1885 near Erfurt. He acted (from no later than June 30, 1943) as the commander of the SS-Kleiderkasse and was known as a brutal sadist. Witness statements by former prisoners unanimously confirm that Fieger constantly terrorized the prisoners with uncontrollable outbursts of rage. His favorite victims to harass were Russians and Poles, whom he arbitrarily beat and mishandled. Fieger was personally accused of several killings in Schlackenwerth. The prisoners who were recaptured following an unsuccessful escape attempt on October 19, 1944, two German prisoner-functionaries, were hung in the castle yard on October 27, 1944. He is said to have murdered a Russian prisoner by pushing him from scaffolding on the fourth floor of the castle. However, this murder could not be proven. What was proven is that in Schlackenwerth, in addition to those two executions, a Pole was executed on July 17, 1944, a Frenchman on March 16, 1945, and another Pole on March 24, 1945. The corpses were most likely taken to the crematorium in the nearby spa town of Karlsbad, where they were cremated. Fieger was never prosecuted for his crimes. He died before the state prosecutors began investigations.

Except for 10 remaining prisoners, the camp was transferred in the middle of April 1945 to the Flossenbürg subcamp at Leitmeritz. Once again the prisoners were put to work under atrocious conditions. The remaining prisoners experienced May 8, the day that Germany capitulated, as the final day of their captivity. Allied troops did not liberate the camp. It was only two weeks later that Czech partisans occupied Schlackenwerth Castle and released the remaining prisoners.

**SOURCES** The first depictions in Socialist Czechoslovakia of National Socialist camps in Czechoslovakia appeared in the 1960s. The compilation by Růžena Bubenicková, Ludmila Kubátová, and Irena Malá, Tábory utrpení a smrti (Prague, 1969), incorrectly describes the Gestapo prison from 1939 as “Konzentrationslager Flossenbürg, SS-Kommandostelle Karlsbad, KZ Stehle Schlackenwerth” and fails to mention the real subcamp, SS-Kleiderkasse. There have been no further studies, either in German or in Czech, regarding the Schlackenwerth subcamp. In 2001, a small pamphlet was published on the Sachsenhausen subcamp Berlin-Lichterfelde, part of which was transferred to Schlackenwerth and formed the departure port for the Flossenbürg subcamp: Klaus Leutner, *Das KZ-Aussenlager Lichterfelde* (Berlin, 2001).

There are numerous prisoner files such as transport lists, entries in the Flossenbürg Numbers Book (Nummernbuch) as well as accounts for work done all relating to Schlackenwerth. Most of these files are held in the BA-B, Collection NS4/F1, as well as the archives of the Ag-F. The files of the preliminary investigations done by the ZdL at BA-L, in particular, the comprehensive witness statements by former prisoners and inhabitants of Schlackenwerth, are a core source collection (ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 24/68). However, these sources do not provide more exact details on the names of the camp victims.

**NOTES**

1. BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 24/68.
2. CEGESOMA, Transport list 31 May 1943, Microfilm 14368.
3. Transport list, June 9, 1943, ebenda.
4. BA-B, NS4/F1-393/2, Labour Demand, January 1, 1945.
8. Conclusion, ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 24/68.

**SCHÖNHEIDE**

In 1944, the R. Fuess company’s manufacturing site for producing measuring instruments used in aircraft weaponry was transferred from Berlin-Steglitz to Schönheide in the western Erzgebirge. The company was relocated to the factory rooms of the closed-down Arlt textile printing works. Due to the lack of workers, the R. Fuess company received from the aircraft weaponry main committee a group of 50 concentration camp male prisoners, in addition to prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian slave laborers. On February 21, 1945, this transport from the Flossenbürg concentration camp arrived at Schönheide.

The prisoners were settled in a space of the Schuricht brush factory. Belonging to the group were 17 Czechs; 12 Poles, including 10 Jews; and 9 Germans, besides head Kapo Georg Weilbach who had become famous as the second camp elder (Lagerältester) at Flossenbürg and in the Mülensing St. Micheln subcamp. There were also in this group 3 Italians, 2 Belgians, 2 French, 1 Bulgarian, 1 Russian, 1 Greek, 1 Yugoslav, and 1 Hungarian, the last 3 being Jews.
On March 31, 1945, the group still counted 48 prisoners. Up to that time, 1 prisoner had died, and 1 (a Czech) had escaped.1 The counting of April 13, 1945, still showed 46 prisoners, although to that point in time it is possible that at least 6 prisoners died, as written down by the Luxembourg prisoner Albert Hommel on April 14, 1945, in Johanngeorgenstadt.2 In SS documents, only 2 fatalities are recorded for the Schönheide subcamp.

An eyewitness account describes the treatment of a prisoner by German manager Walter Arlt, the head of the closed-down textile printing works: “A prisoner sat on the lavatory steps in the courtyard. Mr. Arlt went to him and argued with him that he should work. Because he refused he kicked him in the stomach. When Gustav Seidel [a German worker] called him that he should work. Because he refused he kicked him in the stomach. When Gustav Seidel [a German worker] called out ‘he shouldn’t do that again,’ he let him go. The next day the man was no longer alive. Around 6:00 in the evening he was taken to the graveyard in a handcart (2 SS guards, 4 prisoners). The handcart was turned over into a large hole (mass grave).”3

The prisoners were employed in building barracks on the company grounds and for the transport of material between the various warehouses and manufacturing sites. Several Germans took advantage of the possibilities of contact between the prisoners and the German workers, slipping food to the prisoners. They were reported and, in accordance with the rules, threatened by officers employed by the Nazis, like the head of the Deutsche Arbeitsfront German Labor Front, DAF, with being sent to a concentration camp, should it happen again.4

The responsible camp leader (Lagerführer) was SS-Unterscharführer Carl Freitag, to whom 2 SS-Unterführer and 14 SS guards were subordinate.5

The evacuation of the prisoners began on April 13, 1945. On foot they reached the Johanngeorgenstadt camp on the same day. Albert Hommel reported: “Camp Schönheide (43 prisoners) Carl Freitag, SS-Unterscharführer, arrived without losses via Eibenstock on 13.4.45, went back toward Schönheide on 14.4.45, from where they were evacuated on the next day on orders from the local commanding officer. The Kapo Weilbach, known for his cruelty, was shot underway by a prisoner, who afterward was able to save himself with several others. I was able to again draw up the list of the prisoners from Schönheide—a copy is enclosed. . . . Signed, Albert Hommel.” (Hommel was wrong, however, when he reported about Weilbach being shot by prisoners during the evacuation. Weilbach was sentenced to life in prison at the Flossenbürg Trial at Dachau, later pardoned, and released early from prison. In 1957, he was once again tried before the Weiden District Court. After serving a sentence, he was once again free.)6 During the resumed evacuation, there was an escape, or a liberation attempt by several of the prisoners, on the road between Schönheide and Eibenstock during which some prisoners were shot.


Primary sources for this subcamp may be found in ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg; BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 (F). AR.Z 18/68, Bd. III; and the former Ba-VEB-Bü-SHD.

**NOTES**

6. Ibid.

**SEIFHENNERSDORF**

The Seifhennersdorf subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp was administered by the Waffen-SS Bauleitung (Building Administration) in Dresden. From the subcamp at the SS-Pionierkasernen, approximately 30 prisoners were used from the middle of January 1944 to build an SS hospital at Seifhennersdorf in the district of Zittau near Rumbuk on the Saxon-Bohemian border.

According to the labor requests issued by the Flossenbürg command office to the Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei (Waffen-SS and Police Building Administration) Dresden, building work was planned for Seifhennersdorf for the whole year of 1944. From January 17, 1944, there were on average 30 prisoners working at Seifhennersdorf, the majority of whom were skilled workers, not simple laborers.1 This number remained relatively constant with some variations downward. A letter from the Flossenbürg camp office to Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) for Bohemia and Moravia SS-Obergruppenführer Frank provides details of the prisoners' nationalities for July 1944 as follows: 17 Germans, 4 Yugoslavs, 3 Poles, 2 Soviets, and 1 Czech.2 Most of them were skilled building workers and had already done building work at the SS-Pionierkasernen in Dresden. Many had been in concentration camps for years; this fact, plus the large number of
Germans, supports the assumption that the conditions at Seifhennersdorf were relatively good. The prisoners were accommodated in a hunter's lodge, which was also the subcamp's postal address. The only witness has stated that there were no mistreatments or killings in the camp.\(^1\) The prisoners were guarded by at least 14 guards, belonging to the Stettin SS-Lazarett.\(^4\)

The HSSPF for Bohemia and Moravia and Minister of State SS-Obergruppenführer Frank visited the Seifhennersdorf subcamp on August 10, 1944, as part of an official trip. The participants visited a number of subcamps and other SS camps. They were more interested in camp security and arrived by accident at the Seifhennersdorf subcamp, which the Flossenbürg camp office erroneously ordered under the area administered by the SS section Bohemia and Moravia (in fact, it was a part of the SS sector Elbe).\(^5\) The report’s summary is less surprising: “There are too many SS guards in relation to the number of prisoners.”

The first detachment leader was SS-Oberscharführer Wilhelm Hartmann, who was much liked by the prisoners. Until September 1944, he was the detachment leader at the SS-Pionierkaserne in Dresden. He was suspended in Seifhennersdorf for “facilitating escapes” and held under arrest in Flossenbürg for “facilitating escapes” and held under arrest in Pionierkasse in Dresden. He was suspended in Seifhennersdorf for “facilitating escapes” and held under arrest in Flossenbürg for three months. There are no documents regarding the escape attempts, and even the number of guards, which is difficult to assess how an escape could be possible. Hartmann was replaced by 25-year-old SS-Sturmmann Sieber.

The camp was dissolved on March 16, 1945. A list prepared four days later mentions this date as the date of the transfer of 29 prisoners from the camp to the Flossenbürg Rabstein subcamp. Included among the 29 men were 10 Germans, 8 Poles, 6 Russians, 2 Yugoslavs, 1 Czech, 1 Slovene, and 1 Croat. A comparison with the Flossenbürg registration books shows that the great majority were the same men who, in the summer of 1944, had been stationed in Seifhennersdorf. (A Yugoslav listed in the Numbers Books [Nummernbüchern] is described as a Croat in the transport list of March 16 1945.\(^6\)) Josef L., a witness, has reported that the prisoners were marched in a close group 40 kilometers (25 miles) to the camp at Rabstein and that none had died on the way. A few German prisoners, such as the witness Josef L., were transferred a few days later to Flossenbürg, others to Dresden. The Rabstein subcamp was the last Flossenbürg subcamp to be dissolved on May 9, when it was liberated by Soviet troops.

**Sources**

Investigations by the ZDL at BA-L (410 AR 3246/66) documented the duration, type, and conditions of the forced labor of the Seifhennersdorf prisoners, on the basis of the files in the Flossenbürg collection in the BA-B. The Flossenbürg Nummernbüchern are available at NARA and copied at AG-F. Journalist and historian Toni Siegert has copies of documents held by the ITS, Hist. Abt., including prisoner numbers and data on the number of prisoners and guards in Seifhennersdorf, which are available at AG-F.

**Notes**

1. BA-B, NS 4/FL 393, vol 1: Forderungsnachweis der Kommandantur in Flossenbürg, March 1, 1944.
6. NARA, RG 338, 290/13/22/3, 000–50–46, Box 537 (Microfilm copy in AG-F).

**Siegmar-Schönau**

Since the spring of 1944, the Auto Union AG group had been negotiating with the authorities responsible for the allocation of labor, primarily the main committees for tanks, weapons, and trucks of the so-called personal responsibility of the industry, in order to receive more employees for the Siegmar factory, because the company depended on this labor for fulfilling the weapons orders it had received. In a factory management meeting of April 1944, it was established that “the carrying out of the planned program is not possible because 1) the necessary machines, 2) the necessary workers, 3) the absolutely necessary first run, yielding perfect material and with normal reject quotas could not be guaranteed to date. . . . The maximum factory production of this motor [the Maybach tank motor HL 230 for the tank VII “Tiger,” built under license] is thus not more than 250 units per month. A delivery of more than this can only be promised after these difficulties are overcome.”\(^1\)

In the competition of the weapons manufacturers for labor, the Auto Union had already received thousands of concentration camp prisoners for the expansion of the underground tank motor factory at the property “Richard” in Leitmeritz. Despite this, the group also sought to secure prisoners for the Siegmar factory.

The minutes of the company management meeting of July 14, 1944, read: “To cover these requirements negotiations are presently under way regarding the transfer of concentration camp prisoners. . . . Since the fulfilling of the especially important program now under way at the Siegmar factory must be absolutely assured, every effort for obtaining labor must be continued with extreme strength. The board wishes to be continually informed about the success of these efforts, especially about the employment of concentration camp prisoners.”\(^2\)

After the Auto Union representatives had received the location from the main committees and finally discussed the
selection of prisoners with the responsible Office D II of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), a memo about the meeting of the company management on August 18, 1944, read: “Since 400 prisoners are expected to take up work in Siegmur by the end of this month, this number may be reduced to 284 workers at the end of the month without regard to fluctuation in work requirements.”

On September 10, 1944, the first prisoners, Polish Jews, arrived at Siegmur from Auschwitz. Most of these men were taken to Auschwitz after the Lodz ghetto had been liquidated. Former prisoner Szaja Baczyński writes: “My brother Mosche and I were together at Auschwitz. From there we went to the camp at Siegmur-Schönau. We were there a few weeks and worked in the Wanderer Works of the Auto Union.”

The prisoners were registered with numbers from 26411 through 26810 by the Flossenbürg main camp, the administrative headquarters of the Siegmur-Schönau subcamp.1

In order to ensure more prisoner laborers, the Auto Union concern offered to accommodate around 400 concentration camp prisoners and to use them for work “after the concluded extension of the 3rd upper floor, expected for the middle of December.”

On September 11, 1944, one day after the subcamp was formed in Siegmur, the factory was heavily bombed by an air raid. The prisoner accommodations burned down. Szaja B. wrote: “After the factory and a part of the camp were bombed, we slept in an open field and had to help with the clearing-up work after the bombardment. After a few weeks we went from there to Hohenstein-Ernstthal.” Several prisoners suffered wounds due to the air raid. SS camp leader (Lagerführer) Blacke was also wounded and had to be replaced by SS-Oberscharführer Franz Reber.8 Whether the reduction of the SS guard unit from the original 36 guards to 29 is also due to wounds from the air raid is not known.

On October 23, 1944, a factory memo speaks of 398 concentration camp prisoners at the Siegmur camp. According to SS documents, however, at this time 3 prisoners had already died, and 3 further fatalities were mentioned by the time the prisoners were transferred in January 1945.10

After the bombing of September 11, 1944, the operation of the factory was also interrupted several times due to air-raid alarms, as shown by the Flossenbürg claims against the Auto Union factory. In the claims document No. 767, regarding December 1944, the SS demands from the Auto Union the amount of 57,464.00 Reichsmarks (RM) from which, however, was to be deducted 9,611.35 RM for prisoners’ maintenance and 1,022.60 RM for the loss of working hours due to air raids during October and November 1944.11

In January 1945, the transfer of the Siegmur subcamp took place on foot to the tank motor factory at Hohenstein-Ernstthal, which in the meantime had been evacuated. The prisoners stayed there until the evacuation in the middle of April 1945.

The following archival sources are relevant: BA-L, Zdl. IV 410 AR-Z 57/76, Bd. 1 and 2; ITS, Hist. Abl., Flossenbürg; SHStA-(D), Auto Union AG; and APCK.

NOTES

1. SHStA-(D), Auto Union AG, Nr. 205, Produktionsprogramme Auto Union, Aktennotiz über die Konzernleitungssitzung, April 24, 1944, p. 13.
2. Ibid., Aktennotiz über die Konzernleitungssitzung, July 14, 1944, p. 22.
3. Ibid., Aktennotiz über die Konzernleitungssitzung, August 18, 1944, p. 20.
5. APCK, Nr. 3358.
6. StA-D, Auto Union AG, Nr. 205; Produktionsprogramme, Aktennotiz über die Konzernleitungssitzung v. 22. 11. 1944, p. 27.
8. Zdl. IV 410 AR-Z 57/76, Bd.I.
10. APCK, Nr. 3358.

STEINSCHÖNAU

There was a Flossenbürg subcamp in Steinschönau (Kamenicky-Senov), an old glass city in the north Bohemian Lausitz town of Bergen (Luzické Hory) not far from the city of Böhmische Kamnitz (Ceska Kamenice). It existed from September 1944 to January 1945. While the two subcamps in the little town of St. Georquensthal (Jirefn) were only a few kilometers away and are today relatively well documented, the background to the use of concentration camp prisoners in Steinschönau has remained mostly unexamined.

The subcamp in Steinschönau is first mentioned on September 30, 1944, in the monthly Stärkemeldungen der Arbeitslager im Zuständigkeitsbereich des Höheren-SS und Polizeiführers für Böhmen und Mähren (Monthly Strength Reports of Labor Camps under the Jurisdiction of the Higher-SS and Police Leader [HSSPF] for Bohemia and Moravia) where there is a reference to 48 male prisoners. The entry has the following notation: “Wache stellt Gendarmerie Aussig a.d. Elbe” (Guards are Gendarmerie Aussig on the Elbe).1 Based on a transport list, it is possible to state that the camp was opened on September 22, 1944. On this day, 48 prisoners from Flossenbürg were transferred to the Hotel Glashutten at Steinschönau where they were to work. There were 25 Poles, 10 Soviet citizens, 7 French, 3 Czechs, 2 Italians, and a German. There were no Jews among the prisoners.2 All the prisoners were qualified tradesmen such as bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers, and painters, and just about all wore the red triangle of the political prisoners. Only the German prisoner was categorized as a preventive custody prisoner (Vorbegenshaftung) and transferred to Steinschönau as a Kapo.
The subcamp in Steinschönau had the classic structure of the small Flossenbürg work detachments—the transfer of 1 German Vorbeugehäftling was aimed to ensure that internal prisoner discipline was established by prisoners with the green triangle.

One can assume from the relevant professional qualifications of the prisoners that the detachment was a building detachment. The monthly Labor Demands (Forderungsnachweise) from the “Kommandantur-Arbeitseinsatz K.L. Flossenbürg” (Flossenbürg Command Office—Labor Deployment) for payment were addressed to the Hotel Glasstuben. In the late summer of 1944, this north Bohemian region lay far from the front and was relatively secure from Allied air raids. It became the area where numerous armaments industries, important war units, headquarters, and military hospitals were located. On many of these projects the labor of the Flossenbürg concentration camp prisoners was used, for example, in Steinschönau. In this small town were built a military hospital as well as a department of the armaments company “Weser Flugzeugbau,” which had its own Flossenbürg subcamp in nearby Rabstein. However, neither information on the guards, which were not the SS but Gendarmerie from Aussig, nor the address of the Forde rungsnachweise, the Hotel Glasstuben, provides concrete details on what the prisoners worked on. No statements have been made on where they were accommodated, their treatment, or the conditions in which they were held. The Hotel Glasstuben may have been where they worked or where they were held.

There are documents that show the change in the prisoner numbers in Steinschönau. One month after the formation of the camp, the prisoner numbers had been reduced by 1. Prisoner numbers remained constant at 47 until the end of January 1945; 5 prisoners, including 4 Soviets and a Pole, were able to escape Steinschönau on January 21, 1945. Following this successful escape, the camp was dissolved, and the remaining 42 prisoners were transferred to the giant Flossenbürg subcamp in nearby Rabstein. However, neither information on the guards, which were not the SS but Gendarmerie from Aussig, nor the address of the Forde rungsnachweise, the Hotel Glasstuben, provides concrete details on what the prisoners worked on. No statements have been made on where they were accommodated, their treatment, or the conditions in which they were held. The Hotel Glasstuben may have been where they worked or where they were held.

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In addition, from October 1, 1944, there was a subcamp of Flossenbürg at the firm of A. Schultze Jr. This camp is referred to in a list of guards and prisoners of Flossenbürg of October 1944 in the area of the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) Bohemia. As much as is known, both camps were not connected in any way other than by geographic location. The interesting question as to why there was a crossover of organizational responsibilities between the Gross-Rosen and Flossenbürg concentration camps cannot be answered because of the absence of source information. However, it is possible to sketch a broad outline of the history of the Flossenbürg subcamp in St. Georgenthal.

**NOTES**


2. Transportliste, September 22, 1944, CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14368.

3. Forderungsnachweise für den Häftlingseinsatz für die Monate Oktober bis Dezember 1944, BA-B, NS4/Fl-393/2.


5. Tägliche Stärkemeldung, January 28, 1945, CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14368.

6. Tägliche Stärkemeldungen, January 29 to April 12, 1945, in ibid.

**ST. GEORGENTHAL**

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**SOURCES**

The Steinschönau subcamp is not referred to at all in any available German or Czech historical writings.

The only reliable sources on this subcamp are the prisoners’ transport lists that are held in the BA-B (Bestand NS4-Fl) in Brussels (CEGESOMA, Microfilm 14368), and the ITS, Hist. Abt., collection on Flossenbürg (available at AG-F). A preliminary investigation by the ZdL (at BA-L) revealed no useful historical or judicial material (V-410 AR 3286/66).

Jörg Skriebelleit
trans. Stephen Pallavicini
The relocation of the firm A. Schultze Jr. Blankschrauben-Fabrik und Fassondreherei Berlin from the German capital to St. Georgenthal was anticipated in a letter sent by the firm’s owner to the mayor of St. Georgenthal in October 1943. The firm A. Schultze Jr. produced precision metal parts for air weaponry as part of the German Air Ministry’s Fighter Program (Jägerprogramm). The relocated enterprise was to be seated in the factory buildings of the no-longer-operating Julius Richter spinning mill. The Schultze firm had an enormous demand for room in St. Georgenthal since its whole Berlin workforce was to be relocated to northern Bohemia. As a result, in October 1943 the A. Schultze Jr. firm rented and rebuilt the former hunter’s lodge in the small village. The delivery of the first machines and the arrival of the first civilian skilled workers did not occur until March 18, 1944. The sources available indicate that no application for concentration camp prisoners had been made at this point in time. However, during the course of 1944, the firm A. Schultze Jr. actively sought the use of concentration camp prisoners to compensate for the general labor shortage. A decision by the Sudeten Gauleiter of September 1944 about the allocation of further space for the important war production of the firm A. Schultze Jr. expressly mentions the allocation of concentration camp prisoners. The sparse sources, however, do not reveal the nature of the work envisaged for the concentration camp prisoners.

The decision to allocate forced laborers from a concentration camp must have been taken very quickly because by October 1, 1944, the firm A. Schultz Jr. was a Flossenbürg subcamp. SS-Oberscharführer Müller had been appointed as Oberarbeiter of the St. Georgenthal subcamp. 11 The first concentration camp prisoners were transferred to other Flossenbürg subcamps such as Regensburg, Kirchham, and Janowitz, as well as to Buchenwald and Bergen-Belsen. The death of 3 of these prisoners on the return transport from St. Georgenthal to Flossenbürg is documented.12

SOURCES The Flossenbürg St. Georgenthal subcamp is mentioned in ITS, Verzeichnis der Haftstätten unter dem Reichsführer-SS (1933–1945), 2 vols. (Arolsen, 1979), 1: 119. It appears only in a few Czech studies, the majority of which were published during the period of the Czechoslovak Soviet Socialist Republic. Little information is to be gained from these studies other than the mention of the camp. What makes this situation more difficult is the fact that the Flossenbürg camp is often confused with the women’s Gross-Rosen subcamp, which was also located in St. Georgenthal. A local historical magazine in the Czech district of Děčín published an essay in 2001 about both subcamps in St. Georgenthal. The author is mostly concerned with the history of the buildings, since there were no other sources available to him (Jan Stíka, “Příspěvek k historii koncentračních táborů v Jiřetíně pod Jedlovou”).

The literature reflects the poor archival sources. The files of the St. Georgenthal city archive and the Council of Wandsdorf have only been partially preserved in SpkA-D. The main sources on this subcamp are the register books of the Flossenbürg concentration camp at AG-F, since the German investigation files of ZdL (held at BA-L), which often provide a rich source of material, have little to offer about crimes in the subcamps.

Jörg Skriebeleit
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

NOTES
4. BA-B, NS 4/FI-393/2.
5. AG-F, Häftlingsnummernbuch, Film Roll FC 1804.
6. Ibid.; and Film Roll 91378.

STULLN

The subcamp in Stulln, part of the present-day Bavarian district of Schwandorf in the southern Oberpfalz (Upper Palatinate), about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) south of Weiden, was probably established at the beginning of 1942 and existed for only six months. It is first mentioned in February-March 1942. Stulln was the first subcamp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp system, founded shortly after attempts within the SS to reorganize the employment of inmates. The camp

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was founded shortly after the creation of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA).

The prisoners were used in the construction of a fluorite mine, which was vital for the war effort. In 1941, the firm of Riedel & Co. had been commissioned with the erection of a plant to mine fluorite, the Vereinigte Aluminium-Werke Flusspatchemie. The plant was constructed close to the Flick mines at Haifhof and Maximilianshütte. Since the project was considered important for the war effort, Soviet and French prisoners of war (POWs), Czech forced laborers, and Soviet civilian prisoners were employed. They were kept in the Waldfrieden-Lager, a camp made of wooden barracks. In February 1942, about 200 Flossenbürg inmates were taken to the Waldfrieden camp in Stulln and kept in a separately fenced area. Most of the inmates were Vorbehanghaftlinge ("preventive custody" prisoners), while some were "asocials" and homosexuals; most of them were German, with only a few Polish, Soviet, or Czech. The camp was guarded by the SS.

Survivors report that the conditions in the camp were bearable. There was no mistreatment or killing of inmates, and the food was sufficient—especially since the prisoners received Schwerstarbeiterzulage (supplements for those performing the heaviest labor).

But apparently the camp was no economic success, and in October 1942, the 204 Stulln prisoners were transferred to the Flossenbürg subcamp in Dresden N 23, Döbelner Strasse 54, which was under the administration of the Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei (Waffen-SS and Police Building Administration). Here they constructed accommodations for an SS-Pionierbataillon. The Stulln camp is referred to for the last time on October 17, 1942.

**SOURCES**

Ulrich Fritz describes the Stulln subcamp in Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors*, vol. 4, *Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Ravensbrück* (Munich: Beck-Verlag, 2006), pp. 261–263. Toni Siegert mentions the Stulln camp in Landkreis Schandorf: *Das grosse Heimatbuch* (Regensburg: Handlung GmbH, 1987), p. 44. It is also referred to in Hans Brenner, "Der 'Arbeitseinsatz' der KZ-Häftlinge in den Ausenlager des KZ Flossenbürg—Ein Überblick," in *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur*, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen: Wallstein-Verlag, 1998), 2: 687. Rita Scharl wrote a history of the village of Stulln where she refers to the Nazi concentration camp prisoner work detail. On January 15, 1945, 500 women and girls were transferred to Venusberg from the Ravensbrück concentration camp. They received the Flossenbürg concentration camp registration numbers 61758 through 62257. In this transport were exclusively Jewish females from Hungary, many of whom were from the Budapest ghetto that was constructed after the occupation of Hungary by German troops. Former prisoner Magda W. testified in front of the Israeli investigating authorities: "I come from Budapest. . . . A ghetto was constructed in Budapest. I found myself in the Budapest ghetto until December 5, 1944. I was transported to Ravensbrück on that day. I was there for about six weeks and was afterwards transported to the Venusberg camp. Our transport . . . was the first transport to Venusberg. There were not yet any prisoners at the camp. Somewhat later—about six weeks later—a female transport came from Bergen-Belsen."

This second transport, also containing 500 women and girls, left from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, which had been declared a "holding camp," on February 26, 1945, and arrived at Venusberg on February 28, 1945. These women received Flossenbürg numbers from 62859 through 63357. In the second transport, in addition to Hungarians, there were also Jewish women from Poland, Greece, France, and Italy. The women and girls in the Venusberg camp, who now numbered 1,000, had the following composition, broken down by nationality: 680 Hungarians, 143 Poles, 103 Greeks, 19 French, 18 Dutch, 14 Italians, 7 Czechs, 7 Slovakians, 5 Germans, 2 Turks, and 1 Yugoslav; the nationality of 1 woman is unknown.

The composition of the prisoners broken down by year of birth was as follows: 19 born before 1900, 152 born between 1900 and 1909, 304 born between 1910 and 1919, 322 born between 1920 and 1924, 200 born between 1925 and 1930, and with no information on their birth year.
The women were kept in two large double barracks located in their own camp, which had been set up approximately 800 meters (875 yards) away from the factory, closed off with electrified barbed wire and watched over from guard towers.

Katharina S., also from Budapest and who had been deported to Ravensbrück in December 1944 and from there brought to Venusberg, testified about the changed conditions in the camp with the arrival of the second transport:

In Venusberg we arrived at a work camp. Here a clean, heated, and very attractive barrack awaited us. We worked in an airplane parts factory under comparatively good conditions. . . . The good life lasted for four weeks, until a transport. . . . from Bergen-Belsen arrived. . . . In the new transport there were also Jews deported from Hungary, primarily from upper Hungary. After their arrival our situation changed radically. The food became less and was very bad. The newly arrived SS personnel brought with them the camp rules from Bergen-Belsen. The barracks were overcrowded; there were lice and typhus fever. We stood at the machines from 6 o'clock in the mornings until 7 o'clock in the evenings, before and after roll call. The beatings and the torture also continued here. . . . The infirmary was originally housed in a block with twenty beds. After the typhus fever had spread more and more sick beds were needed. The bodies were put on the roll call square to be taken away.5

The second transport brought into the Venusberg camp the typhus epidemic from Bergen-Belsen, which at that time was raging there. This is also shown in the mortality rate proportions. While only 3 women died from the first transport before the second arrived, at least 43 women died at Venusberg camp from February 28 until April 14, 1945. After an early fatality was buried in the graveyard of the neighboring town of Herold, the priest's offices of other towns refused to allow dead prisoners to be buried in their graveyards. Thus, the SS camp leadership allowed the dead to be buried in an anti-aircraft slit trench, located in a plot of forest nearby.6 Not all of these fatalities were victims of typhus. Abuses by the SS guard personnel and several of the SS-Aufseherinnen (women guard auxiliaries), who possibly came with the prisoners from Auschwitz to Bergen-Belsen and from there to Venusberg, resulted in death for the abused prisoners. Magda W. testified:

I remember a young SS man, who I saw every day in the factory. He was always with our shift. . . . There he inspected our work; he was possibly responsible for our work. He was always in SS uniform. . . . He was especially cruel. If our work did not please him he beat in such a way that there were cases of his victims dying after a few days as a result of his abuse. . . . Even more trouble than the SS men were the SS Aufseherinnen. They were always with us and thus their cruelty was much more difficult to take. I remember well the commandant of the women—the Oberaufseherin. . . . She was terribly cruel, beat without mercy, especially during roll call. I saw cases where a woman who had been beaten by her fell on to the roll call square and remained lying on the ground without movement or sound. After roll call we went back into the barracks, but we did not see the abused women again. We were told that they died.7

The female prisoners gave some of these SS-Aufseherinnen descriptive nicknames for their brutal behavior: “The Red War”—due to the red hair color of the Aufseherin Margarete H.; or “Riding Whip Leni” to the Aufseherin Leni St. Even German workers of the Venus factory stated in their questionings: “I saw how H. [an Aufseherin] beat with her hand prisoners who sat a little from exhaustion at work.” This H., under the name “The Red War,” was especially feared among the prisoners. When Aufseherin O. punished a prisoner, she went into the lavatory with the subject.

The Aufseherin C. once said that if it came to a putsch, another 10 must die before her, and in addition she had already sought out well-fitting prisoners’ clothes that she then wanted to slip into.8

The female prisoners, who were exhausted from undernourishment, often had sudden feelings of weakness during the 12-hour shifts. Accidents happened. Katharina S. reported on one: “In the factory, the woman who worked next to me fell against the drill machine, her hair got caught, and a tuft, including hair, was ripped out. In addition, she was severely injured on her arm and other parts. The drill machine was also broken. The Aufseherin called her to account, how could she dare to break the drill machine, and gave the poor woman another slap on the face.”9

Camp leader (Lagerführer) SS-Oberscharführer Dücker, SS-Oberaufseherin Anny Herzog, and SS-Scharführer Diecke (who put pressure on another Aufseherin who did not behave toward the prisoners as inhumanely as those with the second transport, described as thugs by the prisoners) carried responsibility for the crimes that took place at the Venusberg camp; 2 SS-Unterführer and 18 SS guards, among whom, according to testimony by Hungarian female prisoners, were several German SS men from Hungary, were subordinate to Dücker.

Some 20 SS-Aufseherinnen were subordinate to the SS-Oberaufseherin.10 Part of the responsibility for the abuse of the prisoners also rests with the director of the Junkers factory branch, Dr. Düwell, who had to provide food for the prisoners and who was conscious of the fact that the rations were completely insufficient in light of the difficult work the women had to perform. In order to hush up the crimes, he had the barracks burned down immediately after the women had marched away. On April 14, 1945, the women were evacuated. The transport in overcrowded train cars initially led
through the Erzgebirge Mountains to Blatno, where it was joined up with the evacuation transport of the Freiberg sub-camp detail, then was sent via Pilsen—Planá to Tachov. As the Flossenbürg main camp had already been evacuated by this time, the travel direction was changed, and the transport was rerouted via Klatovy—Strakonice—Ceské Budejovice to Mauthausen, where it arrived on April 29, 1945. The two-week journey claimed many victims. This comes from the reports of the survivors:

The evacuation of the Venusberg camp was somewhat atrocious. As the Russians approached, we were loaded into cattle cars and taken away. It was the middle of April 1945. We were under way approximately two weeks, in closed cars without air, food, and water. The SS crew who guarded us was totally wild—we were beaten and whipped. The women died like flies; we rode together with the bodies. Half died on the way. At Venusberg around one hundred women were from Budapest. No more than twenty to twenty-five returned home. Who didn't die on the way arrived at Mauthausen sick with typhus. Many died from it at Mauthausen.11

Former prisoner Marta S. also testified about the evacuation:

In the middle of April 1945, we were transported in cars from the Venusberg camp to Mauthausen. In the car in which I found myself there were 120 of us. We didn't receive anything to eat or drink. The train stopped twice en route in order to throw the bodies of those who died in the cars out onto the embankment. As I remember, twenty-eight in our car stayed alive; all of the others died. In the other cars, the proportion of those who died or stayed alive was also similar. I emphasize that our car was a long one; there were also shorter cars in the train. The Mauthausen camp was liberated by American troops on May 5, 1945. In the summer of 1945 I returned to Hungary.12

How many women from the Venusberg subcamp arrived at Mauthausen alive and survived has not been determined. In contrast to other female camps, Venusberg belongs to those camps in which a very large percentage of the inmates perished.

**NOTES**

7. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 76/68, Bd. 1, p. 164, testimony by Magda W.
8. AST-ZP, Akte KZ-Kommando Venusberg; Aussage der Arbeiterin der Zahnradabteilung der Venuswerke, Johanna M. bei ihrer Zeugenvernehmung im August 1945.
9. YVA, Doc. 03/1040, testimony by Katharina S.
11. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 76/68, Bd. 1, p. 165, testimony by Magda W.

**WILISCHTHAL**

The Deutsche Kühl- und Kraftmaschinen GmbH (DKK) Scharfenstein, a subsidiary of the vehicle production company Auto Union AG Chemnitz, decided in December 1943 to spin off its munitions and weapons production and develop them into production branches with several times the production capacity. In addition to building a factory in Oederan for the production of 2cm shells for the air force, and subsequently another factory in Brand-Erhisdorf, a manufacturing plant for the (MG) 151 machine gun in Wilischthal was also expanded and outfitted.1

After a previous failure, a new company was founded on October 4, 1944, with the goal of unifying the management and financing of these independent munitions and weapons manufacturing operations.2 As early as October 3, 1944, the Armaments Inspectorate IVa of the Reich Ministry for Armaments and War Production had stipulated that the DKK Scharfenstein use a code name for the yet-to-be-founded company, whose new production branches were taking over
the munitions and weapons production. The memo reads: “In agreement with the Secret State Police, from a defense point of view, there exist no objections against the code name Agri-
cola GmbH, which you suggested for this purpose.”

In light of the precarious labor situation, to secure the allo-
ocation of concentration camp prisoners for labor, and with a
view to expanding production, already in the early summer of
1944 DKK had made contact with the SS-Business Adminis-
tration Main Office (VVHA). This is evident from a letter
dated June 24, 1944, to SS-Standartenführer Gerhard Mau-
rer, who, as head of Department D II, was responsible for
work assignments of concentration camp prisoners. Later, on
August 8–9, 1944, negotiations took place in Flossenbürg be-
tween the DKK representative and the camp commandant.
The following is mentioned in the travel report about the re-
quest for prisoners for Wilischthal: “At the command head-
quarters Flossenbürg there are two additional orders: 500
prisoners Wilischthal, 500 prisoners Scharfenstein. Wilisch-
thal could be discussed with Herr Sturmbahnführer Koegel,
while Scharfenstein was unknown.”

After extending a factory building to serve as prisoner
housing, which DKK had purchased from the formerly
Jewish-owned textile factory Mafrasa, and after an inspection
by an SS leader of the Flossenbürg command had taken place,
100 women and girls from Auschwitz initially arrived at
Wilischthal on October 30, 1944. Former Austrian female
prisoner Susi K. testified, at her questioning in front of Ger-
am consular officers in Canada: “On October 27 I was
brought from Auschwitz to the Wilischthal subcamp. . . . We
were housed in a large wooden barrack, which . . . was divided
into two subdivisions. In each of these subdivisions approxi-
mately 150 prisoners were housed. During the week it was not
allowed for one group to make contact with the other group.
The factory was about 100 meters [328 feet] away from the
housing.”

These women received the Flossenbürg registration num-
bers from 58752 through 58833.

On November 22, 1944, the second transport of 200
women and girls from Auschwitz was registered for the Wi-
lishthaler subcamp by the Flossenbürg concentration camp.
These women received the subsequent registration numbers
58854 through 59052.

Polish Jew Anna Z. belonged to this second transport. She
testified about her long, dreadful journey to Wilischthal:

I was in the SS slave labor camp at Przemysl from
1942 until 1944. There I was the witness of several
killing crimes. The camp leader’s name was
Schwambberger, and he, like other SS members,
shot prisoners before my eyes. . . . Around January
1944 I was . . . brought to the Płaszów concentration
camp. The camp leader was an SS person named Göth. I saw
how he several times shot prisoners for
no apparent reason. . . . In July or August 1944 I was
brought to the Auschwitz concentration camp and
from there to the Birkenau subcamp. I was a witness
to selections there, which Dr. Mengele carried
out. . . . I think that I was brought to the Wilischthal
subcamp in November or at the beginning of De-
cember 1944.7

The 134 Polish women comprised most of the subcamp
prisoners, followed by 74 Hungarians; 37 Italians, among
whom were many from the island of Rhodes; 19 Belgians; 12
French; 11 Czechs; 7 Germans; 7 Dutch; and 1 Yugoslavian.
Broken down by year of birth: 5 born before 1900, 40 born
between 1900 and 1909, 93 born between 1910 and 1919, 110
born between 1920 and 1924, 53 born between 1925 and 1930,
and 1 born after 1930.

Anna Z. testified about her work assignment in the Agri-
cola GmbH armaments factory: “Approximately twenty of the
three hundred female prisoners worked in the kitchen, among
them a Hungarian prisoner doctor. The rest of the staff
worked in two shifts, twelve hours each, in the factory. Most
of the prisoners had to work on a melting furnace; a smaller
number—about twenty women, respectively, including my-
self, worked on a workbench, where we had to put together
individual parts of submachine guns. Working with us were
Italian and French foreign workers, and as well as German
employees, for whom contact with us was forbidden.”9 Susi K.
included in her testimony: “I myself was originally put to
work on an annealing furnace. Later I was instructed to train
the female workers on the various machines for processing
iron parts, and to make those essential contacts with the Ger-
am master craftsmen that were necessary for work. . . . We
were twenty-five prisoners on the annealing furnace; the rest
of the shift worked in a factory hall located behind the
furnace.”

The command in the camp was held by SS-Oberaufseherin
Helene Klofik from Berlin, who used to work at the Osram
factory. Even a former female guard (Aufseherin) from the
Wilischthaler camp testified that the SS-Oberaufseherin was
an evil thug who punished the smallest offense. She also de-
manded from the Aufseherinnen strict action against the fe-
male prisoners. She herself was punished with 48 days’
detention in a cell because in the opinion of Klofik she was
too loyal to the women. Other “soft” Aufseherinnen were
transferred by the SS-Oberaufseherin to the Zschopau sub-
camp. When Klofik was absent, the other Aufseherinnen al-
lowed the women to sit together and sing.10 This was also
confirmed by a former female prisoner: “Among the prisoners
was an Italian singer, a former partner of Benjamino Gigli.
On Christmas Eve she sang ‘Ave Maria’ with a fantastic
voice; the barracks reverberated, and we all cried. The SS-
Oberaufseherin heard this, came in, and knocked out all of
her teeth so that she could not sing anymore.”11

The selfless commitment of the Hungarian doctor, who
also acted against the SS-Oberaufseherin, was unanimously
praised by all the female prisoners. Susi K. testified: “The
Oberaufseherin made it a game for herself to torment pris-
oners. I saw myself that she particularly raged against the Hun-
garian doctor, who cared for us in the infirmary.”12 A German

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resident, who could see into the factory courtyard from her apartment, also reported that the doctor, in a dispute with Klofik, brought to her attention that abusing the women prisoners led to a deterioration in their ability to work and thus to a reduction in production. Klofik was scared of that. After that the punishments on the beating block were stopped.\(^3\)

The guarding external to the camp was carried out by older SS guards, whose leader was an SS-Scharführer from Hungary by the name of Koos.

On April 15, 1945, the Wilischthal subcamp was closed down, and the women were evacuated in railroad transport cars. About this Susi K. added to her testimony: “We were packed into a freight car, about ninety prisoners each, and traveled around for about a week, without food being distributed to us and without having the opportunity to get out. I don’t know if all of the inhabitants of the freight car, in which I was kept, came through the journey alive. We only heard that on the way prisoners, who succeeded in escaping from other, open freight cars, were shot at. At Theresienstadt the Oberaufseherin handed us over to the local camp administration.”\(^4\)

The transport’s final station was Leitmeritz. The women from the Mittweida camp, who were also in the transport, remained there. The Jewish women from the Hainichen, Oederan, Wilischthal, and Zschopau camps had to go all the way by foot to Theresienstadt.

Since on April 13, 1945, the camp strength was reported at 299, while on April 21, at the arrival of the columns in the Theresienstadt ghetto, only 290 women were registered who declared to be from the Wilischthal detail, it may be that 9 women were victims of the evacuation transport.\(^5\) There exists unclear information about a fatality that supposedly happened at the Wilischthal camp. Some of the women from the Wilischthal camp died at Theresienstadt shortly after liberation on May 8, 1945.

### SOURCES


Relevant records may be found in SHStA-(D), Auto Union; NARA, Microfilm T-580; BA-L, ZdL, IV AR 3291/66, IV Ar-Z 204/75. Published witness testimony may be found in DÖW, ed., *Jüdische Schicksale: Berichte von Verfolgten* (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1992).

### NOTES

1. SHStA-(D), Auto Union, Nr. 3896, Studie über Ausgliederung der Munitionsfertigung von DKK und ihre Grundung als selbständige Gesellschaft.

2. SHStA-(D), Auto Union, Nr. 1030, Aktenvermerk über die Gründung der Agricola GmbH. Scharfenstein, October 5, 1944.

3. SHStA-(D), Auto Union, Nr. 1030, Schreiben Rü In IV a des RmfRuK an DKK GmbH. Scharfenstein, October 3, 1944.

4. AHM-O, Reisebericht des Vertreters von DKK Scharfenstein über den Besuch im K.L. Flossenbürg, August 8–9, 1944.


6. NARA, Microfilm T-580, Rolls 69–70.


8. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 204/75, Bd. 1, p. 163, testimony by Anna Z.


12. ZdL, IV 410 AR-Z 204/75, Bd. 1, p. 196, testimony by Susi K.


15. BA-B, Film 14 430, p. 1266.

### WOLKENBURG

Due to the constant danger of air raids, in 1943 the company Opta Radio AG Leipzig transferred its production sites into less-threatened areas. One of these factories was transferred to a weaving mill at Wolkenburg, which had been cleared out for this purpose. Due to a backlog of 109.1 million Reichsmark (RM) for radio equipment that existed on December 31, 1943, a need for expansion in production, and a severe lack of labor, the Opta company endeavored to receive workers from the ground radio equipment special committee. The company report to the board for the second half of 1944 read: “The personnel questions of the factory transferring have especially stood in the way of gaining additional capacity. It can, however, be fortunately reported that all of these problems can in the meantime be solved so that enough labor is available.”\(^6\)

Concentration camp prisoners were made available. On August 19, 1944, the first transport with 150 Sinti and Roma, recorded as “Gypsies” in SS documents, arrived at Wolkenburg.\(^2\) These women came by September 1, 1944, from the Ravensbrück concentration camp administration to that of Flossenbürg and received from the command of Flossenbürg the registration numbers from 50000 through 50149. The majority of these women (116) were German, in addition to whom there were 34 from seven different countries at the camp.\(^1\) On October 10, 1944, an additional 151 women were
brought from Auschwitz; they were allocated the registration numbers from 58142 through 58291. The number of prisoners at the subcamp increased on November 30, 1944, with a transport of 100 women from Bergen-Belsen. In this transport was Pole Genowefa K., who reported:

On 12.8.1944 my colleagues and I arrived at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. It was a mass transport with civilians after an armed uprising in Warsaw. . . . So began the terror, the fear, and the hunger. My long braids were cut off and I was shaved to the skin. It was terrible for us young girls. We slept on planks, where there were lice and bugs. The roll calls, which lasted several hours, were very strenuous. Then on 13.9.1944 the transport to Bergen-Belsen took place in overcrowded freight cars. At Bergen-Belsen the conditions were even worse, as we slept on the floor of the barracks, which had been scattered with shavings. For pillows we had our shoes. We lied so close that we could only turn around on an order. The rations were horrible. There were turnips, root vegetables, and fully-grown spinach with worms. There was very little bread. We were constantly hungry. We were brought to Wolkenburg in freight cars.3

The women on the transport from Bergen-Belsen received the Flossenbürg registration numbers from 59053 through 59152. Thus, the composition of the Wolkenburg subcamp was as follows: 206 Poles, 116 Germans, 43 Soviets, 7 Dutch, 5 Italians, 4 Yugoslavs, 3 Czechs, 2 Belgians, 2 French, 9 stateless people, and 5 without information. The women were accommodated on the top floor of the factory and in surrounding buildings. The grounds were fenced in. Although the escape possibilities were extremely limited, 3 women fled from the top floor by sliding down the rain gutter. They were apprehended again after a few days and received an awful beating.

The slave labor took place partly in the production of radio equipment, partly in transporting material. Pole Seweryna K. testified: “We worked in a factory on a floor, ten women. It was warmer there. Supervisors were women in uniform. My sister and other women (prisoners) worked on the transport. I don’t know what they did, but it was supposedly very difficult. One died from pneumonia. My friend and I worked on the inspection of radio apparatuses [radio equipment], others on assembly. The soldering was a dangerous work and bad for your health.”

The strength reports from Flossenbürg show that on January 31, 1945, 376 women were at Wolkenburg camp.6 On February 28, 1945, there were 348.7 If 10 women were sent back to the Ravensbrück concentration camp because they were pregnant, then 18 of the prisoners must have died by the end of February 1945. German civilian workers reported as eyewitnesses: “Many of them died. The bodies were removed in the night and substitutes were brought in for them. The last five of these martyrs, whose bodies could not be removed, are buried at the Wolkenburg cemetery; two at the graveyard wall and three near the chapel wall. Coffins were not available. Cement sacks had to serve as substitutes.”8

The strength report from March 31, 1945, still records 372 women at the camp.9 The same number was also reported for April 13, 1945, the day on which the evacuation began.10 A Sudeten German from Eger, Wilhelm Brusch, functioned as the camp leader (Lagerführer). Subordinate to him were 5 SS guards.11 The name of the SS-Oberaufseherin, who is depicted as a cruel thug by the subcamp survivors and as an “inhumane monster” by the German civilian workers, is unknown.12 Subordinate to her were 20 SS female guards (Aufseherinnen), some of whom were selected at the factory and engaged by the employment office, others who had come with the prisoners on the transports.11

On April 13, 1945, the women had to begin the evacuation march on foot. Genowefa K. reported:

On the first day we were led over fields. In the evening we went into freight cars and traveled the whole night. Early in the morning we continued by foot. Lying on the street were many dead men from groups who had gone before us. My sick sister could not go any further, but she was not beaten to death. At night we slept out in the open and we couldn’t wash ourselves. Once we slept in a barn, then again in the forest in a barrack. There we separated from my sister. My sister begged; I did not want to leave her alone. But it didn’t help. I also asked those who drove us, but to no avail. She was transported on by horse and car with other prisoners. I was sure that she would be shot. One always thinks the worst. That was, however, not the case.

Suddenly there was such a terrible bombardment that the earth quaked.14

The evacuation column was hit by an air raid of Allied forces at the train station in Weiden on April 17, 1945. During this bombardment many women succeeded in escaping, so that by the end of the raid, only 201 women were still counted. Attacked again from the air and driven out of the cars on the continuation of their journey, the women then camped in a plot of forest near the town of Irrenlohe in Kreis Schwandorf. As hardly any food was given during the evacuation of the camp, those who were arrested due to the denunciation of the local German residents were sentenced to death as “plunderers” by a court martial under SS-Obersturmführer Schippel and immediately shot. Their grave has not been found.15

With only 128 women left—following the escape of others and sorting out of the sick—the column continued its march to Dachau, where it arrived on April 27, 1945.16

Sources There are no published studies of the Wolkenburg camp. On the prisoners’ registration numbers, see Hans

The following archival sources are useful: BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 AR 3290/66; ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg; SStA-L, VEB-RFT-Wg (formerly Opta Radio AG).

NOTES
1. BA-B, Bank der Deutschen Luftfahrt, Nr. 252, p. 54.
6. ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg, Nr. 10, pp. 52–53
7. Ibid., pp. 70–71.
10. BA-B, Film 14430, p. 1266.
14. Genowefa K., report. Her sister Wanda K. had the Flossenbürg registration number 59091. She died on May 20, 1945, in the Cham hospital.

WÜRZBURG

The institutional roots of the Würzburg subcamp are in the development by the SS of its own medical service. Beginning in 1936, the SS, parallel to the Wehrmacht, began to develop its own system of hospitals, hospital sections, and convalescent homes. As a general rule, they were sections of already existing hospitals and clinics that were partly used and supported by the SS. After the beginning of the war in 1939, a multitude of additional hospitals and sections were opened that in each case were headed by SS leaders who were specialists in their respective fields. A neuropsychiatric observation station of the Waffen-SS was established in 1941 in Giessen for the head and brain injured and traumatized members of the SS, which in August 1941 was complemented by a department at the Würzburg University neurological clinic. Patients who required further treatment were transferred there. The address of the SS hospital section for the neurologically impaired at the Würzburg University Clinic was 15 Füchslein Strasse. That address is given as the site of the Würzburg subcamp by the register of detention sites of the International Tracing Service (ITS). The infamous euthanasia doctor Werner Heyde, SS-Sturmbannführer and professor for neurology and psychiatry at the University of Würzburg, became the head of this Waffen-SS Neurological-Psychiatric Observation Station in Würzburg. The date when the expansion of the SS hospital section in Würzburg began cannot be fixed definitively. On April 9, 1943, an order by the section of SS-Medical Operations in Department D of the SS-Main Command Office (Führungshauptamt, FHA) was issued to all SS hospitals to expand the SS hospital sections. However, it can be assumed that the decision to expand the Würzburg section had been taken before this order because by April 17, 1943, the first concentration camp prisoners had already been transferred to Würzburg as a construction detachment.

On the basis of his activity in the SS-Death’s Head Units and his earlier favors to his friend Theodor Eicke, since 1934 the Inspector of the Concentration Camps, Heyde enjoyed the best possible connections in the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA), which had to give permission for, and coordinate, the labor deployment of concentration camp prisoners. The SS-Hospital Administration and Heyde desperately needed labor. The replacement of urgently needed workers by concentration camp prisoners, in the view of the leaders of the SS hospital section and especially Heyde, was a logical consequence that also could be implemented quickly. After a formal review by the WHA of the necessity of the use of the labor deployment, a contingent of prisoners from the Flossenbürg concentration camp, in the district of the Higher-SS and Police Leader (HSSPF) of Main, was assigned to Heyde or, respectively, the hospital section in Würzburg.

In May 1943, there were 28 male prisoners from the Flossenbürg concentration camp in the Würzburg “labor camp.” Although the deployment of concentration camp prisoners at Füchslein Strasse was foreseen in April 1943, no facilities to accommodate concentration camp prisoners had been arranged. Therefore, a barracks in the so-called emergency jail at Fries Strasse was occupied by the 28 prisoners. The number of prisoners was increased to 58 by a transport that arrived between July 16 and 27.2 The Würzburg detachment had thus reached its maximum strength and was part of one of the smaller subcamps of the Flossenbürg concentration camp. A list of prisoners according to nationality and race from February 28, 1945, shows that there were 50 non-Jewish concentration camp prisoners in Würzburg, among them 2 Germans, a Yugoslav, a Greek, a Frenchman, 4 Czechs, 15 Soviets, and 26 Poles.

From a monthly roster of the “labor camp of the Flossenbürg concentration camp,” the observation is to be taken that “the SS Hospital section stands guard.”3 An Unterscharführer Marggraf signed a list of signatures of the Flossenbürg concentration camp’s detachment leaders from the year 1944 also as responsible for the Würzburg subcamp.4 However, he could not be identified by the investigating authorities after 1945. The Würzburg prisoners partly were assigned outside the clinic to extend a wall and for excavation work. In several witness
all these prisoners of the Würzburg subcamp survived. They concentration camp alive. This does not mean, however, that all 50 prisoners from Würzburg reached the Flossenbürg. From a roster of March 27, 1945, it can be seen that oners still living in the camp were moved back by rail to Flossenbürg. Würzburg was dissolved on March 22, 1945, and the 50 prisoners in the Würzburg city area. The subcamp in work in the area of the SS hospital administration but, in small labor detachments, for removing bombs and recovering damaged during the air raid on Würzburg on March 16, 1945. This pragmatic evaluation, considering the prevailing labor shortage everywhere, the small size of the detachment, the varying work assignments in Würzburg, and the possibility time and again of contacts with civilians made the Würzburg subcamp in retrospect more bearable in the prisoners’ remembrances. However, the prisoners were at all times aware that they were within the concentration camp system. They could face the return to Flossenbürg or another camp any day.

At least one prisoner tried to evade this always threatening danger by fleeing. This attempt ended with his murder. This is the only verifiable case of death of a prisoner in the Würzburg subcamp. However, in a report by an examiner of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) of March 1, 1947, the death of a second prisoner in Würzburg is mentioned, who is said to have died in the Julius Hospital in Würzburg. Existing documents cannot confirm or disprove this death. Nevertheless, the connection of at least one other death with the Würzburg subcamp is evident. On March 12, 1945, a 35-year-old Slovenian prisoner died in Flossenbürg who had been transferred back from Würzburg shortly before.

Parts of the Neurological Clinic and with them also the concentration camp prisoners’ accommodations were heavily damaged during the air raid on Würzburg on March 16, 1945. Now the prisoners were no longer employed for construction work in the area of the SS hospital administration but, in small labor detachments, for removing bombs and recovering dead bodies in the Würzburg city area. The subcamp in Würzburg was dissolved on March 22, 1945, and the 50 prisoners still living in the camp were moved back by rail to Flossenbürg. From a roster of March 27, 1945, it can be seen that all 50 prisoners from Würzburg reached the Flossenbürg concentration camp alive. This does not mean, however, that all these prisoners of the Würzburg subcamp survived. They were in the Flossenbürg concentration camp until the evacuation of the Flossenbürg camp began on April 16, 1945. The mention of different locations in the testimonies of the investigative proceedings allows the conclusion that most of these prisoners were driven south on the dissolution of the Flossenbürg concentration camp on April 20, 1945.

**SOURCES**

The history of the Würzburg camp has remained surprisingly unnoticed despite the comprehensively documented history of the air raids on Würzburg by Hans Oppelt, *Würzburger Chronik vom denkwürdigen Jahre 1943* (Würzburg, 1947); and by Max Domarus, *Der Untergang des alten Würzburg im Luftkrieg gegen die deutschen Großstädte* (Würzburg, 1985); and of the many aspects of National Socialist rule in the diocesan city, such as the work by Herbert Schultheis and Isaac E. Wahler, *Bilder und Akten der Gestapo Würzburg über die Judendeportation 1941–1943* (Bad Neustadt a.d. Saale, 1988). Also in the numerous investigations into the history of medicine during the Third Reich, the use of concentration camp prisoners in the construction detachments of SS hospital sections and the involvement of the euthanasia doctor Werner Heyde in the exploitation of prisoner labor for his personal benefit have not been explored. For these investigations, see Ernst Klee, *Was sie taten—Was sie wurden. Ärzte, Juristen und andere Beteiligte am Kranken- oder Judenmord* (Frankfurt am Main, 1980); Michael H. Kater, *Arzte als Hitlers Helfer* (Hamburg, 2000); and Hubert Fischer, *Der deutsche Sanitätsdienst 1921–1945: Organisation, Dokumente und persönliche Erfahrungen*, 5 vols. (Osnabrück, 1984), 2: 215–2235. A detailed study of this subcamp is printed in a publication of local history, *Mainfränkisches Jahrbuch*, written by this author in 2004 on the occasion of the thirteen-hundredth anniversary of the city of Würzburg.

In April 1967, an investigative procedure was begun relative to the Flossenbürg subcamp in Würzburg. As part of the criminal investigations, it was attempted to identify former prisoners and guards of the subcamp and to interrogate them as witnesses (ZdL, IV 410AR3285/66, available at BA-L). The files of these investigative proceedings provide the richest source about the Würzburg subcamp, which, however, cannot clarify its basic history without the consideration of other documents. On the basis of additional sources from the Sta-Wü, the results of the investigative proceedings can be supplemented, even refuted, concerning the crime of homicide that was excluded by the examiners (Sta-Wü, Gestapostelle Würzburg 5814 and 15825). There are also scattered documents on the subcamp in Würzburg in the AG-F, here, above all, on the camp prisoners. Altogether, though, the archival records are unsatisfactory so that many questions—precisely those that refer to details of local history, the exact location of the prisoner accommodations, and labor deployment—must remain open.

Jörg Skriebelit
trans. Stephen Pallavicini

**NOTES**

1. BA-B, DOK/K 183/11.
2. BA-B, DOK/K 183/11, Strength Reports, July 28, 1943; the first is from July 16 and mentions 28 prisoners in Würzburg.
Among them . . . there was a certain friendliness. There was, for example, a German head supervisor in the factory. He was a good guy. I got sick with typhus. As soon as one was sick it meant death. My brother brought me food. Then this man came in and said I should come and sit behind the electric furnace. He took a chair and sat me down. There I sat for several days. He did not want to send me back to work. He came by regularly and threw me a cigarette, which I gave to my brother who then exchanged it for food. He told me: "the war will pass, and if you remain healthy you can survive."³⁴

On October 22, 1944, additional prisoners came from the Flossenbürg main camp, who were followed on November 7, 1944, by a larger transport with over 300 prisoners from the Mauthausen concentration camp, who received the registration numbers of the series 35000 through 36000. Frenchman Paul P. was among these prisoners. He was imprisoned in February 1941 as a member of the French resistance movement, delivered to Mauthausen, and employed at the Passau II subcamp as an auto metalworker. At the end of October 1944, the SS closed this subcamp and transported the prisoners to Zschachwitz. He writes: "At MIAG I then worked in production, at first on tool construction. There I did an apprenticeship with sharp band saws and circular saws, and I also worked on the emery machines." Later he went to the electric furnace. "After an attempted escape I, although I was not involved, was taken hostage in order to be shot. After the SS had again apprehended the escapees they shot them and put the coffins, from which blood flowed, on the soup vat and ordered [the prisoners] to eat the soup."³⁵

With smaller prisoner transports from the Flossenbürg main camp on December 6, 1944, and from Auschwitz on December 8, 1944, the number of prisoners grew to nearly 1,000 by the end of the year 1944. On January 31, 1945, there were 985 prisoners at the camp, and by February 28, this number had sunk to 949 due to the increasing number of fatalities. By March 31, 1945, the number was reduced to 805 due to many fatalities and also to a massive escape of 20 Russian prisoners. According to the strength report from April 13, 1945, there were 794 prisoners on that day.⁴

Altogether, according to a list found in the company archive of the former nationally owned enterprise (Volkseigener
Betrieb, VEB) Mühlenbau Dresden-Zschachwitz, 1,097 prisoners passed through the Zschachwitz subcamp, of whom 150 lost their lives there. Prisoners unable to work who were deported to Bergen-Belsen and to the Flossenbürg main camp usually died there after a short time.

About the conditions at Zschachwitz camp that produced these victims, there are also, in addition to reports of surviving prisoners, eyewitness accounts of German workers, like the juvenile employee who was then employed at MIAG:

A picture of horror offered itself to our eyes. Emaciated, usually sick people, dressed in striped overalls, cap, and wooden clogs, stood there intimidated by the SS guards. . . . It was January, outside it was ice cold. The workrooms were also very cold. There was no winter clothing for the prisoners. The thin suit was the day and night clothing for every season. One prisoner got it bad when he tried to put empty cement bags underneath his clothing as heat protection. A Kapo who saw this ripped the clothes from his body and wrote him up. “Oh, that [is] not good,” said another prisoner to me. “When written up, then two days without food!”9 Whoever wanted a second helping from what food remained had to take into account a beating by an SS guard armed with a truncheon. Even if some of the colleagues, who had nothing in common with the fascists, once hid pieces of bread or apples at certain places, for the prisoners this was only a drop in the bucket. 7

Paul P. also discussed the conditions at Zschachwitz camp: “Food was a soup at midday and a piece of bread and a small slab of margarine in the evening. For clothes I had a vest, striped pants and a shirt; that was it, no socks, no sweater on the body. I froze and was hungry, but I cannot continue to describe all of this to you.”8

During the bombing of Dresden, the MIAG factory also received hits. The accommodation of the prisoners on the top floor of the loading hall, particularly near the important train line to Prague, thus proved to be a deadly plan. Paul P. said: “The stairwell was not so spacious that all prisoners could get down fast enough during an air raid. There was also a bombardment. Two firebombs hit approximately 25 meters [82 feet] away from me. The fire from the bombs had caught the outside of the factory on the Dresden side. Panic resulted, in which we also had victims, because all the prisoners wanted to go down.”9 Julius Eisenstein also discusses these life-endangering accommodations and its effects. He said that a direct hit on the factory during an air raid at the beginning of 1945 led people to run and search for cover. One of the Eisenstein brothers was trampled in the crowd. “We saw him the next morning dead on the floor. I forced my way on to a pile of people and lost my shoes. My feet were stuck in clay and people were lying on me. We ran out on the street, but two hours later we went back. Why didn’t we continue? It was dark and we were in Germany.”10

The crimes committed at the Zschachwitz camp were primarily the responsibility of the camp leader, SS-Hauptscharführer Marks, as well as 2 other SS-Unterführer and 38 SS guards who were subordinate to him. 11 Former Polish prisoner Aron St. testified before investigating authorities in the United States: “The awful camp commandant . . . often beat us. He forced us, for example, to stand half the night without food after the difficult workday and even to do calisthenics. No reason was given. . . . At Zschachwitz many prisoners died. They died from hunger and from the whippings. . . . Prisoners were often beaten, and in fact from this SS-Scharführer, the camp commandant.”12 Johann Kübler, who before his Zschachwitz function was infamous as the Rapportführer at the Flossenbürg main camp, was Marks’s successor until the camp was closed and is responsible for the victims at the end of the camp’s existence and on the evacuation march. He was tried after the war and sentenced for the crimes for which he was responsible.

Even in the last months of the war, the manufacturing of V-2 (vengeance weapon) missile parts was begun at the MIAG factory, which ran under the code name “Salamander Production.”

As material deliveries stagnated due to the destruction of the railway network and thus limited production, 200 prisoners were transported to Leitmeritz on April 14, 1945.13 On April 26, the SS permanently closed the Zschachwitz subcamp. Barbed-wire fencing and guard towers were torn down, and incriminating files were burned in the factory courtyard. The still remaining prisoners had to join the evacuation march, which claimed numerous victims. Eisenstein said: “During the confusion of the last war months the tank factories were closed. We were all brought out and had to begin marching. . . . We marched for three nights and four days and slept in holes. We only had wooden clogs with no socks. Our feet were bloody. Who couldn’t go any further was shot.”14

For most of the prisoners the march ended at the Leitmeritz subcamp. The arrival of the transport with 200 prisoners was registered there on April 14, 1945. The Jewish men on the evacuation march from Zschachwitz were passed on from Leitmeritz to the Theresienstadt ghetto, where they finally reached freedom on May 5, 1945, as the SS fled from the approaching Soviet Army.

**SOURCES** There are no published studies of the Zschachwitz camp. Some information on the arrival of the Zschachwitz survivors at Leitmeritz may be found in Miroslava Benešová, “Konzentrační tábor v Litoměřicích a jeho věznové,” in Koncentrační Tábory Litoměřice. Průspěvky z mezinárodní konference v Terezíně, konané 15.–17. listopadu 1994 (Terezín, 1995), appendix, table 1, p. 24. Marek Poloncarz’s article, “Die Evakuierungstransporte nach Theresienstadt (April–Mai 1945),” TSD (1999): 255, claims that only 2 prisoners from the Zschachwitz subcamp were registered on their arrival at the Theresienstadt ghetto; this claim does not correspond to the facts. Around 300 to 320 prisoners of the Zschachwitz subcamp were evacuated to Theresienstadt via Leitmeritz. An extensive report on Zschachwitz survivor Julius Eisenstein is

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**ZSCHACHWITZ** (1999): 255, claims that only 2 prisoners from the Zschachwitz subcamp were registered on their arrival at the Theresienstadt ghetto; this claim does not correspond to the facts. Around 300 to 320 prisoners of the Zschachwitz subcamp were evacuated to Theresienstadt via Leitmeritz. An extensive report on Zschachwitz survivor Julius Eisenstein is

Relevant records may be found in BA-L, ZdL, IV 410 AR 3289/66, IV 410 AR-Z 152/76; ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg; Ba-VEB-Mü-DZ (Current location unknown); AG-T; and AK-IPN.

**NOTES**


4. Ibid.


9. Ibid., p. 31.


**ZSCHOPAU**

The Mitteldeutschen Motorenwerke Taucha (MIMO), a subsidiary of Auto Union AG, had relocated part of its aircraft engine production to the Dampf Kraft Wagen (Steam-driven car, DKW) motorcycle plant in Zschopau. Like many other factories of Auto Union, MIMO also received a detachment of prisoner workers. Since the technical director of Auto Union, William Werner, who as head of the Main Committee on Aircraft Engine Production Sites, first in the Fighter Staff Office and then also in the Armaments Staff Office, was the man responsible for planning the means of production, worked closely together with the SS leaders Hans Kammler and Gerhard Maurer, the deployment of concentration camp prisoners to the Auto Union factories can certainly be ascribed to this relationship.

On November 18, 1944, 50 women, and on November 22, 1944, 450 women and girls, were sent on a march from Auschwitz II-Birkenau to Zschopau. On their arrival in Zschopau, they were assigned Flossenbürg registration numbers between 60857 and 61356. The breakdown according to nationalities in the detachment was as follows: 294 Hungarians, 137 Poles, 22 French, 11 Slovaks, 8 Italians, 7 Greeks, 7 Dutch, 5 Belgians, 4 Yugoslavs, 3 Germans, and 2 Czechs.

Regarding the transport to Zschopau, former Hungarian female inmate Dora J. gave the following testimony to the Israeli investigative authorities:

On May 3, 1944, I was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau on the first transport from Máramaros Sziget. We were selected immediately on arrival—I lost my parents at that time. I was brought into the Birkenau camp, section A, and after several weeks the number A-7728 was tattooed onto my forearm. I was deployed on an outside work detail and worked on road construction and on a stretch of railroad. In about October 1944, I smuggled myself into a specially selected group destined for a subcamp and I was taken to Zschopau with this group, which numbered about five hundred souls. At the beginning we were quartered in a school building, and then we moved into the factory building in which we were working, and we lived on the first floor. Initially, when we were sleeping outside the factory, we went into the factory on foot. . . . The company was called Auto Union; I was making small metal parts.

Concerning the accommodation and living conditions in the camp, the testimony of the Polish woman Ester S. gives a rough picture:

In Zschopau we arrived in a large factory, where initially we had to sleep on straw on the floor. Here there was for the first time something to eat again, that is, coffee, some bread, and for lunch, a cereal soup. . . . When we moved into the factory building it was empty. After a few days, bunk-beds were erected in the building for us, on which we then slept. The roughly five hundred exclusively female prisoners were divided into a day shift and a night shift. . . . I was assigned to service in the quarters, doling out the food and cleaning both the large room where the prisoners slept and also the smaller rooms, in which the uniformed female guards were accommodated. . . . We were not permitted to leave the factory building. Therefore, I cannot say precisely whether the building was located in a larger fenced-in camp. But I believe that I recall that the camp consisted only of the factory building itself. On account of a serious tooth infection, I was taken by an SS guard through Zschopau to another factory, where women were also being held prisoner. . . . There the three teeth were pulled out using a simple pair of pliers, by an inmate who was in charge of the sick quarters there.
The work of the women was organized in 12-hour shifts for the production of aircraft engine parts. Master craftsmen and foremen, made available from the DKW motorcycle factory belonging to MIMO, trained the women on the machines. On this, Dora J. comments in her testimony: “In the factory we were divided into many groups. I remember the groups Hartwig and Mai, which were named after the respective foremen. I belonged to craftsman Hartwig’s group. During the work hours, the SS-female guards [Aufseherinnen] were in the factory workshops.”1 Hungarian woman Berta B. gave testimony regarding the working conditions, which indicate that the female prisoners did not receive any protective clothing or goggles: “As I already said, I mainly had to produce screws and due to the bright light and the oil, which spurred into my eyes, I got a serious eye infection. I was in great pain for a week and could hardly see, but I didn’t dare to say anything. Then a miracle occurred. Another woman complained on my behalf and instead of something happening to me, I was taken under escort by a female guard to an eye doctor in Leipzig and had to lie down for three months with my eyes bandaged. I never returned to the machines.”2

On the relationship of the German workers and employees with the Jewish women and girls, Hungarian Ilona Ormos said the following, “When I once asked a German colleague for a needle and thread in order to make necessary repairs to my ragged clothes, he replied: ‘You get nothing from me on principle!’ Acting on just such a principle, the then works’ doctor refused to treat a female workmate [prisoner] who had an accident on a milling machine.”3 But Ormos also described that at Easter in 1945 the women prisoners found little packages with cookies hidden at their workstations, which had pleased her workmates very much at that time: “It was a black dough with a little bit of sugar on top, but for us it was a sign that at Easter in 1945 the women prisoners found little packs.”4

On February 13, 1945, 497 women were deported in the camp, because she was pregnant. For example, she secretly gave me socks and food. I know that other female SS guards also did things for the prisoners, as did some of the factory workers too.5

Unanimously, all survivors testify to the hunger, which tortured them constantly. Thanks to the completely insufficient diet, the bodily strength of the women and girls was increasingly drained away. That was also the reason for the five deaths that took place in the Zschopau camp. “The only deaths which I experienced in Zschopau were caused by hunger and exhaustion. We then had to bury these prisoners, after they had been wrapped in paper towels. Whether there were any deportations from Zschopau, I don’t know, apart from one case, in which two young women from Zschopau were sent to Auschwitz.”6 SS documents do not contain information on this. However, one Polish woman was sent to Ravensbrück because she was pregnant.

As a result, the numerical strength of the work details only declined a little. On January 31, 1945, 497 women were reported in the camp,7 and on March 31, there were still 495.8 On the day before its evacuation, the concentration camp in Flossenbürg registered 494 women for the subcamp in Zschopau.9

On the camp commandants, the camp guards, and the female SS guards, there are the following accounts by survivors: “The senior commandant was an older Oberscharführer of medium height, who was friendly toward us. The difference to Auschwitz can scarcely be described. This man was replaced later by a younger, tall SS man, who often beat us and directed terrible swear words at us.”10 The female prisoners gave him the nickname “Hitler.” Irene G., who went to the United States after her liberation, testified:

I saw the camp commandant every day. I cannot say anything negative about him. I can recall the following names of female SS guards: Hilda. Hilda was mean; she beat up prisoners with her hands and her feet. Erika was the name of the senior guard. . . . There was also a woman there, whom we called “Madame Appell” she was not malevolent, but a stickler for discipline. She often called us out on parade and made us stand in rows for a long time. This is what earned her the nickname, which we gave her. . . . I would especially like to mention, however, another guard named Frieda H. . . . She had clearly taken me into her heart and did me favors wherever she could. For example, she secretly gave me socks and food. I know that other female SS guards also did things for the prisoners, as did some of the factory workers too.11

The camp commandant was initially SS-Oberscharführer Happel; the senior SS guard was Traude Stein.12 Ten SS guards and 20 female SS guards guarded the women prisoners.13 “Two Ukrainian SS guards were also in the camp. They wore black SS uniforms and were nasty sadists. They were brutal and primitive people.”14

On April 14, 1945, the subcamp was dissolved and the women evacuated by train. During the train journey, seven women managed to escape from the transport. Frenchwoman Odette Spingarn said of this escape:

At 6 o’clock we had to gather in the courtyard. Everyone had a blanket and a piece of bread. It was a strange farewell accompanied by screams and blows. The French prisoners of war, who work on the lower floor of the factory, push themselves together into one corner of the courtyard. They have to watch everything—powerless and confused. . . . We are crowded together into the last wagon of the train, we—that is, 120 women. Somebody succeeded in unscrewing the plate in front of the window, so that we could get some air. And then there was suddenly the thought, which took root among our little band of Belgian and French women, to which the Italian, Bianca, also belonged: Escape! I have to move through the whole length of the wagon, during which I climb over the squashed and cowering bodies of my fellow prisoners, who don’t understand why I am seeking another spot. They are squatting there in their misery and I am disturbing them! I make slow progress. At the time I am thinking that with each turn of the train’s wheels I am getting further away. Soon I want to jump.
Finally I get to grab the window opening—through, I jump. The Seventh! Before I jumped, I shouted to my workmates: “Good-bye, my dears!” They had formed a ladder, in order to help me to squeeze through the small window opening in the cattle car. The train rolled on slowly through the night.\(^{17}\)

Spingarn, like Italian Bianca R. and Hungarian Alice, went back to Zschopau. French prisoners of war, whose help they could rely upon, assisted them in finding a place where they remained hidden until May 8, 1945.

The evacuation transport arrived in the Theresienstadt ghetto on April 21, 1945. On their arrival in the ghetto, 457 women who had belonged to the Zschopau subcamp were registered.

**NOTES**

4. Ibid., p. 233, testimony of Dora J.
5. Ibid., p. 138, testimony of Berta B. (number 61010).
7. Ibid.
10. Ibid., pp. 86–87.
11. BA-B, Film 14 430, p. 1266, Strength report of April 13, 1945.
13. Ibid., Bd. 1, p. 269, testimony of Irene W. (number 61020).
14. ITS, Hist. Abt., Flossenbürg, Nr. 3, Letter from the commandant’s office of KZ-Flossenbürg to the head of the Kommando in Zschopau, December 28, 1944, re.: appointment of senior female SS guard.
15. Ibid., Nr. 10, pp. 86–87.

**ZWICKAU**

On September 13, 1944, the subcamp in the Horch factory, Zwickau, was established with the transport of 210 prisoners there from the Flossenbürg concentration camp. Due to the successive arrival of additional prisoner transports, the prison population of the subcamp had expanded by the end of 1944 to 898.\(^{1}\) Escapes, deaths, and the return to the Flossenbürg main camp of prisoners who were sick or incapable of work reduced the number of prisoners to 861 by January 31, 1945.\(^{2}\) The addition of prisoners to the subcamp, in spite of many deaths in February, had brought the camp strength to 966 prisoners by February 28, 1945.\(^{3}\) The return to Flossenbürg of a transport of nearly 200 prisoners suffering from tuberculosis and further deaths at the Zwickau camp reduced its numerical strength to 727 by March 31, 1945.\(^{4}\) Increasing numbers of deaths saw the camp strength decline further to 688 prisoners by April 13, 1945.\(^{5}\) Therefore, well over 1,000 prisoners passed through this camp in total.

According to their nationality, the prisoners in the Zwickau subcamp broke down in the following way on February 28, 1945; the national composition had accordingly changed by March 31, 1945:\(^{6}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>February 28, 1945</th>
<th>March 31, 1945</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germans</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarians</td>
<td>61 (58 Jews)</td>
<td>47 (47 Jews)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italians</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgians</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechs</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croats</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgarians</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanians</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spaniards</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 (1 Jew)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovaks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poles</td>
<td>374 (including 29 Jews)</td>
<td>263 (15 Jews)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{1}\) Hans Brenner, trans. Martin Dean

**ENCyclopedia Of CAMPS And GHettos, 1933–1945**
The prisoners were accommodated in a barracks camp about 100 meters (328 feet) from the factory, which appeared to be secured against escape attempts by an electrified fence and towers containing guards armed with machine guns. Nevertheless, a few escapes were attempted in the autumn of 1944. This can be presumed from a report by the factory management to those engaged at the works: “In response to the escape attempt made by individual prisoners during the night shift, it must be observed how immediately a large number of workers gathered in order to satisfy their curiosity by watching these events. . . . We therefore bring it forcefully to the attention of our workers, that the guards have strict instructions to shoot immediately at the prisoners in the event of escape attempts or similar occurrences.”

An attempt by Soviet prisoners to escape from the camp, using a tunnel dug from an empty barrack building, was foiled on the planned day of escape, as they were betrayed by other prisoners. The camp commandant had 23 prisoners shot immediately, who were discovered during the escape attempt or arrested as co-conspirators due to denunciations. In the protocol of the trial against camp commandant SS-Unterscharführer Müsch and others, the following can also be found on these events:

At the end of February or the beginning of March 1945, a group of prisoners planned an escape attempt from the camp. For this purpose the prisoners had made a hole, fifty centimeters by fifty centimeters [about 20 by 20 inches] in the floorboards of their living barracks and from there dug a tunnel. . . . On the night before, the accused was informed by other prisoners of the intended breakout. During the night he entered the dark barracks armed with a pistol and accompanied by armed SS men. The prisoners were in the subterranean tunnel when he and the guards disturbed them. . . . The accused shone his flashlight into the tunnel and demanded that the prisoners come out, assuring them that nothing would happen to them. When they did not obey his request he threatened that if they didn’t comply he would use his weapon. Then the prisoners did come forward. At this moment, the accused gave the SS man Welantschütz the order to fire into the tunnel with his machine pistol. Welantschütz obeyed this order and killed all the prisoners who participated in the escape.

Another SS-Unterscharführer, Schragner, also took part alternately with Welantschütz in this cowardly murder. Müsch was sentenced to four years and six months in prison.

The completely inadequate food rations given to the prisoners and the exhaustion of their bodily strength contributed to the outbreak of diseases, such as tuberculosis, and were the main causes of many deaths. On April 2, 1945, alone the strength report of the Flossenbürg concentration camp reports 28 deaths for the Zwickau subcamp.

Indicative of the way hunger and the search for something edible dominated the thoughts of the prisoners is one passage in the testimony of a Polish Jew:

On arrival back in the camp quarters in the evening I went straight to my friend Salzmann and said to him: “Salzmann, today God smiled on me and I have something for you.” I took out a few turnip peelings and gave them to him. “Breitowicz,” he said, “for your good heart, that you have, I will ask God that you survive the war. God will certainly listen to me.”

That was the first happy night in Zwickau . . . Several more terrible days went by. It was said, they need people to go for cinders. I reported with several other colleagues and we went to get cinders with little carts. For this work we were supposed to receive an extra half-liter [two cups] of soup. In the factory, from which we picked up the cinders, there were many foreign workers. They saw that we were weakened by hunger.

Since the inhuman treatment of the concentration camp prisoners was not concealed from the German workers, above all non-Nazi-leaning Horch workers made efforts to help the prisoners: “Paul Unger made contact with the Dutch forced laborers. His wife obtained food, which the work-mates distributed to the concentration camp prisoners via the Dutchmen. These people worked in the high building, which was surrounded by barbed wire and strictly guarded by armed SS. One could only enter with a special pass, which only a few people received. The contact person for the Dutch was the resistance fighter van Groth. When the Gestapo succeeded in infiltrating a snitch into the group, it was revealed.”

The bill of demand issued by the Flossenbürg concentration camp to the Horch factory Zwickau charging them 115,038 Reichsmark (RM) for the “rental of the prisoners” also includes a deduction of 19,194 RM in favor of the Auto Union company for prisoner food supplied. This deduction for the “hunger rations” supplied by the factory is evidence of the shared responsibility of the company for the murderous living conditions that prevailed in the Zwickau subcamp.

The miserable condition in which the prisoners found themselves, had to be conceded even by the factory management, as it was brought to their attention by the workers:

[O]n the part of the company’s employees an increasing number of complaints have been received about the dirtiness of the prisoners being so bad that one can already speak of a smell that is simply unbearable for a longer period of time. . . . [A]ccording to our view the main cause for this complaint is firstly the lack of washing soap and on the other hand also to a great extent the lack of underwear and clothes to change into. . . . Daily body washing must
The prisoners were driven on the route via Marienbad (Mariánské Lázně)—Planá—Tachau (Tachov)—Bor—and Doly, until after a massacre of the Jewish and Soviet prisoners near Primda they were abandoned by the SS. German Kapo Dietze made the following statement about the murder of these prisoners in the Müsch trial. In the protocol it states: “The witness D. also made known, that the accused had the remaining twenty or so Jewish and Russian prisoners shot, after he learned that the Flossenbürg camp was already in the hands of the Americans.”

Just on the march route between Karlshad-Tepla and Planá, 296 corpses of prisoners from this column were uncovered during exhumations in 1946.

From among the prisoners of the Zwickau subcamp, which together with the column from Johanngeorgenstädt made it to Leitmeritz, six men were registered on their arrival in the Theresienstadt ghetto, to which the Jewish prisoners from Leitmeritz were sent.

**NOTES**

3. Ibid., pp. 70–71.
4. Ibid., pp. 86–87.
5. BA-B, Film 14430, p. 1264.
7. Ba-VEB-S-Z, Akte Horch vor 1945, No. 17, information sheet issued by the factory management (poster), December 18, 1944.

Hans Brenner
trans. Martin Dean
The origin of the planning for the employment of prisoners in Zwodau cannot be determined precisely; nevertheless, there exists information about its context: The Luftfahrzeugwerke Hakenfelde GmbH (Aircraft Equipment Works Hakenfelde Ltd., LGW) had been founded in 1940 as a 100 percent joint subsidiary of Siemens & Halske AG (S&H) and Siemens-Schuckert-Werke AG (Siemens-Schuckert Works, Inc., SSW). At high rates of production, the ordnance company manufactured autopilots, gyroscopes, and navigation instruments; aircraft instruments and electronics; communications equipment; and electric firing systems. In view of the positive results that Siemens had been able to produce since the autumn of 1942 at its Ravensbrück assembly plant (Fertigungsstelle), in connection with the increasing danger from air raids, Siemens director Paul Storch suggested in the spring of 1943 to carry out the transfer of the assembly to better-protected areas and to enlist concentration camp prisoners for the production of particularly important components.\(^1\) It was, therefore, a strategic decision of Siemens to establish the use of prisoners at the periphery of the Old Reich, a decision by which the responsible parties combined the enormous turnover increase in the armaments business with the concurrent shortage of labor. For the increase in its production, the company was guided by its model project for use of prisoner labor in the Ravensbrück concentration camp.\(^2\)

On September 3, 1943, 13,000 square meters (about 15,550 square yards) in the Kamimgarnspinnerei Ignaz Schmiegler AG Zwodau near Falkenau on the Eger River were occupied by the Gesellschaft für Luftfahrzeuggeräte, Spandau.\(^3\) The Falkenau camp was established provisionally on the factory site as early as December 1943; the occupancy grew from about 100 in the beginning to approximately 745 female prisoners by July 1944.\(^4\) As of March 1944, the female concentration camp prisoners who originated from Poland, Germany, France, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia were brought to Zwodau mostly from Ravensbrück. In addition to their work in the factory, they built the Zwodau camp. Together with Italian military internees (IMIs), the women leveled a triangular parcel of land located about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) outside the city and put up four barracks for prisoners—one as a hospital and one as a canteen—as well as quarters for the SS guards. The camp was fenced in with barbed wire, which at least initially was not electrified.\(^5\) Around the end of June or the beginning of July the prisoners moved from the factory to the not-quite-finished barracks. Later, four watchtowers and an electrified fence were erected, which also enclosed the prisoners’ way to work, the so-called Lion’s Path, to the factory and reduced the guard requirements.\(^6\)

The women came above all from Germany, France, Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia; in addition, there were about 100 Hungarian Jews in the camp.\(^7\) The women worked in day and night shifts of about 12 hours and, in a similar manner to that in the Fertigungsstelle Ravensbrück, produced coils, switches, measuring equipment, and the like, for aviation armament as unskilled workers in operations sharply demarcated by the division of labor. The output of the prisoners was recorded individually as in Ravensbrück and linked to a bonus system.\(^8\) For substandard performance there were punishments such as makeup work and withdrawal of food; for adequate or increased performance, additional rations.\(^9\) The women in their spare time also had to take on additional work such as hauling coal from Zwodau into the camp.\(^10\)

Until the middle of February 1945, the detachment leader at Zwodau was SS-Hauptscharführer Kurt Erich Schreiber and, later, SS-Oberscharführer Willi Jordan; they commanded a guard force of about 25 SS men. Schneider was assigned as the supervisory female SS guard and was later replaced by Unger. They commanded around 20 female SS guards, who also supervised the prisoners at their workplaces. All those named were accused of mistreatment, also with deadly consequences. Since September 1944, the camp had been under the Flossenbürg concentration camp. The relocation had resulted in a worsening of the daily food in the camp even though the factory kitchen continued to supply the camp, a clear sign of corruption and embezzlement in the camp. Survivors especially accused camp elder (Lagerältester) Johanna Baumann née Forthofer of currying favor with the SS and of mistreatment.

The available data, however, show only small variations in the number of prisoners until the arrival of the first evacuation transports during the winter of 1944–1945; this, in combination with a rather low death rate in the camp itself, points to the practice of transferring sick prisoners to the main camp.\(^11\) With the arrival of a large number of women, mostly Jewish who had been weakened by long marches on foot from camps in Freiburg, Dresden, and Helmbruchs, the number of camp inmates swelled in April 1945 to between 2,500 and
In this connection, the predecessor camp Falkenau was also the Flossenbürg concentration camp. Selective investigative proceedings covering the subcamps of investigations by the ZdL. Zwodau was also examined in connection with the evacuation of the camps located in the east and the deportation of its inmates to camps located westward, as was Zwodau. For background on Siemens armament manufacturing, see the apologetic work by the director of AS-M, Wilfried Feldenkirchen, Siemens, 1918–1945 (Munich, 1995), pp. 381–382.

The presumably quite wide-ranging contents of the AS-M unfortunately are not made accessible to independent research as so-called uncataloged intermediate archival sources. Research is therefore dependent on state archives. The above-mentioned files of the investigative proceedings of the ZdL are therefore one of the most important correlated collections of sources for the investigation of the Zwodau subcamp. They contain numerous witness statements of surviving prisoners, other witnesses, and perpetrators. In this connection, it must be emphasized that the investigating state prosecutors in the search for witnesses worked closely with the ITS, whose collections of contemporary documents they could still examine and draw on for the investigations. Further, the state prosecutors also assessed the extensive material on the Flossenbürg concentration camp held by the BA-B under NS4, the second important unified collection on the Falkenau subcamp, decades before it aroused the interest of Western historians. There are presumably important contemporary documents in the Czech archives on the history of the origin of the use of prison labor as the planning papers prove that reached Ludwigsburg through the assistance of the Commission for the Investigation of National Socialist Crimes. The BA-MA holds collections of the war authorities for the economy about the procurement situation and production of the LGH. Other smaller collections are quoted in the text. 

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trans. Stephen Pallavicini

NOTES


2. LGW, Bestelleingang u. Umsatz bis 1943, BA-MA, RL/3/4117 P141.


5. Die Pläne der Bauabteilung der Siemenswerke für das LGW Zwodau, Barackenlager, “KZ-Baracken 2, 3 u. 4,”
1. 100 24.2.1944 and “Plan 14, LGW-Betrieb Zwodau, Lageplan Barackenlager,” 1:1000, March 4, 1944, ZdL, VI 410 AR-Z 60/67 (B), p. 422; Reisebericht [SS-Obergruppenführer Frank], August 10–11, 1944, August 15, 1944 [Prague], ZdL.


