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

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

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

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

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

In 1940, the Chief of the Sipo and the SD declared the two camps Mauthausen and Gusen to be Category III camps, which in effect turned them into "camps for murder." Prisoners from other concentration camps were sent for punishment to Mauthausen and Gusen, where they served out their imprisonment under more severe conditions. At least 3,500 prisoners were murdered between 1942 and 1945 in the Mauthausen gas chambers. A minimum of approximately 1,000 prisoners were gassed in the subcamp Gusen as well as in the so-called gas van (Gaswagen). About 5,000 prisoners who were incapable of work were murdered in the gas chambers of the former “Euthanasia Institute” in Schloss Hartheim near Linz. The death rate among prisoners in Mauthausen/Gusen was until the end of 1942 the highest of all National Socialist concentration camps.

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

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

The majority of the subcamps established until the middle of 1943 were used for construction purposes—be it road construction such as in Vöcklabruck, building tunnels such as Loiblpass, or power stations in Grossraming, Ternberg, Dippoldsau, and Passau. The construction of power plants was connected with the planned expansion of the central region of Upper Austria to a center of the German armaments industry. The systematic establishment of armaments firms in the greater areas of Linz and Vienna meant the establishment of subcamps in the same locations. The prisoners were initially used to construct the production facilities and later were used in the production process. The first Mauthausen subcamp
established for the armaments industry was Steyr-Münichholz in March 1942. Other subcamps for the armaments industry were established in the Vienna region (Wien-Schwechat, Wien-Floridsdorf, Wiener Neudorf, Wiener Neustadt, Hirtenberg, Wien Saurerwerke) and in the Upper Austrian central area (Linz III, armaments production in the Gusen subcamp, Gunskirchen-Wels, St. Valentin).

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

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

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

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

**Sources** Many of the Mauthausen subcamps, as well as the main camp, are covered in Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistische Konzentrationslager, vol. 4, ed. Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2006). The earlier standard work on Mauthausen is by former camp clerk Hans Maršálek: Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen: Eine Dokumentation (Vienna, 1995). The first dissertation on the camp was by Gisela Rabitsch, Konzentrationslager in Österreich (1938–1945): Überblick und Geschichten (Vienna, 1967). In the 1970s, there appeared in English the book by Evelyn Le Chêne, Mauthausen: The History of a Death Camp (London, 1971). Another complete history was published by Michel Fabregué, Mauthausen: Camp de concentration national-socialiste en Autriche rattachée (1938–1945) (Paris, 1999). All of these works deal with the subcamps as part of the Mauthausen camp system. The relationship between the main and subcamps stands in the center of the essays by Florian Freund, “Mauthausen: Zu Strukturen von Haupt- und Aussenlagern,” DaHe 15 (1999): 254–272; and Bertrand Perz, “Der Arbeits-einsatz im KZ Mauthausen,” in Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager—Entwicklung und Struktur, ed. Ulrich Herbert, Karin Orth, and Christoph Dieckmann (Göttingen, 1998), 2:333–557. Freund, Perz, and Karl Stuhlpfarrer have published a bibliography on the history of the Mauthausen concentration camp and its subcamps: Bibliographie zur Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen (Vienna, 1998). The research on the various subcamps varies. The most researched subcamps are those involved with the rocket industry and the SDP; particularly the Ebensee, Melk, and Wiener Neustadt studies by Freund and Perz cover certain subcamps: Freund, Arbeitslager Zement: Das Konzentrationslager Ebensee und die Raketenrüstung (Vienna, 1989); Freund and Perz, Das KZ in der Serbenhalle: Zur Kriegsindustrie in Wiener Neustadt (Vienna, 1987); Perz, Projekt Quarz: Steyr-Daimler-Puch und das Konzentrationslager Melk (Vienna, 1991). The Gusen, Linz, Loiblpass, Redl-/Zipf, Steyr, and Wiener Neudorf subcamps have also been relatively well researched. The remainder of the camps have, in part, been researched in unpublished academic works or in part in unpublished, local historical works.

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

Ralf Lechner and Christian Dürr

**Notes**

1. For sources on DESt (Bilanzen, Geschäftsberichte, Prüfberichte, etc.), see Best. NS 3, BA-B.
2. For the lease of the Mauthausen quarries, see ASt-Wien, MD 1849/38 and MD 921/39; for the Gusen quarries, Prüfbericht der DESt 1938–1940 (NS 3-756, pp. 14–17); as well as Bilanzunterlagen 1938/39 (NS 3-756, p. 29).
5. There are a number of sources on the prisoner numbers in the AG-M, E/6/1 bis E/16/17. Also there are various Häftlingszugangsbücher that have survived: AG-M, Y/36, Y/43, Y/44.
The Amstetten subcamp was located in present-day Niederösterreich (Lower Austria), about 114 kilometers (71 miles) west of Vienna and 30 kilometers (18.6 miles) southeast of Mauthausen. Until 1945 it was part of the Reichsgau Niederdonau. Although the camp held its own camp police—members of which were sent back to the main camp early in April 1945—Florian Freund argues that Amstetten perhaps was not a real subcamp with its own administrative structure but a work detachment only. However, the camp was established on March 19, 1945 (according to the International Tracing Service [ITS], April 1, 1945), with the arrival of a large transport of male inmates. On March 23, another 1,500 inmates arrived in the camp. The maximum number of inmates in the camp was 2,966, among them 715 Jews.

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

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

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

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

Many prisoners were killed on March 20, 1945, when there was an air raid on Amstetten. Since they were not allowed to enter the air-raid bunkers for the civilian population, the prisoners fled into the forest between Eisenreichdornach and Preinsbach as the aircraft approached. It was here, however, that the U.S. planes dropped their first bombs. In the chronicles of the Parish of St. Stephan, Amstetten, there is a report on the recovery of the bodies that followed: “While we were rescuing the victims . . . in a touching procession full of disturbed, exhausted, and unhinged people, men and women, captured Poles, Greeks, interned foreign workers who were not allowed during the bombardment to go into the air raid shelters but were forced into the forests to the east . . . we saw trucks on which there were the corpses—layered between straw hung their hands, feet and heads.”

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

**SOURCES**


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

Evelyn Zegenhagen trans. Stephen Pazzlavicini

**NOTES**


**AMSTETTEN II [AKA BAHNBAU II] [WOMEN]**

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

The women’s camp was established on March 20, 1945, the day after the opening of the men’s camp in Amstetten. As with the men’s camp, it lasted until April 18, 1945. There were around 500 women held in the camp who were used to clean up after bombing raids in the vicinity of the destroyed
Amstetten railway station. The railway station had been destroyed in a heavy bombing raid on March 19, 1945.

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

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

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

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

SOURCES

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

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NOTE

BACHMANNING

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

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

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

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

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

VOLUME I: PART B
of prisoners in Grossraming increased from 918 to 937. The Bachmanning work detachment was apparently closed simultaneously with the Grossraming work detachment at the end of August 1944.

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

SOURCES Gisela Rabitsch compiled the first information on the Bachmanning camp in “Konzentrationslager in Österreich (1938–1945): Überblick und Geschehen” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Wien, 1967). Details of the attempted joint venture between the SS and the Reichswerke are to be found in Walter Naassner’s Neue Machtzentren in der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft 1942–1945: Die Wirtschaftsorganisation der SS, das Amt des Generalbevollmächtigten für den Arbeitseinsatz und das Reichsministerium für Bewaffnung und Munition/reichsministerium für Rüstung und Kriegsproduction im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem (Boppard am Rhein, 1994); and Bertrand Perz, “KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter der deutsch-österreichischen Herrschaftssysteme in Österreich” (Wien, 2001). For the history of the company Die Ernährung und Verpflegung GmbH (German Experimental Institute for Nutrition and Provisions, Ltd.), this company in 1939 and 1940 acquired three alpine farms—Krahberger, Koini, and Hauserbauer—in Bretsteingraben and created an experimental farm for the breeding of sheep and horses. Experience gained here was to be put to use in the future Wehrbauerhöfe (fortified farms) of the SS in the conquered territories, mainly in the East. Also, according to Bertrand Perz, the SS experimented with a biological-dynamic way of farming (biologisch-dynamische Landwirtschaft). During the war, the products harvested there served to supply the SS with agricultural products.

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

The prisoners were used for a multitude of tasks: they looked after a poultry farm, bred sheep, and worked in the market garden and on an experimental weaving mill. Their main task, however, was to build a road for goods traffic through Beitsteingraben. Hans Marsálek refers to several unsuccessful escape attempts by the prisoners: on June 30, 1942, two prisoners were shot while trying to escape (the euphemistic expression could also refer to the willful murder of these prisoners); on August 5, 1941, a group of five Spanish Republicans were recaptured and murdered after attempting to escape. In total, seven prisoners were murdered in the camp.
On December 10, 1942, the camp was evacuated, mainly because of the climatic conditions in this alpine valley. The inmates were taken to the Steyr-Münichholz camp. Probably because of the priority of the employment of concentration camp inmates in armament production, no new inmates were taken to Bretstein in the spring of 1943. Only on June 5, 1943, 10 inmates—6 Jehovah’s Witnesses and 4 Spanish Republicans—were taken to Bretstein. Their task was to dissolve the camp. On June 25, these inmates were transferred back to Mauthausen. The empty grounds of the subcamp were handed over to the Agrarbezirksbehörde (local agricultural authorities) Leoben, and on August 30, 1943, the camp ceased to exist.

**Sources**


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

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**Dippoldsau**

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

**Sources**

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

Robert G. Waite

**Ebensee**

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

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

Many of the prisoners working in the tunnels did so under the direction of civilian construction firms and under the supervision of civilian workers and Kapos. The plan was to employ large numbers of prisoners and to get the project done quickly. By the end of 1943, the number of prisoners at Ebensee had climbed to 511. With the completion of additional barracks in early January 1944, more prisoners were sent from Mauthausen, and the number quickly reached about 1,000. For these early transports to the new site, the SS carefully selected prisoners who had technical skills, had been in Mauthausen for a long time, and had already obtained some position of authority among the other prisoners. Most of the following transports to Ebensee held prisoners who had only recently been sent to Mauthausen, most from Poland, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. In the spring of 1944, large numbers of French and Italian prisoners, and in June about 1,500 Hungarian Jews from Auschwitz, arrived. They were followed in July by a large number of Soviet prisoners of war (POWs) and in the fall by Polish prisoners from Auschwitz. The prisoner population rose to more than 6,000. A massive increase in the number of prisoners came in January 1945, as large numbers of prisoners arrived from concentration camps evacuated in the east. Later in the spring, as
subcamps of Mauthausen were emptied, thousands more came to Ebensee, and the number of prisoners held there reached 18,500 housed in 32 barracks. During its brief existence, an estimated 27,000 prisoners were incarcerated in Ebensee.

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

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

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

The last roll call took place on May 5, 1945, and the commandant ordered the prisoners into the tunnels where, it
was rumored, the Nazi guards had set up explosives to destroy them and the prisoners. The prisoners refused to leave the roll-call area. That night the approximately 600 guards fled from the camp, and the next day American forces arrived. The U.S. military identified, arrested, and prosecuted several former guards in 1947, and West German authorities prosecuted and convicted former commandant Anton Ganz.

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

Former prisoner Jean Biondi provides an overview in his statement “The Camp of Ebensee” (NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg Document PS-2176). West German prosecutors initiated several criminal investigations. The most extensive court records come from the prosecution of former commandant Anton Ganz in Munich; he received a sentence of life in prison. Several U.S. Army trials prosecuted former guards, including USA vs. Geiger (NARA, RG 238, Case No. 000-50-5-6) and USA vs. Horst Goennemann (Case No. 000-50-5-34). The report of war crimes in the Mauthausen system prepared by Major Eugene Cohen contains prisoner statements on Ebensee (NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg Document PS-2176). YVA has a box of cards recording the deaths of prisoners in the camp infirmary from February to April 1945 (YVA 041-19), and each card has the prisoner’s name, date of birth, date of death, and cause of death. A list of 193 guards is held in YVA (M-9/E-12-8). A copy of the Lagerstandbuch is in the AG-M, BMdI, Vienna (BS/35).

Robert G. Waite

EBENSEE/WELS II [aka WELS]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The camp existed until March 14, 1945. On March 2, 230 prisoners were transferred to the Peggau subcamp and from there to Mauthausen. Of the remaining 10 inmates, 9 were taken to Peggau on March 14 and the last one the following day directly to Mauthausen. However, the files of the Mauthausen concentration camp refer to the continued existence of the Eisenerz subcamp until April 29, 1945—with 1 prisoner only.

SOURCES


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

ENNS, ENNSDORF

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

Enns and Ennsdorf are located in the present-day district of Linz in Oberösterreich (until 1945: Reichsgau Oberdonau). According to Hans Maršálek, a subcamp existed here for only 10 days between April 10, 1945 (the date it is first mentioned), and April 19. About 2,000 male prisoners were held in the camp and were most probably used by the Gauleiter and Reichsverwaltungskommissar (Reich Defense Commissar) August Eigruber in constructing bunkers to strengthen the
last lines of defense against the advancing Allied troops. In the official records of the Mauthausen main camp, two escape attempts are reported: 9 inmates tried to escape on April 14, another on April 20.


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**GREIN**

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

A maximum of 120 men were used by the construction company Koller, which had a contract from the company Voigt & Haefner AG, Werk Linz, to convert the cellars of the castle to machine halls, to construct living quarters, and to assemble prefabricated barracks. These installations were to be used by Voigt & Haefner (under their code name Fa. Leopold Freundlich AG) for the production of electronic installations for air armament, including parts for the V-1. The majority of the inmates were skilled laborers; most of them came from the Soviet Union and Italy.

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


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

Schoopler directed the initial growth of the camp and the assignment of the prisoner work details to the construction of a hydroelectric plant and roads. In August 1943, SS-Untersturmführer Julius Ludolph replaced him, and in May 1944, SS-Untersturmführer Hans Altfuldisch took over command from Ludolph. The Schutzhaftlagerführer was SS-Scharführer Franz Koffer, and, later Hans Riegler. The 5th Company of the SS-Totenkopfstandarte Mauthausen continued to guard Grossraming, supplemented by at least three dog handlers.3

The Grossraming concentration camp expanded rapidly in early 1943, as more prisoners and 136 “East workers” (Ostarbeiter) arrived there. Many of the prisoners came after several weeks in the quarantine barracks at Mauthausen. Grossraming held individuals from most of the European nations, as the transfer lists and status reports document, with very few Jews among them. The largest contingent at Grossraming was Yugoslav nationals, most of whom had been arrested for political reasons. There were also Germans, Poles, Russians, Czechs, Spaniards, and “Gypsies” (Sinti and Roma) incarcerated there.4

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

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

Although the beating of prisoners was officially not permitted, the punching and slapping of prisoners were common at Grossraming. Usually such blows accompanied orders to work harder or walk faster, and they were administered by guards and Kapos. A former prisoner-functionary recalled only three to four escape attempts. Those who escaped and were recaptured came back wearing signs announcing their return, and most were executed.

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

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

The records of the trials of the staff of the Grossraming concentration camp, now held in NARA, RG 153, include a number of witness statements on Grossraming. The cases include USA v. Altfuldisch et al., case 000-50-5; USA v. Hans Bergerhoff et al., case 000-50-5-3; USA v. Kaspar Geetz et al., case 000-50-5-4; USA v. Johann Haider et al., case 000-50-5-13; USA v. Friedrich Kurbel et al., case 000-50-5-37; and USA v. Fabian Richter et al., case 000-50-5-40. A sketch of the site is in the records of case 000-Mauthausen-15 (NARA, RG 338). The guard roster of the 5th Company, the SS unit posted to Grossraming, dated July 26, 1944, was attached to the “Report of Investigation of Alleged War Crimes, prepared by US Major Eugen Cohen,” Nuremberg document 2176-PS, and it contains 126 names. The BDC (now at BA-BL and NARA, RG 242) has files on each of the commandants and many of the guards listed on this roster. The Zentrale Stelle in North-Rhine Westphalia developed a case against Josef Hilger (24Js21/69 Z), and these records, held in the NHSHStA-(D) (Rep18/1529), contain a large number of statements from for-
mer prisoners, guards, civilian workers, and local residents. In May 1945 the Office for Vital Statistics in Reichraming prepared a list of 63 individuals whose deaths in Grossraming were recorded there. The IPN has a number of change-of-status reports and death reports from the summer and fall of 1943.

Robert G. Waite

NOTES


GUNSKIRCHEN-WELS I [AKA WALDWERKE, WELS, NOTBEHLELSHEIMBAU, SS-ARBEITSLAGER GUNSKIRCHEN]

Wels is located in the community of Edt, approximately 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) southwest of Linz, in Upper Austria (Oberösterreich; until 1945: Reichsgau Oberdonau), and Gunskirchen is a part of the community of Wels. The history of the Gunskirchen-Wels camp is especially complex, and research on it is complicated by the fact that the camp was referred to under a multitude of names. Hans Maršálek, one of the early experts on Mauthausen, states that the camp was opened in the Noitzmühle mill on Traunautristasse on December 27, 1944. Under the code name Waldwerke (forest factory), prisoners—whose number reached its peak at 397—were to construct a gigantic supply depot, probably for the Flugzeug- und Metallwerke Wels. The mentioning of this to construct a gigantic supply depot, probably for the Flugzeug- und Metallwerke Wels. The character of the assembly camp meant that the prisoners had to erect temporary homes. But very soon the camp had to change its purpose: While it is unclear if it ever was planned to be a real production site, it was quickly transformed into an assembly camp to accommodate the always increasing numbers of concentration camp inmates evacuated from the East. This interpretation is also confirmed by Wiebke van Iijken, who states that preparations for the later assembly camp for evacuated prisoners had already been made in December 1944 when around 400 Polish and Soviet prisoners were transferred to Gunskirchen-Wels to erect 10 barracks. Due to military developments in the last months of the war and the overwhelming prisoner evacuations, the original plans had to be changed quickly: Gunskirchen-Wels became a much larger camp than expected. Already from fall 1944 on, more and more prisoner transports had arrived in Mauthausen, and the situation worsened early in 1945 with the evacuation of Hungarian Jews who had been exploited in erecting the so-called Südostwall (Southeast Wall) against the advancing Red Army. Since the Mauthausen main camp was already completely overcrowded, arriving inmates were forced to move on to Gunskirchen after that camp had been converted into a temporary camp (Notbehelfslager) in the first half of March 1945, on orders of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA). Transports of inmates left Mauthausen for Gunskirchen on April 16, 18, and 24, 1945; other transports probably arrived directly from southeast Europe, from Auschwitz, and from other camps without passing through the Mauthausen main camp. On April 28, 1945, for example, 2,808 male Hungarian Jewish men and 300 Jewish women were taken to Gunskirchen-Wels. The capacity of the camp was established at between 12,000 and 15,000 prisoners. While the camp mostly held Jewish prisoners of both sexes, there were also increasing numbers of smaller groups of political prisoners from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia taken to Gunskirchen-Wels.

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

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

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

By the late morning we entered the woods around the camp and saw dead, emaciated, partly clothed bodies, as far as the eye could see. Between the bodies were huge piles of feces. A strong fecal stench permeated the cool, damp air of the woods. Inside the dim barracks, lying on straw, were the dead, alongside the dying, who could not muster the strength to walk away when the SS guards had deserted three days previously. The skin of the dead was loose and wrinkled, their cheeks hollow, the skin shrunken from their open, hollow, sightless eyes. Their teeth were rotten snags, protruding from their open mouths. Their limbs were extremely thin and the bones appeared to almost poke through the joints that were bent into weird contortions that conveyed the horror of the agony of death. Their clothing was ragged patches held together by filth. Many had part of their clothing missing, probably taken by their living, suffering comrades. Even the lice seemed to have abandoned the dead.1

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

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

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

Row upon row of living skeletons, jammed so closely together that it was impossible for some to turn over, even if they could have generated enough strength to do so. . . . A pair of feet, black in death, protruded from underneath a tattered blanket, just six inches from a haggard old Jew who was resting on his elbow and feebly attempting to wave to us. A little girl, doubled with the growing pains of starvation, cried pitifully for help. A dead man was rotting beside her. . . . Few of those remaining in the building could stand on their feet. The earth was
Some 3,000 prisoners who could still walk left the camp when the American troops arrived. The U.S. Army registered and cared for 5,419 survivors. Estimates of the number of dead in the camp vary between several hundred and several thousand. Florian Freund states that probably 15,000 prisoners survived the camp, while more than 3,000 died. In the following months, at least 1,000 prisoners, who were looked after in civilian and military hospitals in Wels and surroundings, were to die from the deprivations they suffered in the camp. After the war, mass graves with 1,227 corpses were found in the camp’s vicinity. The archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, list 877 survivors of the camp.

SOURCES

There are numerous documents on the Gunskirchen-Wels camp held in AG-M under collections B 5, B 11, B 11/12 (Nebenlager Gunskirchen, Planskizze der Gräber-
Prisoners and guards occupied the concentration camp on May 25, 1940. The selection of Gusen as the first subcamp of Mauthausen and its rapid growth were due initially to the nearby Gusen, Kastenhof, and Pierbauer stone quarries. In the spring of 1940, a professional quarry worker was placed in charge of the quarries, which produced freestone, paving stone, and gravel for distribution and sale throughout Austria. Two railway spurs ran to the quarries. Beginning in 1943, Gusen played an important role in armaments production.

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

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

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

The pattern of deaths at Gusen reflected the severity and brutality of the treatment of the prisoners at the hands of the Kapos and guards, the starvation rations, the lack of basic sanitary facilities, and the forced labor under the most difficult of circumstances. Officials kept detailed records of prisoner deaths in four death books that recorded the following fatalities: 1940: 1,522; 1941: 5,570; 1942: 3,890; 1943: 5,116; 1944: 4,004; and until early April 1945: 7,740—a total of 27,842 individuals, identified by name, prisoner category, prisoner number, date and place of birth, cause of death, and
date and time of death. Those unable to work because of injury, illness, or fatigue and weakness were typically killed, in 1940–1941, in the so-called death baths where they were drowned and during the latter years of the war in Block 31, the Bahnhof. Some victims, killed shortly after their arrival, were not registered at Gusen, and the actual number of those who perished there numbers at least 35,000.

The operation of Gusen was directly connected to Mauthausen. SS-Hauptsturmführer Karl Chmielewski, who directed the establishment and construction and was in charge until January 1943, and his successor SS-Hauptman Friedrich August (Fritz) Seidler, who directed the massive growth in the number of prisoners and the shift to war-related industries, held the position of Schutzhaftlagerführer and were responsible for the daily operations of the camp. Both answered directly to SS-Obersturmbannführer Franz Ziereis, the commandant of Mauthausen. The four companies of guards assigned to Gusen were part of the SS-Totenkopfsturmbann Mauthausen (Death’s Head Battalion Mauthausen). In 1944, their number reached an estimated 3,000. In late January–early February 1945, a number of prisoners were sent to Mauthausen. It came to hold some 10,000 prisoners, many of whom were not registered at Gusen, and the actual number of those who perished later by West German courts. More than a dozen of the U.S. Army trials involved former Gusen guards and Kapos, including USA v. Erik Schmettauf (000-50-5-3); USA v. Georg Bach (000-50-5-10); USA v. Andreas Bättmerman (000-50-5-11); USA v. Giovanazzi (000-50-5-12); USA v. Karl Bertsch (000-50-5-29); USA v. Karl Glas (000-50-5-31); USA v. Karl Horicka (000-50-5-32); and USA v. Georg Pirner (000-50-5-42). The statements given by former prisoners, particularly in the trial of Chmielewski in the LG Ansbach, begin to reveal the horror inflicted upon prisoners. West German prosecutors initiated more than 70 criminal investigations involving Gusen, and the records of many are held at the ZdL (now BA-L).

Robert G. Waite

NOTES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The women were evacuated from Hirtenberg early in April 1945 and arrived at Mauthausen on either April 18 or 19. During the evacuation march, women tried to escape again: on April 7, 4 Soviet prisoners, and on April 16, 40 Soviet and 8 Polish women. On April 10, 7 young Russian women were shot while trying to escape from the evacuation march; it is also possible that the women were executed because they were shot while trying to escape from the evacuation march; it is also possible that the women were executed because they were shot while trying to escape from the evacuation march; it is also possible that the women were executed because they were shot while trying to escape from the evacuation march; it is also possible that the women were executed because they were shot while trying to escape from the evacuation march; it is also possible that the women were executed because they were shot while trying to escape from the evacuation march.


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

Evelyn Zegenhagen

KLAGENFURT-LENDORF

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

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

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

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

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

A Mauthausen subcamp was planned for the barracks as support for its planned expansion. According to former Mauthausen camp recorder Hans Maršálek, the Klagenfurt-Lendorf
concentration camp was established on November 19, 1943, at the request of the Bauleitung der Waffen-SS und Polizei (Waffen-SS and Police Building Administration) Klagenfurt.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The prisoner’s greatest threat to life was a return to the Mauthausen main camp, which was equivalent to a death sentence. The constant uncertainty about survival and the suffering caused by social isolation and deprivation of rights
The use of concentration camp prisoners in Leibnitz, as with just about all underground relocation projects, probably resulted from the good understanding that the general director of the Steyr factory, Georg Meindl, had with the highest officials of the SS.

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

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

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

Grissinger also mentioned that the Leibnitz subcamp since the summer of 1944 had relatively good living conditions when compared with other detachments. The improved
survival chances are reflected in the death statistics in the roll-call books. Between February 1944 and April 1945, about 75 prisoners died in the Leibnitz subcamp. About 50 prisoners were transferred back to the main camp, presumably because they were ill or weak. The roll-call book records that 7 prisoners escaped at different times, with no indication of recapture.

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

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

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

**SOURCES**

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

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**NOTES**
1. Transport list of February 8, 1944, AG-M, Y/44.
2. Details on prisoner movements are taken from the Roll Call Book of the Work Detachment, AG-M, E/6/11.
4. Ibid.
7. IPN, Mauthausen Concentration Camp 24, k.81 (Escape Report April 6, 1945); see also Variation Report of the Ebensee subcamp, April 20, 1945, AG-M, B/35/1.

**LENZING**

The Leenzing subcamp was located in Lenzing (part of the community of Pettighofen) on the banks of the Ager River near Lake Atter in Oberösterreich (until 1945: Reichsgau Oberdonau). It began on October 30, 1944 (other sources: November 3, 1944), with the arrival of a transport of about 500 women from Auschwitz via Mauthausen. The women were accommodated in two buildings of the Zellwolle und Papierfabrik Lenzing (also Lenzinger Zellwolle-AG), both of which were fenced in with barbed wire. The factories produced synthetic products, including uniform pieces for the Wehrmacht. The factory, which had a long tradition, was originally owned by Jews. Immediately following the Anschluss of Austria with Germany, the factory burned down in circumstances that were never explained and was then “aryanized.” An extensive rebuilding program began, but it was
not finished by the end of the war. In the last years of the war, around 50 percent of the inmates were forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) from Poland, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Slovakia, Greece, and France. The workforce was accommodated close to the factory.

According to historian Andreas Baumgartner, there had been close connections between the synthetic wool factory and the Mauthausen concentration camp since 1943. The factory produced the so-called Biosyn-Wurst or Mycel-Wurst, which was produced from albumen, with the help of a fungal culture from the wastewater arising from the production of the synthetic wool. The sausage was tested on the Mauthausen prisoners. Production ceased when the sausage caused severe inflammation in the digestive organs of the prisoners. The women who arrived in Lenzing constructed their own two-tiered bunk beds in the former paper mill’s large factory hall. Their quarters were separated into four “Blocks.” SS officers arrived on November 3. On that date the camp officially began operations. There were 20 SS men, including camp leader Karl Gieseler. They were responsible for outside security. There were also female SS in the camp whose mistreatment of the prisoners has been recorded. By the end of January 1945, two additional transports of female prisoners had arrived at Lenzing from Auschwitz. According to Baumgartner, there were now 577 women in the camp. Older accounts state that there were 565 women in the camp, but this figure now appears to be superseded. Baumgartner states that among the women there were 323 Hungarian Jewish women, 65 Poles, 58 women from the Reich Protectorate of Bohmen und Mähren, 38 Russians, 39 Germans and Austrians, and 35 Slovaks; 528 women were Jewish, and 49 were political prisoners. The youngest female in the Lenzing subcamp was 12 years old. There was at least one pregnant woman who at the end of January 1945 was forced to abort her baby in the Mauthausen infirmary.

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

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

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

There is a record that on April 17, 1945, four Soviet prisoners escaped from the Lenzing subcamp. One of the prisoners was a Jewish woman who was forced to work at the factory without a helmet. She managed to escape and return to the subcamp before the YS investigating officer of the liberating army, Major Eugene Cohen.

The YS investigating officer of the liberating army, Major Eugene Cohen, conducted investigations regarding the Lenzing subcamp. He interviewed numerous female prisoners, including those who had been forced to work at the factory. The investigations revealed that the factory worked around the clock to produce bricks for the war effort.

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

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

NOTES

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

928  MAUTHAUSEN

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

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

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

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

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

On July 25, 1944, Linz I was largely destroyed in an Allied air raid on the Linz industrial area. A large number of prisoners, at least 73, died during the bombing raid, but many corpses or body parts could not be identified. As a result of the destruction, Linz I could no longer be used. It was dissolved on August 3, 1944, and the remaining 631 prisoners were transferred that day to Linz III. Altogether, 1,756 prisoners were transferred to Linz I. Between August 1943 and April 1944, the number was between 520 and 569 prisoners. After April 14, 1944, the number of prisoners increased constantly because the prisoner tasks were always being extended. On July 14, 1944, the high-water mark for prisoner numbers, 958, was reached.

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

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

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

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

SOURCES A comprehensive history of the RWHG subcamps in Linz, on which this article is based, is to be found in Bertrand Perz’s publication “KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter der Reichswerke ‘Hermann Göring’ in Linz,” in NS-Zwangarbeit: Der Standort Linz der Reichswerke Hermann Göring, Linz. \textsuperscript{9} Another history of the Linz subcamps is to be found in the book by Robert Fuchs, Die KZ-Lager in Linz, which is to be published in 1988.
in Austria, in the ASt- Ln, IfZ- UW/ÖGZ, and the Oö.La; in Poland, at ASt- N, and the IfZ; in Germany, in BA- B, the ASt- N, and the IfZ; in Poland, at ASt- N, and the IfZ; in Poland, at ASt- N, and the IfZ; in Austria, in the ASt- Ln, IfZ- UW/ÖGZ, and the Oö.La; in 数 locations, some of which are as follows: and roll- call reports. Material on the Reichswerke camps is to This archive contains numerous lists of names, transport lists , and also hold relevant documents relating to postwar trials. The AG- M holds the report of survivor Ottokar Merinsky. This archive contains numerous lists of names, transport lists, and roll-call reports. Material on the Reichswerke camps is to be found in numerous locations, some of which are as follows: in Austria, in the ASt- Ln, IfZ- UW/ÖGZ, and the Oö.La; in Germany, in BA- B, the ASt- N, and the IfZ; in Poland, at APMO and IPN. The NARA and the BA- L (formerly ZdL) also hold relevant documents relating to postwar trials. The NARA reference is RG 338, Records of US Army Commands, 1942–, Records of Headquarters, US Army Europe (USA- REUR), War Crimes Branch, War Crimes Case Files (“Cases Tried”), 1945–1959. Christian Bernadac, “Linz I–Linz III, in Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III (Paris, 1976), pp. 149–205, has published reports of French survivors. Pio Bigo was a prisoner in both Reichswerke camps and reported on his experiences in Il triangolo di Gliwice: Memoria di sette Lager (Alessandria, 1998). Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner trans. Stephen Pallavicini

NOTES
3. DEST Composition and Analysis of the Examination Reports for 1941–1943, BA-B, NS 5719; Agreement between Pohl and Pleiger, November 7, 1942, Nuremberg Document NG 2915.

LINZ II

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

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

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

On February 21, 1944, 100 prisoners from Mauthausen were transferred to Linz for antiaircraft defense construction.
Since the camp in the RWHG in Linz already functioned as a subcamp, the newly established one was called Linz II.

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

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

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


To a larger extent, there is material on the construction measures regarding the air-raid defense in the ASt-Ln. Most likely because the prisoners in Linz were mainly Soviet citizens and Poles, only a few accounts about this camp are known to exist. One account comes from the German prisoner Fritz Grabowski, June 1, 1945, ITS, Arolsen Historic Section (Historical Documents Concerning Various Concentration Camps, File 279); another can be found in the private archive of Bertrand Perz (Letter by Stefan Szulborski, Piaseczno, Poland, to Bertrand Perz, August 19, 1985). Documents on the negotiations at the leadership level of the SS can be found in the BA-B.

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

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

The prisoners of the Linz III camp were deployed initially mainly in the weapons production business at the Oberdonau metal plant and Stahlbau steel factory. As a result of the closure of the Linz I camp, the prisoners from Linz III also had to work for the German Earth and Stone Works (DESt) in the blast furnace slag processing plant (Hochofenschlackenwerk) Linz/Donau. The work at the iron and steel work became the most important deployment location, and the prisoners were used for different jobs there; 60 percent of the prisoners were deployed at Hütte in March 1945. In addition to the prisoners deployed at the Hütte iron and steel work, a large number of prisoners were also included who actually had to work outside the RWHG at clearing up operations for the Deutsche Reichsbahn (German Railways), for the construction of air-raid shelters, or for the post administration. The deployment at the railroad in particular became more and more important. As a whole, 49 percent of the prisoners were engaged in the extraction of raw material for the Hütte Linz and DESt.
Another 39 percent of the prisoners were deployed for weapons production at the Oberndorf steel plant and at the Stahlbau steel factory.2

Because of a lack of construction material as a result of the war conditions, the location chosen for the subcamp, Linz III, was the already existing Camp 54. Italian military internees (IMIs) had been housed there earlier. The camp was located on an island between the Traun and the Mühlbachtal rivers and was consequently easy to guard, though exposed to flooding. On May 22, 1944, an advance party (Vorkommando) consisting of 30 prisoners was transferred to Linz to modify the existing Camp 54 into a subcamp of Mauthausen. The actual opening of the camp took place on May 26, 1944.3 The occupancy of the camp rose very fast. On June 6, 398 prisoners were transferred to Linz III, and on June 30, there were already 1,402 prisoners in the subcamp.

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

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

As can be seen from the number of prisoners, the conditions of imprisonment in the Linz III camp were totally different from those in the Linz I camp, where there were at most 958 prisoners. Survivor Ottokar Merinsky compared the two RWHG camps as follows: "Camp III was in comparison to camp I like a home for the poor and the Hotel Sacher. Instead of stonewall blocks there were old wooden huts. When there was high water the streets were under water. Along the huts were boardwalks. There were no toilets in the huts; the latrines were 20 to 100 m (66 to 328 feet) away from the blocks. The camp was filled above its capacity, and the block leaders were like raging dogs. Nobody could be sure that he could not be pushed into the water from the boardwalk simply because of a leader’s moody impulse and shot dead with a revolver."6 The different living conditions in the two camps cannot be explained only by the much higher number of prisoners, by the inferior construction material used for the Linz III camp, and by the fact that the camp was located near high water. The difference also has to be seen in connection with the existence of the Linz III camp at a later moment in time. As the war progressed, the increasing pressure on weapons production as well as the deterioration of the supply of basic goods for everyday use had a detrimental effect on the prisoners’ working conditions. In the last weeks before the liberation of the camp, getting supplies to the camp broke down completely. These conditions generated a large number of illnesses. For this reason, Linz III set up its own infirmary and, later on, also a second hut for the critically ill.7 On March 21, 1945, 998 of the 5,324 prisoners were reported sick, about 20 percent.8

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

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

The guarding of the camp was done by the 6th Guard Company of the SS-Totenkopfsturmabteilung (Death’s Head Guard Battalion) Mauthausen as well as by members of the Wehrmacht and probably also the 10th SS-Totenkopf Guard
Company. Up to 370 members of the SS guarded the Linz III camp. In addition, members of the RWHG’s plant protection (Werksbetutz) were also assigned to guard prisoners. Civilians recruited for the Volkssturm (German Home Guard), “men sixty years and older,” were also assigned to guard duty toward the end of the war. This circumstance was perceived as a relief by the prisoners.

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

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

**SOURCES**

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

**NOTES**
4. Roll-call book, daily reports from May 22, 1944, until March 15, 1945, E/6/11; movements in the KL Mauthausen in the month of April 1945, E/6/7, both AG-M.
5. AG-M, Data Bank Project, “Erfassung aller dokumentierten Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen.” Data bank questionnaire for prisoners from the subcamp Linz III (unfinished project, as of July 30, 2003).
8. List of the sick prisoners in Mauthausen and subcamps from March 21, 1945, AG-M, H/14/1.
11. Roll-call list of the 6th Company KLM; Labor camp Linz III and roll-call list of the Unterführer and men detailed to the KL Mauthausen, labor camp Linz III, both July 28, 1944, Nuremberg document PS 2176.

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

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

During 1943, the following camp facilities were installed on both sides of the Loiblpass: a camp for civilian workers,
intended for state employees overseeing the construction work and those belonging to the private construction companies; an SS and police camp to house the concentration camp guards; and the actual concentration camp intended for prisoners from Mauthausen. The first prisoner transport arrived from Mauthausen on June 3, 1943, comprising 330 prisoners, including 316 French prisoners, who had been selected in Mauthausen for the “Detachment X” at Loibl.

The concentration camp guards were recruited from men of the 1. SS-Totenkopfstandarten (Death’s Head Guard Battalion) based in Mauthausen. They were supplemented and reinforced by police guards from the SS-Alpenland unit.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In the northern camp as well as the southern camp, there was a “crematorium” in which the corpses were burned. The crematorium consisted of a ditch constructed with brick walls, upon which an iron grid was placed. On top of this a bonfire was built for burning the corpses of the prisoners. Generally, Dr. Ramsauer was present when corpses were burned at the southern Loibl concentration camp.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In 1946 and 1947, a British military tribunal in Klagenfurt investigated the events in the concentration camps on the Loiblpass. On November 10, 1947, it issued these verdicts: the SS men Winkler and Brietzke, who were found to have been the main persons responsible for numerous cases of murder, were sentenced to death by hanging. (These verdicts were carried out on March 10, 1948.) The commandant of the northern camp, Paul Gruschwitz, was sentenced to 12 years in prison, and the SS-Rapportführer of the northern camp, Karl Sachse, received 20 years. Six additional SS men who had held senior positions as guards at the camp were sentenced to prison terms of from 3 to 9 years. All of those sentenced who did not receive the death penalty were released after only a few years, in most cases before 1955.

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

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

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

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

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

Altogether there were 14,390 prisoners from at least 26 countries held in Melk. It was only in the middle of September that the planned prison capacity of 7,000 inmates was reached. From September 1944, prisoners evacuated from the Natzweiler main camp began to arrive in Melk and, from January 1945, prisoners from Auschwitz. According to historian Hans Maršálek, the camp reached its maximum capacity on January 30, 1945, with 10,352 prisoners. The larger national groups included Poles, Hungarians, French, Soviet citizens, Germans, Italians, Greeks, and Yugoslavs. However, there were also in Melk prisoners from Albania, Egypt, Denmark, Portugal, Turkey, the United States, and other countries. Around 30 percent of the prisoners in Melk were Jews. The last prisoner transport reached the camp on January 29, 1945: among the 2,000 prisoners from Auschwitz were 119 children between ages 9 and 15.

A camp crematorium had been erected in the autumn of 1944. Between December 1944 and April 1945, more than 3,500 deceased prisoners were cremated in it. According to transport reports, 1,440 sick and injured prisoners were returned to Mauthausen as “unable to work” (arbeitsunfähig). The Standortarzt (garrison doctor) recorded in the register of deaths 4,802 prisoners who died in Melk, including 1,019 in January 1945, or more than 30 per day. One-third of the prisoners who were brought to Melk died within the first six months of the camp’s existence. SS statistics list the nationalities of the dead: 1,575 Poles; 1,432 Hungarians; 546 French; 388 Soviet citizens; 302 Italians; 174 Yugoslavs; 150 Germans and Austrians; 101 Greeks; 36 Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians; 26 Dutch; 22 Czechs; 17 Norwegians; 12 Spaniards; 9 Belgians; 3 Swiss; 4 Luxembourgers; 2 Turks; 1 Portuguese; 1 Albanian; and 1 stateless person.
According to statements by Jean Varnoux, a former prisoner, there were fewer than 10 SS members in the camp. The remaining guards consisted of around 500 Luftwaffe soldiers who had been put under the command of the SS. The first camp leader, Hauptsturmführer Anton Streitwieser, was replaced in May 1944 by Obersturmbannführer Julius Ludolph. The Rapportführer was SS-Oberscharführer Curt Jansen, and the Arbeitsdienstführer was Oberscharführer Ernst Schindler. Hauptscharführer Otto Striegel was in charge of food transports.

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

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

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

Marštálek stated that there were several prisoner executions in Melk. For example, on May 11, 1944, a prisoner was shot while “trying to escape.” During an air raid on July 8, 1944, 250 camp inmates were killed and 197 were injured—the injured were probably murdered in the next few days with injections into the heart. A similar event occurred on February 19, 1945, when a transport of 250 Slovakian prisoners from Melk was attacked by Allied fighters; 7 prisoners managed to escape, and 20 died; 49 injured prisoners were murdered in Melk. Prisoners in the labor detachments in the “Quarz” construction area often tried to escape: according to the SS, there were 29 escape attempts; it is known that 9 of these attempts failed and 1 was successful.

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

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

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

**Sources**

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

The AG-M holds documents on the Melk subcamp including the following: Signaturen F 4/1 (Angaben des im Arbeitsseinsatz eingesetzten Häftlings Wolfgang Sanner); B 40/1 to 40/10; B 30/1 to B 30/16; B 12/16 (Berichte und Kopie von Transportlisten, u.a. von Melk); E 6/11 (Rapportbuch, Gesamtstand der Häftlinge in den Nebenlagern, Tagesaufstellungen); B 60/11 (Auffstellung der Lager

The YVA holds statements by Dr. Hirsch Simon (O2/3399) and Dr. Alexander Puder (O2/1030). Other documents particularly relating to SDP are held in the IWM in the collections German Underground Installations (CIOS Originals, 1991); Moshe Ha-Elion, Mauthausen (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999); Jeremia P. Eisenbauer, “Die Judenvernichtung 1938 bis 1945. Die Geschichte des SS-Konzentrationslagers, die Rolle des Staatskonzern Steyr-Daimler-Puch bei der Verwirklichung der NS-Wirtschaftziele in Österreich,” in Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945, ed. Hermann Kainburg (Opladen, 1996), pp. 95–112. Claims that in the cavern facilities at Roggendorf heavy water was produced by means of “fractioned distillation” as part of the process to construct an atomic bomb have not been substantiated. On these claims, see Markus Schnitzberger, Was die US Army in der Alpenfestung wirklich suchte: Eine Theorie zum Decknamen der Anlage ‘Quarz’ in Roggendorf bei Melk (Schleusening: Amun-Verlag, 2001). For more detail on the intervention by the Luftwaffe medical doctor for the prisoners, see Erika Weinzierl, Zu wenig Gerechte: Öster-

The Straits of Hell: The Case of Private Austrian, German and Dutch Enterprises, M-1100 (Records of US Army War Crimes Trials, Case 000-5-5-2, USA v. Ernst Dura, et al.), M-1191 (Records of US Army War Crimes Trials, Case 000-5-5-6, USA v. Hans Joachim Geiger, et al.), M-1019 (including USA v. Hans Altfuldish, et al., Case 000-50-5, USA v. Josef Kattner, et al., Case 000-50-5-21), as well as RG 245 (including damage assessments photo intelligence reports, III.1.1835 Melk, USBSBS Records, Section 4, European Target Intelligence, and Plant Report on Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, Wälzlagerwerk Steyr, Austria, USBSBS Records, Section 1, European Documents, report 53 c/2). In RG 165, Entry 179, Box 376, there are two detailed interrogation reports on SDP dated 28. December 1945 and 16. February 1946. The YVA holds statements by Dr. Hirsch Simon (O2/3399) and Dr. Alexander Puder (O2/1030). Other documents particularly relating to SDP are held in the IWM in the collections German Underground Installations (CIOS Section Intelligence Division Office, chief engineer, UFET, Washington, DC, 1945), FD 784/46 (Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, company organization, meetings of boards of directors and working committees . . . ), as well as FD 784/46 (Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, Vienna—data on contracts with directors and senior personnel . . . , 1937–1945). Investigations by the ZdL are held in File 419 AR-Z 4/64 at BA-L. Trial documents relating to the Melk subcamp are held in the following archives and collections: LG Wien (VG 5d Vr 211/48, Strafsache gegen Franz Judmann, and VG 12 Vr 5709/47, Strafsache gegen Hermann Schultz), Sta. LG Fulda (Ks 1/60, Strafsache gegen Gottlieb Muzi-

OKH, Führungsaufbau Walzaggerwerk, Führungsaufbau, Statistische Informationen, Unter-Tag Quarz, Verlagener-Grunzen Quarz, and others. There are also documents on the camp in A-BMD, Abt. IV/4, and in the DOW. The USHMM holds the following original documents on the Melk camp: Acc.1995.A.077—Andrew Woolrich (prisoner report) and Josef V. Czarski, RG-02.149, Acc.1994.A.171 (prisoner report), as well as several oral history interviews with camp survivors, for example, Bernard Weinstein (RG-50.002*0047; 1993.A.0088), Cedomir Markovic (RG-50.030*0308), and Norman Belfer (RG-50.030*0367). Other collections, including those relating to the role of the U.S. Army in Melk are held in the NARA, Collections T-990 (Totenbuch des SS-Standortarztes KL Mauthausen), T 83 (Records of Private Austrian, German and Dutch Enterprises, M-1100 (Records of US Army War Crimes Trials, Case 000-5-5-2, USA v. Ernst Dura, et al.), M-1191 (Records of US Army War Crimes Trials, Case 000-5-5-6, USA v. Hans Joachim Geiger, et al.), M-1019 (including USA v. Hans Altfuldish, et al., Case 000-50-5, USA v. Josef Kattner, et al., Case 000-50-5-21), as well as RG 245 (including damage assessments photo intelligence reports, III.1.1835 Melk, USBSBS Records, Section 4, European Target Intelligence, and Plant Report on Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, Wälzlagerwerk Steyr, Austria, USBSBS Records, Section 1, European Documents, report 53 c/2). In RG 165, Entry 179, Box 376, there are two detailed interrogation reports on SDP dated 28. December 1945 and 16. February 1946. The YVA holds statements by Dr. Hirsch Simon (O2/3399) and Dr. Alexander Puder (O2/1030). Other documents particularly relating to SDP are held in the IWM in the collections German Underground Installations (CIOS Section Intelligence Division Office, chief engineer, UFET, Washington, DC, 1945), FD 784/46 (Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, company organization, meetings of boards of directors and working committees . . . ), as well as FD 784/46 (Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, Vienna—data on contracts with directors and senior personnel . . . , 1937–1945). Investigations by the ZdL are held in File 419 AR-Z 4/64 at BA-L. Trial documents relating to the Melk subcamp are held in the following archives and collections: LG Wien (VG 5d Vr 211/48, Strafsache gegen Franz Judmann, and VG 12 Vr 5709/47, Strafsache gegen Hermann Schultz), Sta. LG Fulda (Ks 1/60, Strafsache gegen Gottlieb Muzian), Sta. LG München 1 (Ks 1/58, Strafsache gegen Wilhelm Reischenbeck), and Sta. Köln (24 Ks 1/66, Strafsache gegen Karl Schulz and Anton Streitwieser). Other descriptions of the camp, some by former prisoners, are to be found in Jean Vernoun, Sonderschrift über das SS-Arbeitsschlaglager Melk (Niederösterreich), Konzentrationslager von Mauthausen (German Sonderschrift des französischen Originals, 1991); Moshe Ha-Elion, The Straits of Hell: The Chronicle of a Saloniki Jew in the Nazi Extermination Camps Auschwitz, Mauthausen, Melk, Ebensee (Cincinnati, OH: Bowman & Cowdy, 2005); Pierre Saint Macary, La nuit du malheur...percer l’oubli (Paris: Harmattan, 2004); Alexander Marton, 186 ha-madregot: korotav shel na’ar Yehudi ba-mahanot Oshvits, Ma’utha’uzen, Melk ve-Ebenezech (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1999); Jeremia P. Eisenbauer, “Die vergessenen Toten von Melk: Das Melker Konzentrationslager und die Röggendorfer Stollenanlage,” MeM 146 (July

VOLUME I: PART B

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**PASSAU I (WITH PASSAU III)**

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

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

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

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

On August 10, 1944, three Polish prisoners were shot “trying to escape,” and on September 27, 1944, a German political prisoner was shot in “self defense” by camp leader Wilhelm Werner. One witness stated that it was a planned murder. There is no other evidence of cases of death in the camp.

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

**PASSAU III**

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

**SOURCES**

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

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


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**NOTES**

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

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

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

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

Of the 353 prisoners deported to the subcamp, 329 are known by name. The names in turn give a relatively accurate description of the composition of the prisoners: the majority came from Poland (36.2 percent), the Soviet Union (27.6 percent), and France (26 percent). There were smaller groups from Italy (5.7 percent), the German Reich, Spain, and other countries. The majority of prisoners were political prisoners (71.4 percent), and 20.7 percent were “Russian civilian workers.” Another 5.8 percent were Soviet prisoners of war (POWs). The other categories were “temporary preventive custody” (Befristete Vorbeugehaft), “Red Spaniards” (Rotspanier), “security custody” (Sicherheitsverwahrung), and “Reich Forced Labor” (Arbeitsschutz Reich).

Ten prisoners tried to escape from the camp. The name of the camp leader, SS-Oberscharführer Vogelsang, is only known because his name was mentioned in a report to the main camp following the escape of a Soviet prisoner on September 14, 1944.3 On October 29 and November 7, 1944, 150 and 177 prisoners, respectively, were transferred to the Flossenbürg concentration camp. The Passau II camp was then closed.4


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

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner trans. Stephen Pallavicini

NOTES

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

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

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


PEGGAU

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

As the “Ostmark” was increasingly under threat of Allied air attacks from the summer of 1943 onward, the armaments...
industry saw itself forced, where feasible, to relocate its most important strategic production sites underground. The Steyr factory in Graz-Thondorf was also to be relocated underground. Following an air raid on the Steyr factory on July 26, 1944, the village of Peggau, about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) in the north from Graz, as well as the finished site at Leibnitz were chosen as suitable locations for the establishment of an underground facility for the manufacture of aircraft engines for the Graz-Thondorf factory. In Peggau, as with most of the underground relocations, concentration camp prisoners were to be used to construct the facility.

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

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

The majority of the Peggau prisoners came from the Soviet Union and Poland. In addition, there were Yugoslavs, Italians, and Frenchmen. They were accommodated in 10 barrack about 1 to 2 kilometers (0.6 to 1.2 miles) from the tunnels where they worked. The site had been expropriated...
from the Catholic Vorau Convent. The prisoner-functionaries were selected from among German and Austrian prisoners who wore the green triangle. The Peggau subcamp leader was SS-Untersturmführer Fritz Miroff, who had been sent from the Leibnitz subcamp. Besides him, there were another four to six SS members in Peggau. The remainder of the guards comprised around 15 members of the Municipal Police (Schutzpolizei) and about 80 Ukrainian guards who had deserted from the Wehrmacht. All were under the command of the Revier-Leutnants der Schutzpolizei Franz Weber from Graz.

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

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

The Mauthausen concentration camp roll-call book gives evidence that between the date that Peggau was established to the middle of March 1945 at least 63 prisoners died in Peggau. Initially, the dead were cremated in the Graz crematorium. Some 117 other prisoners, the majority probably because they were ill or physically weak, were sent back to the main camp.8 Toward the end, when the number of dead dramatically increased, a mass grave was dug close to the camp. After the war, 138 bodies were exhumed from it (82 would remain in the grave, on which later was placed a tombstone). Altogether it can be assumed that between 150 and 200 prisoners died in Peggau alone. The Eisenerz work detachment was transferred almost in toto to the Peggau camp at the beginning of March 1945. Peggau was evacuated on April 2, 1945. Before the evacuation march began, 15 prisoners who could no longer walk were shot in the tunnels. The remaining 850 prisoners were driven at first on foot to Bruck an der Mur. There, they were loaded onto cattle wagons and transported to Mauthausen, where they arrived on April 7, 1945. Another 21 prisoners died during the evacuation, and 9 were officially recorded as successfully escaping.8

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


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

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NOTES
4. All details are from Rapportbuch Aussenkommandos, AG-M, E/6/11.
7. Meldungen der Lagerschreibstube über Häftlingsbewegungen während der Evakuierungsärnische from April 9, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.
8. Meldungen der Lagerschreibstube über Häftlingsbewegungen während der Evakuierungsärnische from April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.
The subcamp in the Upper Austrian town of Redl-Zipf had the code name “Schlier.” It is connected with the acceleration of production of the “miracle weapons” that were the result of the ever-increasing threat of German defeat. Beginning in June 1943, work began on the construction by concentration camp prisoners of a factory for the serial production of the so-called A4 (Aggregat 4) rockets in Wiener Neustadt. However, at the end of August 1943, the decision was made, due to the increasing air bombardment on factories where the A4 rockets were produced, to relocate underground and to separate the areas of research and development from production. The serial production of the A4 rockets would be centralized in the underground facilities of the Mittelwerk GmbH in Nordhausen. Simultaneously, a subterranean rocket research facility would be constructed in Ebensee.

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

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

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

There was another large explosion on August 29, 1944, when an oxygen tank blew up; 28 people were killed, all of whom were civilian engineers or skilled tradesmen. Investigations could not determine whether this was an act of sabotage or an accident.

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

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

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

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

As a result of prisoner transfers to the Gusen and Ebensee subcamps as well as the Mauthausen main camp, prisoner numbers at the Redl-Zipf subcamp had fallen by April 1945 to about 330.4 Toward the end of the war and as a result of the collapse of the Eastern Front, prisoners from the so-called Operation Bernhard, also known as the Forgery Detail, were transferred from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp via the Mauthausen main camp to Redl-Zipf. It was only on April 13, 1945, after the prisoners had been in the Mauthausen camp for several weeks, that the 142 Jewish prisoners in this detachment became the responsibility of the Mauthausen main camp.5 The detachment was sent to the Redl-Zipf subcamp, where it resumed production of, inter alia, counterfeit pound banknotes.

The order to evacuate the Redl-Zipf subcamp was finally given on May 3, 1945. At this point, there were about 470
prisoners remaining in the camp. Some of the prisoners were evacuated by truck and others on foot to the Ebensee subcamp. Several prisoners were able to escape on the march to Ebensee.

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

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

Sources

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

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

Notes

3. All details come from the Rapportbuch, AG-M, E/6/11.
4. Ibid.
5. AG-M, B/36/5.
7. A copy is to be found in AG-M, Collection B/36/15.
occasional transfers of individual prisoners back to the Mauthausen concentration camp.

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

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


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

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NOTES
1. Work Report of the Work Leader, Schutzhäftler Mauthausen, E/2/13; Roll Call Book Work Detachment, Daily Reports, February 17, 1944, to March 15, 1945, E/6/11; Movements in Mauthausen concentration camp April 1945, E/6/7—all in AG-M.

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

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

4. Variation Report, July 5, 1943, Camp Record Office, Mauthausen concentration camp, IPN, KZ Mauthausen 26, k. 89–90.
At 45 years, the average age of the female prisoners at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach was relatively high. When the camp was established in 1944, the youngest female prisoner was age 32 and the eldest was almost 60. Four of the Jehovah’s Witnesses had behind them long years of imprisonment and had already been held in early concentration camps such as Moringen and Lichtenburg. The prisoners included 12 Germans, the largest national grouping. There were 2 female Poles and 2 female Jehovah’s Witnesses from the so-called Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (present-day Czech Republic). The female prisoners were used for cleaning and other domestic duties. They also worked in the fields and the gardens. As the women lived and worked mostly within the castle walls, they had almost no contact with the local population.

The female prisoners were apparently fed from the common SS kitchen. There is an invoice for food for the prisoners from May 1944. The female Jehovah’s Witnesses probably received food that had a higher nutritional value than prisoners received in other concentration camps.

Historian Andreas Baumgartner provides three explanations why the prisoners received increased rations at the rate of 2 Reichsmark (RM) per day—the costs may have been higher than those of the large kitchens in the concentration camps or the Jehovah’s Witnesses in fact received better and more costly meals at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach. The most probable explanation is that the camp administration in fact calculated a rate of 2 RM per day per prisoner but only used part of that for the prisoners and pocketed the rest.

What is known about the female prisoners’ treatment is that there were neither killings nor deaths in the Schloss Mittersill or Schloss Lannach subcamps. There was practically no change in prisoner numbers. Baumgartner states that there was probably an exchange of prisoners whereby the eldest Jehovah’s Witness was returned to the main camp and a Jehovah’s Witness from Ravensbrück was sent to Schloss Lannach as her replacement. The woman sent back to the main camp survived more than five and one-half years in the concentration camps and was liberated in Ravensbrück. Another female Jehovah’s Witness was transferred from the Schloss Mittersill subcamp to Mauthausen. She almost did not survive her time in Mauthausen but was finally liberated.

The living conditions in the camps at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach are estimated to have been much better than in the female concentration camps at Ravensbrück and Mauthausen.

Both subcamps, originally part of the Ravensbrück camp system, were taken over by the Mauthausen camp for administrative reasons in September 1944. This organizational measure did not result in any personnel changes. There are also no reports of any changes in the guards.

In the final phase of the Third Reich, obviously no consideration was given to the evacuation of the camps at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach, because of the long distance from the Mauthausen main camp and the collapsing transport network. The female prisoners at Schloss Mittersill were liberated by American troops on May 8, 1945. A U.S. infantry division pushing east from the Tyrol in the direction of Pínzgau, where Mittersill is located, liberated the Jehovah’s Witnesses at the Schloss Mittersill subcamp.

The women at Schloss Lannach were liberated a little later. On May 9, a motorized unit of the Red Army reached the area to the west of Graz, where Schloss Lannach is located. The guards had most probably fled by this time.

Details on the SS guards are lacking. There was only a general investigation into acts of homicide in the Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach camps. The investigation did not proceed due to a lack of evidence.

**SOURCES** A scholarly publication on these subcamps was written by Andreas Baumgartner, *Die vergessenen Frauen von Mauthausen: Die weiblichen Häftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen und ihre Geschichte* (Vienna, 1997), which forms the basis of this essay. Some details were taken from a work by Hans Maršálek, *Die Geschichte des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen* (Vienna, 1995). Hermann Kainburg’s detailed study *Die Wirtschaft der SS* (Berlin, 2003) contains details about how Schloss Lannach fitted into the SS economy.

Archival sources used by Baumgartner mostly come from the AG-M and from Baumgartner’s private archive. A collection of data relating to the Jehovah’s Witnesses who were imprisoned in these two subcamps is to be found in GAZJ. There are few documents in AG-R. Material on the SS economy in relation to Schloss Lannach is to be found in the BA-B. The BA-L (formerly ZdL) holds a report on possible criminal acts in the subcamps at Schloss Mittersill and Schloss Lannach.

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**NOTES**

1. AG-M, K4e.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. BA-B, NS 19-773, NS 2583.
5. BA-B, NS 3-722.
6. GAZJ, Collection KZ Mittersill/ KZ Lannach.
7. BA-B, NS 3-722.
8. AG-M, K4e.
10. GAZJ, Collection KZ Mittersill/ KZ Lannach.
12. BA-L, B 162 AR 6901606.

**ST. ÄGYD AM NEUWALDE**

The St. Ägyd am Neuwalde subcamp was located in the village of St. Ägyd am Neuwalde in southern Niederösterreich (Lower Austria; until 1945: Reichsgau Niederdonau). It was opened on November 2, 1944, and closed on April 1, 1945, according to historian Hans Maršálek (or according to the International Tracing Service [ITS], on April 4, 1945).

Usually, this camp is seen in connection with the Kraftfahrtechnische Lehranstalt der Waffen-SS (Motor Vehicle...
Technical Education Institute [SS], KTL), which had its headquarters in Vienna. But Bertrand Perz argues that the employment of the inmates could perhaps also be seen in connection with a larger construction project such as the erection of a production site for car engines, a giant facility for the production and storage of fuel, or a production site for V-weapon components. Whatever project was planned, the isolated location of St. Ägyd, hidden deeply in the mountains of Lower Austria, would have provided ideal conditions. However, due to the advancing front line, none of these plans was ever realized, and until April 1945 the prisoners were only used to construct the camp, to expand a cavern, and to prepare the planned construction work. Probably some inmates were indeed employed by the KTL to maintain and repair truck engines. Other employers of prisoners from the St. Ägyd camp were the companies Schmitt & Junk (a construction company from Munich) and the Stephansdach Holzbau GmbH, which operated a sawmill and a carpenter shop.

The camp was located on a property that had been confiscated from the Catholic Church in the summer of 1944. It consisted of two barracks for the inmates, as well as some administrative and technical buildings, and was surrounded by barbed wire and watchtowers. Next to the camp, there were a number of barracks in which the guards were accommodated. They consisted of about 30 to 40 Volksdeutsche SS men. The camp commander was SS-Hauptsturmführer Willi Auerswald, who had earlier been on duty at the Steyr-Münichholz camp. The roll-call leader (Rapportführer) was Anton Perschl.

On November 2, 1944, the first 300 prisoners arrived. More than half of them were Poles; the others were Yugoslavs, Soviets, and Germans. Of this group, 125 were considered skilled laborers, and 14 were assigned to be prisoner-functionaries. Due to the severe work and living conditions in the subcamp, there was a high fluctuation of inmates. Repeatedly, prisoners from St. Ägyd were sent back to Mauthausen. Until January 8, the number of inmates dropped to 268—about 10 percent of the inmates had died within the first two months of the camp’s existence, and some had been sent back to the main camp. On January 8, more than 90 prisoners who were incapable of working were sent back to Mauthausen; on February 20, 50 more. On February 21, 184 inmates were brought from Mauthausen, mostly Soviets but also Italians, Poles, and Germans. Out of 497 inmates that had been transferred in total to St. Ägyd, about 46 died.

The 391 remaining prisoners were evacuated on April 1. They had to walk to the railway station in St. Ägyd and were taken by train to St. Pölten. From there, they walked to Krems an der Donau and continued by train to Mauthausen. On April 4, 1945, 297 prisoners arrived there; 4 had died.

Camp commander Willi Auerswald was sentenced to death in the Dachau Trials. In 1948, his sentence was reduced to life, then early in the 1950s to 10 years of imprisonment. Anton Perschl was sentenced in Vienna in 1952 to seven months of imprisonment.

**STEYR-MÜNICHHOLZ**

The ball-bearing factory Münichholz, “one of the most important specialist industries for German air armaments,” according to Hans Mārsālek, was located in the Münichholz district of the city of Steyr in Oberösterreich (Upper Austria) during World War II. Guidance equipment and later aircraft engines were produced in the facility. The rolling mill in Steyr-Münichholz had been founded in 1941 and quickly became the third-largest producer of ball bearings in the German Reich; almost half of the labor force consisted of male and female forced laborers from all European countries. The rolling mill belonged to Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP).

By no later than September 1938, the city of Steyr had close relations with the nearby Mauthausen concentration camp. As Karl-Heinz Rauscher states, from that time the corpses of prisoners who died in Mauthausen were cremated in the Steyr crematorium. Until 1945, victims of Mauthausen and its subcamps comprised 86 percent of all people cremated at the Steyr crematorium.

From the end of 1941, prisoners from Mauthausen were required to work for SDP. At first they were sent on a daily basis to Münichholz on buses and later on trains, but this approach turned out not to be efficient enough for the SDP managers. According to Rauscher, from January 1942, following the initiative of the managing director of the SDP, Meinl, prisoners were required to construct a temporary barracks camp in Steyr-Münichholz that was to accommodate Mauthausen prisoners who were to work in the SDP’s new aircraft engine factory. From January 1942 on, about 300 inmates, the majority of them Spaniards, worked on erecting this camp. It was intended that permanent accommodation would be the Steyr-Garsten prison. However, due to political intrigue, the

**SOURCES**


Files on the subcamp St. Ägyd am Neuwalde are located in the AG-M under call numbers B/60/11 and B/42/01 (Nebenlager St. Ägyd am Neuwalde: Lage- und Höhenplan).

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**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF CAMPS AND GHETTOS, 1933–1945**
prison was not made available for the concentration camp inmates. The result was that on March 14, 1943, the temporary camp in Steyr-Münichholz was opened as the new Mauthausen subcamp. The camp consisted of six accommodation barracks, an infirmary, stores barracks, toilet barracks, kitchen, one barracks for the camp command, and one for the guards.

Not only the SDP but also the Steyr community benefited from the prisoners’ labor. Prisoners were used to construct the camp and various air-raid defense buildings, to build aircraft engines and perform quality control on them, to produce hall bearings, and to assemble aircraft engines and tank components. They worked in two 12-hour shifts. The city of Steyr used the prisoners in building streets, cellars, and bunkers. Initially there were 300 male prisoners in the camp. By the end of February 1944, there were 1,022 prisoners, and by the end of 1944, about 2,000 prisoners. Rauscher states that the prisoners were mostly of Russian, Yugoslav, and Polish nationality. In Steyr-Münichholz, there were also Spanish International Brigadists and French resistance fighters. From fall 1944 on, there were also Jewish prisoners in the camp. Otto Heess was the camp commander from August 27, 1943, to May 6, 1945. The roll-call leader (Rapportführer) was Willi Auerswald.

After reviewing the city of Steyr’s record of the number of cremations, Rauscher estimates the number of prisoners who died in the Steyr subcamp or who were returned to Mauthausen as “unable to work” (arbeitsunfähig) and probably murdered there as 900. Several prisoners died while trying to escape, while others—with the help of the local Münichholz parish—appeared to have succeeded. During a heavy air raid on Steyr on April 2, 1944, prisoners were killed. Even before that raid, the ball-bearing factory had been repeatedly bombed, as, for example, on February 23 and 24, 1944.

A group of prisoners from the camp Wiener Neustadt arrived in the camp on April 9, 1945. A few days later, these prisoners and a first group of prisoners from the Steyr- Münichholz subcamp marched to Gusen; those who could not walk were taken to Mauthausen and murdered. These measures reduced the almost 2,000 prisoners to around 1,200. Evacuation marches from other camps meant that the last officially recorded number of prisoners in the camp at the end of April 1945 was 2,918, but when the camp was liberated on May 5, 1945, there were 3,090 prisoners.

A number of postwar trials dealt with events at the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp. For killing an inmate, Czech SS guard Franz Kautny was sentenced to death in a case that dealt with crimes committed at the Mauthausen main camp and its subcamps. Heess was sentenced to life in prison; Auerswald (who later became the camp commander in St. Ägyd), to death by hanging. The sentence was later reduced to 10 years of imprisonment. The Austrian inmate Franz Steurer who had been the block elder of Block 4 in Münichholz was sentenced to a life term in a penitentiary.


Details on the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp are held in AG-M unter references B/38/03 (Nebenlager Wien-Saurerwerke: Evakuierungsliste von Wien-Saurerwerke nach KL Steyr, 1282 Namen, 2.4.1945–23.4.1945); and V/03/45 (Interviews und Haftlingsberichte: Bericht des Franz Kalteis, ehemaliger Höfling im Konzentrationslager Mauthausen sowie im Nebenlager Saurerwerke, September 15, 1969). The use of the
Mauthausen

948

prisoners by the city of Steyr is documented in various construction files held in the AS-Sty; in the DOW under reference 112111; and in the IFZ-UW under reference T 83/77. Records regarding the trial against former personnel of the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp can be found at the following sources: US vs. Kurt Otto (NARA, 000-Mauthausen-5); US vs. Wilhelm Kauffeld (NARA, 000-Mauthausen-10); US vs. Laurian Navas (NARA, 000-50-5-25); US vs. Hubert Frisch et al. (NARA, 000-50-5-38); US vs. Fabian Richter et al. (NARA, 000-50-5-40); Franz Steurer trial (People's Court of Vienna, Id Vr 4845/48.

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NOTE


ST. LAMBRCHET [MEN]

The St. Lambrecht Monastery was the first Austrian monastery to be confiscated by the National Socialists. This occurred in May 1938, and the Gau Steiermark (Styria) became the registered proprietor. Together with other monasteries, St. Lambrecht was administered by the Manor Administration Admont and St. Lambrecht (Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht), which was under the command of SS-Obersturmbannführer (later SS-Standartenführer) Hubert Erhart. The Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht in turn was controlled by the German Association for the Care of Ethnic Germans and Settler Assistance (Deutscher Reichsverein für Volkspflege und Siedlerhilfe e.V., Berlin). This association originated from the SS-Race and Settlement Main Office (Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt, RuSHA), and in 1942 it came under the jurisdiction of the SS-Business Administration Main Office (VVHA). The association's chairman at this time was Oswald Pohl, head of the WVHA. The association was originally established with the main task of resettling Germans in non-German border areas of the German Reich so as to strengthen the ethnic Germans within those areas. It also managed church confiscated property. The association was unsuccessful in its attempt to gain ownership of the monastery assets, and so a lease was negotiated with the Gau Styria over the monastery lands.

In St. Lambrecht, the Deutscher Reichsverein aimed to restructure the ownership of 10 percent of the monastery grounds so that it became so-called hereditary farms. They would be leased on favorable conditions to farmers. One further goal at St. Lambrecht was to establish a farm laborer settlement. To establish the settlement, the association demanded concentration camp prisoners. The first transport of 80 to 100 Dachau prisoners arrived in St. Lambrecht on May 13, 1942. The camp was administered until November 19, 1942, by the Dachau concentration camp. On November 20, 1942, St. Lambrecht, together with the subcamps at Schloss Lind and Passau I, came under the administration of the Mauthausen concentration camp.

At first the prisoners were put to work within the monastery, constructing the camp and the SS accommodations. After that work was done, the majority of the prisoners had to construct the farmer settlement, and up to 30 prisoners were put to work on the farm and in the forests. Some also worked in the kitchens and as cleaners. From the winter of 1942–1943 onward, the prisoners were also used by Erhart to build a villa for his family not far away from the monastery. At the beginning of 1944, the Office for Publications, Vienna (Publikationsstelle Wien) was relocated to the St. Lambrecht monastery. A few prisoners then worked for this institution.

In the summer of 1943, there was a rotation of almost all the prisoners. On June 29, 1943, 15 German and Polish prisoners were transferred back to the main camp. On July 1, 1943, 14 of these prisoners were reported as having been shot while “trying to escape.” A few days later, on July 5, 1943, 79 prisoners, mainly Polish and German political prisoners as well as Red Spaniards (Rotspaniern), were forced to march to the Gusen camp; 3 Red Spaniards were forced to march to the Schloss Lind subcamp, and 1 Red Spaniard to the main camp. At the same time, 99 Red Spaniards and a Polish “protective custody” prisoner were transferred from the main camp. The 79 prisoners who were transported to Gusen were allocated to a punishment company. Only a few are said to have survived. The reasons for this action are not documented, but survivor Josef Nischelwitzer thinks that the leader of a construction detail, who came from Upper Silesia, had heard Polish prisoners discussing escape plans.

Little can be said about the composition of the prisoner population in the period when the camp was administered from Dachau. According to one report, the prisoners in the first transport were mostly Poles, but there were also Germans and people from the former Czech Republic. The names of 103 prisoners sent to the St. Lambrecht subcamp before July 1943 are known: 45 came from the German Reich, 33 were Poles, 19 were Spaniards, 5 were Czechs, and 1 was a Yugoslav; 73 were categorized as political prisoners, 19 as Red Spaniards, 7 as “asocials” (Arbeitsschwach, Reich), and 2 as temporary preventive custody (Befristeter Vorbeugungshaft) prisoners.

The names of 129 prisoners transported to the subcamp after July 2, 1943, are also known. These names allow one to discern the nationalities of the prisoners: 109 (84.5 percent) were Spaniards, 6 Poles, 5 Italians, 3 Soviets, 3 Frenchmen, 2 Reich Germans, and 1 Hungarian. In addition to the Red Spaniards, there were 13 political prisoners (10.8 percent); 2 percent were in security arrest (Sicherheitsverwahrung); there was 1 Soviet prisoner of war (POW); the remainder were (1 each) categorized as a Russian civilian worker, or rather a civilian worker, as “Jewish,” and as a temporary preventive custody prisoner.

It can no longer be determined how many prisoners in total were sent to St. Lambrecht. The first strength report was dated from September 2, 1943, when 121 prisoners were sent from
the main concentration camp to the subcamp; 44 of these were sent back to the main camp, including 31 Red Spaniards, in a transport on December 1, 1943. These Red Spaniards apparently were not sent back to the main camp for punishment or to die. Rather, as skilled workers, they were reallocated to another work detachment. Between September 1943 and May 1945, there were on average 80 prisoners in the camp. The highest documented number of prisoners was on October 2, 1943, when there were 101 prisoners in the camp. No prisoners died in the camp after September 1943, but it should be noted that in addition to the Red Spaniard transport another 13 prisoners were transferred back to the main camp.

Conditions in the camp deteriorated considerably when the Mauthausen concentration camp took control. Misreatment of prisoners increased with the new camp guard. Nevertheless, the food was better than in other subcamps—if only for the reason that the Manor Administration operated its own farm.

Unlike the subcamp at Schloss Lind, which was also administered by the Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht, the evacuation of St. Lambrecht was not attempted. However, in its last days, there were allegedly no guards in the camp. It was liberated shortly after Schloss Lind, after May 11 or 12, by British forces.

The camp leader was initially SS-Unterscharführer Remle. He was replaced by SS-Hauptscharführer Ernst Angerer, who came from Munich. According to a report by Josef Nischelwitzer, who enjoyed privileges as a construction detachment Kapo, Angerer was not “an oppressor and not a murderer . . . he was basically different from the others. The detachment was relatively bearable.” Angerer is said to have been arrested because he gave favors to the prisoners. He is said to have been convicted and punished by being transferred to the SS-Sondereinheit Dirlewanger for probation.

When the Mauthausen administration took over, Angerer was replaced as camp commander by SS-Untersturmführer Erich Scholll. The camp guard, which consisted of between six and eight men, was also replaced. A member of the guard was convicted in proceedings before a U.S. military court in Dachau for mistreating prisoners and sentenced to 10 years’ imprisonment.

The report by survivor Josef Nischelwitzer has been published as “St. Lambrecht: Die Geschichte eines Häftlingskommandos,” in Josef Nischelwitzer 1912–1987: Skizzen aus seinem Leben und seiner Zeit, ed. KPÖ Kärnten (Klagenfurt, 1988), pp. 55–74. Dietmar Seiler’s interviews with local inhabitants and persons who were in contact with the camp are held by the Oral History Archive of HfWsg. The AG-M holds copies of the transport list, the subcamp roll-call book, statements by Josef Nischelwitzer, and 71 prisoner cards. The IPN holds a few transport lists. There is further information in the Sti-A-StLam and the Seiler private archive collection St. Lambrecht. For the trial of an SS guard from the St. Lambrecht camp, see NARA, RG 338, Records of U.S. Army Commands, 1942, Records of Headquarters, USAREUR, War Crimes Branch, War Crimes Case Files (“Cases Tried”), 1945–1959, Case 000-50-5-8, USA v. Willi Auerswald et al.

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**NOTES**

1. BA-B, NS 3/900 and 1462.
2. BA-B, NS 3/312, fol. 19.
3. Variation Report for June 29, 1943, Mauthausen Concentration Camp Record Office. KZ Mauthausen 26, k. 85; Variation Report for July 5, 1943, Mauthausen Concentration Camp Record Office, KZ Mauthausen 26, k. 89–90, both in IPN.
8. Variation Report for July 2, 1943, Camp Record Office Mauthausen Memorial Concentration Camp, B/44/3; Report of the St. Lambrecht Town and the St. Lambrecht Police Office, list of seventy-one prisoners in the camp at its liberation B/44/1/1, AG-M; as well as AG-M, Data Project, List of All Documented Prisoners in the Mauthausen Concentration Camp, Data Bank Questionnaire to St. Lambrecht Prisoners (project incomplete as of July 30, 2003).
9. Work Leader Report Mauthausen Protective Custody Report F/2/15; Subcamp Daily Reports, February 17, 1944, to March 15, 1945, E/6/11; Movements in Mauthausen Concentration Camp, April 1945, E/6/7—all in AG-M.
13. NARA, RG 338, Case 000-50-5-8, USA v. Willi Auerswald et al.
ST. LAMBRECHT (WOMEN)

As with the men’s subcamp, the female prisoners at St. Lambrecht worked for the Manor Administration Admont and St. Lambrecht (Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht), part of the German Association for the Care of Ethnic Germans and Settler Assistance (Deutscher Reichsverein für Volkspflege und Siedlerhilfe e.V. Berlin). The work was forestry work, cleaning, and working in the kitchens. At the beginning of 1944, the Office for Publications, Vienna (Publikationsstelle Wien) was relocated to the monastery at St. Lambrecht. Some of the prisoners also had to work for this organization.

In February or March 1943, 30 women from the Ravensbrück concentration camp are said to have been transferred to St. Lambrecht. The St. Lambrecht subcamp for women, erected with the arrival of these prisoners, was physically and organizationally separate from the subcamp for men. It remained under the administration of the Ravensbrück concentration camp until September 15, 1944. When the camp was transferred to Mauthausen, the remaining 23 prisoners were entered into the Mauthausen prisoner register. The prisoners, together with some prisoners from the main camp and the Schloss Mittersill subcamp, were given the first prisoner numbers ranging from 1 to 58.

All the women at St. Lambrecht were Jehovah’s Witnesses. The members of the International Association of Bible Researchers (Internationaler Bibelforscher-Vereinigung) had been persecuted by the National Socialists since 1933. They were persecuted because they refused to undertake military service, to swear allegiance to the state, and to obey the rules of state institutions. This group of Jehovah’s Witnesses remained incarcerated in St. Lambrecht until the subcamp was liberated. This is noteworthy because in September 1943 the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA) gave a directive that Jehovah’s Witness groups in the concentration camps were to be scattered, and the individuals were to be separated from each other.

Of the 23 women, 12 were from the German Reich; there were 5 Poles, 5 Dutch, and 1 Belgian. The eldest was born in 1889. The women had an average age of 41 years when they were liberated. There are no documented cases of any deaths or of any transfers back to the main Mauthausen concentration camp after September 15, 1944. This suggests that the prison conditions were bearable in the St. Lambrecht female subcamp.

According to a statement by a prisoner from the subcamp for men, the female guards were just as bad as the male guards. According to the Central Office of State Justice Administrations (ZiLo) in Ludwigsburg, Jane B., a female St. Lambrecht overseer, appears in a number of proceedings relating to the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

SOURCES Dietmar Seiler describes the history of the three subcamps assigned to the Güterdirektion Admont und St. Lambrecht in Die SS im Benediktinerstift: Aspekte der KZ-Aussenlager St. Lambrecht und Schloss Lind (Graz, 1994). Probably because of the dearth of documents, only a small chapter is devoted to the subcamp for women. Based largely on Seiler, a short history of the subcamp is to be found in Andreas Baumgartner’s work on the female prisoners of the Mauthausen concentration camp, Die vergessenen Frauen von Mauthausen: Die weiblichen Haftlinge des Konzentrationslagers Mauthausen und ihre Geschichte (Vienna, 1997); as well as in an essay by Barbara Distel on the Dachau subcamps in Austria, “KZ-Kommandos an idyllischen Orten. Dachauer Aussenlager in Österreich,” DaHe 15 (1999): 54–65.

Only a few documents on the subcamp for women at St. Lambrecht are known. They are held in the AG-M, the St-A-StLam, and the Seiler private archive, collection St. Lambrecht. Dietmar Seiler has conducted interviews with the local population and with people who had contact with the camp. These interviews are kept by the Oral History Archive of the IFWSG. A report of a former prisoner of the St. Lambrecht subcamp for men mentions the subcamp for women: Josef Nischelwitzer, “St. Lambrecht: Die Geschichte eines Häftlingskommandos,” in Josef Nischelwitzer 1912–1987: Skizzen aus seinem Leben und seiner Zeit, ed. KPO Kärnten (Klagenfurt; 1988), pp. 55–74.

Christian Dürr and Ralf Lechner trans. Stephen Pallavicini

NOTES

1. A copy of the Admissions Register of the female Mauthausen Concentration Camp, AG-M, K/5/6; original held by ITS.
2. AG-M, K/6/2.
4. AG-M, K/10/09/06A.

ST. VALENTIN

St. Valentin is located in the district of Amstetten in Lower Austria (Niederösterreich; until 1945: Reichsgau Niederdonau). The Nibelungenwerke, one of the largest tank production sites during World War II, was located in St. Valentin. Hans Maršálek states that during the war mostly Type IV tanks were built here: 4,340 of the 8,209 Type IV tanks that were produced during World War II came from St. Valentin, or more than 50 percent of the total production in the German Reich. Of the 3,366 Type IV tanks manufactured in Germany in 1944, 2,809 originated from St. Valentin. Even in April 1945, 65 tanks were delivered to the Wehrmacht’s Heeresgruppe Süd. The Jagdtiger and Elefant
tanks were also manufactured in St. Valentin but in lesser numbers.

Already in 1938 the Army High Command (Oberkommando des Heeres) had prepared plans to increase the capacities for the production of tanks in the Ostmark, the former Austria. Thus, the production site for tanks was created in St. Valentin, in close proximity to the iron production sites in Linz (Hütte Linz) and the Eisenwerke Oberdonau, both managed by the Reichswerke “Hermann Göring.” Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP), a former Austrian and then, from 1938, German armaments manufacturer, was first a leaseholder of the production site through the Nibelungenwerke, a subsidiary solely created for this purpose. In 1942, SDP finally acquired the company. At the same time, production was upgraded from repairing to producing tanks. The close cooperation of SDP with the SS also included the use of slave labor: between March 1942 and the autumn of 1943, the SDP engaged around 10,000 prisoners in different sites. Later, the number would increase to 14,000.

The St. Valentin camp was opened on August 21 (other sources: August 22), 1944, with the arrival of 500 male prisoners, among them 481 Jews. The latter had arrived in Mauthausen only one day earlier from Krakau-Plaszow. On August 28 and September 7, two more transports followed, each with 500 prisoners. Due to deaths on-site and transports back to the main camp, the subcamp never exceeded a maximum number of 1,480 inmates. The inmates were kept in approximately 10 barracks that were located about 300 meters (984 feet) behind the company grounds, close to the testing area for the assembled tanks. The camp was guarded by about 110 SS men under the command of a certain Heidingsfelder; the roll-call leader (Rapportführer) was Johann Schiller. During the existence of the camp, at least 150 inmates died, and six attempts to escape were reported.

The inmates were used in the vital war industry of tank manufacture. They worked within the company where they were kept in specific areas, separate from other employees. and they erected the testing area for assembled tanks and an air-raid bunker. In April 1945, when parts of the tank production were relocated to Ebensee, 695 inmates from St. Valentin were also relocated, between April 19 and 21. Then the camp was closed as Allied forces approached. But the exact date of its closure differs according to various sources: the International Tracing Service (ITS) states that the camp probably closed on April 19, 1945—the date when the first prisoners were evacuated to Ebensee. This information is based on the files of the Mauthausen camp and eyewitness statements. The German Bundesgesetzblatt gives April 21 as the closure date, whereas Maršílek puts the date as April 23—after the transports of prisoners to Ebensee had ceased.

After the war, a number of trials dealt with events at the St. Valentin subcamp, among others the U.S. Mauthausen military tribunals that took place in Dachau. For the severe mistreatment of inmates, leading to death, Rapportführer Schiller was sentenced to 30 years in prison. Former camp clerk Hans Carl von Posern was sentenced to life imprisonment for the mistreatment and killing of inmates. The Landgericht (Regional Court) Vienna sentenced Ferdinand Polsterer, former leader of the factory security force in the Nibelungenwerke, to 12 years in a penitentiary. The Landgericht Munich I sentenced Wilhelm Lipinski, a former prisoner-functionary, to 6 years of imprisonment for the mistreatment of prisoners.

**Sources**


The AG-M holds information on the St. Valentin subcamp under the references B 45/1 and 2 (Berichte über das Nebenlager St. Valentin); M F 4/1 (Angaben des im Arbeitsseinsatz eingesetzten Häftlings Wolfgang Sanner); B 40/1 to 40/10, B 30/1 to B 30/16, B 12/36 (Berichte und Kopien von Transportlisten); as well as E 6/11 (Rapportbuch, Gesamtstand der Häftlinge in den Nebenlagern, Tagesaufstellungen). Information on postwar trials regarding the events at St. Valentin can be found at the following sources: *US vs. Johann Schiller at NARA* (Case 000–50–3–39; *US vs. Hans Carl von Posern at NARA* (Case 000–50–5–46). At NARA, see also *US vs. Peter Baerens et al.* (Case 000–50–5–22), which contains details about Ebensee. For the trial against Polsterer, see LG Vienna, Vg I a Vr 6923/46; for the case against Lipinski, see LG Munich I, 1 Ks 17/49. The USHMMMA lists the names of 25 prisoners who survived the St. Valentin subcamp. The account of former prisoner Nathan Gutman, “The Angel of St. Valentin,” is under the reference Acc.1996.A.0373. It describes his last weeks of the war in St. Valentin.

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**Notes**


VOLUME I: PART B
Initially, these prisoners were placed by the SS at the lowest level in the Mauthausen hierarchy. Some 4,200 of the approximately 7,000 prisoners brought to the camp had been killed by the end of 1942. The Red Spaniards rose in the camp hierarchy as newer prisoners arrived, prisoners who were even more discriminated against. In time, their work discipline enabled them to assume a privileged position.

The Mauthausen concentration camp categorized veterans of the Spanish Civil War, that is, Spanish Republicans and members of the International Brigades, as Red Spaniards. Initially, these prisoners were placed by the SS at the lowest level in the Mauthausen hierarchy. Some 4,200 of the approximately 7,000 prisoners brought to the camp had been killed by the end of 1942. The Red Spaniards rose in the camp hierarchy as newer prisoners arrived, prisoners who were even more discriminated against. In time, their work discipline enabled them to assume a privileged position.

From June 1941, the “César Detachment,” which consisted exclusively of Red Spaniards and was named after its Kapo, César Orquín Serra, was sent to the subcamps at Vöcklabruck and Ternberg and eventually on to Redl-Zipf. Very few prisoners in this detachment died despite the heavy physical work. This was in large part due to the strong solidarity among the Red Spaniards. According to one prisoner report, Orquín Serra was able to get the SS to provide adequate food supplies; other reports state that Serra was duplicitous. The Kapos ensured that when the work details were put together, there was a combination of the physically weak with the healthy prisoners.

It can be assumed that the Red Spaniards were the majority of Ternberg’s prisoners. Only 13 of 408 prisoners died in the camp, a relatively low number when one considers the large size of the construction camp. In the nearby subcamp at Grossraming, where the prisoners were also constructing a power plant on the Enns, 227 of the 1,013 prisoners died between January 14, 1943, and August 29, 1944.

The major role of the Ternberg prisoners was the creation of the construction site. The excavation for the foundations, where the prisoners had to break up the hard rock with heavy hammers and carry it, was physically draining work. Some of the prisoners are said to have worked in the nearby quarry. Not only did the Deutsche Bergwerke require the prisoners to construct the power plant; the construction firm Hummel and Baumann used them to reroute Reichstrasse 95. The Reich Road Administration (Reichsstrassenverwaltung) paid the Deutsche Bergwerke for the use of the prisoners.

On September 18, 1944, 395 prisoners were transferred back to the main camp, and the subcamp at Ternberg was dissolved. Although well advanced, work ended on the power plant. The project was no longer important enough for the war effort.

When questioned after the war before the state criminal court, SS-Chief Josef Schiller stated the “company commander” [Kompaniechef] was an SS-Obersturmführer Kieserle. SS-Hauptsturmführer Anton Ganz was the camp leader (Lagerführer) at Ternberg from the end of 1942 to May or June 1943. He was later commander at Wiener Neustadt and Ebensee. Ganz was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1972. He was particularly noted for his brutality in Ebensee—a survivor described him as arbitrary, dictatorial, and brutal.

Sources

The history of the Ternberg camp has been described in two publications: Florian Freund, “Zwangarbeit beim Bau der Ennskraftwerke,” in NS-Zwangarbeit in der Elektrizitätswirtschaft der „Ostmark“ 1938–1945: Ennskraftwerke—Kaprun—Draukraftwerke—Ybbs-Persenbeug—Ernstbofen, ed. Oliver Rathkolb and Florian Freund (Vienna, 2002); and Adolf Brunthaler’s Strom für den Führer: Der Bau der Ennskraftwerke und die KZ-Lager Ternberg, Großraming und Dipoldsau (Weitra, 2000). Information on Spanish Republicans at Mauthausen can be obtained from Martina Schröck, Von Spanischen Bürgerkrieg ins Konzentrationslager: Die republikanischen Spanier im KZ Mauth-
As with just about all subcamps that were dissolved toward the end of the war, there are scarcely any SS documents other than the scattered transport lists. This camp was not the subject of postwar trials. There is a relatively large amount of material dealing with the construction of the Enns power station in the BA-B and in the Os.La. Additional primary sources may be found in BA-L and a published document, translated into French, in Christian Bernadac, *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976).

### NOTES

2. Report of the Ebenboden near Ternberg Police Station to the Steyr District Council, May 23, 1942, Os.La, BH Steyr, Sch. 190 AZ 10/13-1942.
5. BA-L, ZdL, Ludwigsburg, AZ 419 AR-Z 4/64.

### VÖCKLABRUCK

The subcamp at Vöcklabruck opened in June 1941 in the Wagrain district of the city of Vöcklabruck. It was the third subcamp of the Mauthausen concentration camp after Gusen and Breitstein. The prisoners were generally not used in armaments production in the early stages of the founding of the camp. The assumption was made that the camp was opened at the instigation of the SS-owned company German Earth and Stone Works (DESt). Its prisoners were engaged mainly in road construction work.

The first transport of about 300 prisoners was transferred to Vöcklabruck on June 6, 1941. The prisoners—with the exception of 2 prisoners from the German Reich and 1 Moroccan—were said to have been exclusively so-called Red Spaniards.

The camp's prisoners were deployed to different labor details in the surrounding area of Vöcklabruck. The two biggest details, Strassenbau I and Strassenbau II, were assigned to do road construction work in the south of the city. Three smaller labor details, Vöcklüberkle, Agerbrücke, and Tiefenweg, were engaged in bridge construction. Other small labor details worked on the construction of a water pipe, in a stone quarry, in the nearby town of Attnang-Puchheim, and at demolition work.

The labor details were supposedly led by one or more civilians.

According to the statement of a survivor, a so-called gas van (*Gaswagen*) was used repeatedly for the killing of prisoners who were unable to work anymore. Two Spaniards and a Moroccan tried unsuccessfully to flee the camp on April 5, 1942. The Spaniards were supposedly recaptured; the Moroccan froze to death.

The Reichswerke “Hermann Göring” (RWHG) asked for concentration camp prisoners to be deployed at the construction of the power station Ternberg in the spring of 1942. Because the commandant's headquarters of the Mauthausen concentration camp were not in a situation to provide the requested number of prisoners, the Cäsar Detachment, which consisted of Red Spaniards and was named after its Kapo, César Orquín Serra, and its guard force were transferred to the newly opened subcamp Ternberg on May 14, 1942. Consequently, the camp Vöcklabruck was closed.

The Vöcklabruck subcamp was supposedly guarded by 30 SS men.

### SUBKOMMANDO VÖCKLABRUCK OF THE REDL-ZIPF SUBCAMP

Between September 30, 1943, and March 24, 1945, a subcommando of the subcamp Redl-Zipf also existed in Vöcklabruck.

From a transport list it can be concluded that 48 prisoners were transported from the subcamp Wien-Schwechat to this detail on October 13, 1943. The majority of these prisoners were of Polish, Spanish, and Soviet origin.

### SOURCES


As is the case with most of the camps that were closed before the end of the war, almost no SS documents about Vöcklabruck have been preserved. Pictures of the camp as well as the record of an interrogation of former prisoner Bernardo Martinez Castillo can be found in the AG-M. The most important source for the representation of the Vöcklabruck subcamp is the interview with prisoner B. The interview was conducted in 1985. In the collection of the ITS, there are documents about Vöcklabruck as well as about the subcommando of the Redl-Zipf subcamp. There is also some documentation in IPN. Christian Bernadac's *Des jours sans fin: Mauthausen III* (Paris, 1976) reproduces some documentation for this camp in French translation.
NOTES


WEYR

Weyr was located approximately 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) from the Grossraming subcamp, and it dates from the spring of 1943, probably mid- or late April. At that time, a detail of about 30 prisoners from Grossraming began clearing the forest land, leveling the ground in preparation for the construction of barracks. During the first few weeks at the Weyr site, the prisoners returned daily to Grossraming. After the site was enclosed with a barbed-wire fence and four barracks had been constructed, the prisoners stayed there. Additional barracks were built outside of the compound for the SS guards and the civilian workers. Weyr held about 100 prisoners, perhaps as many as 250, from various European nations, as well as 20 SS guards. Prisoners did road work and labor for civilian firms and were supervised by German Kapos. The Weyr subcamp was evacuated in October 1944, and the prisoners were returned to Mauthausen.

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

WAGNER [SAURERWERKE, WIEN-WEST]

The subcamp Wien (Saurerwerke) was located in District IX, Simmering, in Vienna. Here the prisoners worked for the former Austrian Saurerwerke AG in the Heidequerstrasse (sometimes also referred to as Haiderstrasse).

The Austrian Saurerwerke performed production under license of the Swiss Company Adolph Saurer, which produced trucks and buses. Until 1938, the company employed approximately 1,000 people. By 1944, this number increased to about 5,000 including a high percentage of foreign forced laborers. In 1938, after Germany’s Anschluss with Austria, the production site in Vienna-Simmering had been expanded, and a new factory building had been erected. Here, mainly armored reconnaissance vehicles, tank transporters, and tank engines were produced.

The camp was established on either August 20 or 21, 1944, with the arrival of the first 500 prisoners from Mauthausen. They had to erect the camp, which was established in a now-separated part of the camp for foreign forced laborers. Also, according to Bertrand Perz, they had to build the roll-call grounds and the work site for the inmates who were mainly employed in the tank transporter production. For that purpose, they had to block the doors of Hall C to make sure that the concentration camp inmates remained as separate from the general workforce as possible.

On September 24, 1944, after the camp was finished, 850 more inmates arrived from Mauthausen. The company now employed prisoners exclusively. In February 1945, the number of inmates reached its peak, at 1,489. The majority of inmates were Poles, Soviets, Czechs, Yugoslavs, French, and Italians; about 150 inmates were considered Jews. According to Perz, in the course of the existence of the camp, 136 prisoners were transferred back to Mauthausen because they had become incapable of working; at least 35 died, and 12 inmates tried to escape. Hans Maršíálek also states that several small groups of prisoners, comprising 3 to 5 prisoners each, managed to escape from the subcamp. Austrian prisoner Josef Lauscher succeeded in escaping with the assistance of an illegal prisoner organization, which had been operating in the Melk and Saurerwerke subcamps from the autumn of 1944 on. This illegal prisoner organization worked very efficiently—it was one of its largest successes to install Franz Kalteis, a Communist from Vienna, as the camp elder. Kalteis succeeded in establishing contacts with civilian workers at the company, individual members of the guard, and members of the resistance movement outside the camp.

The camp was guarded by members of the Wehrmacht who had been taken over by the SS and by members of the Austrian Home Guard (Landesschützen). Their number was about 130. The camp commander was Wehrmacht captain Johann Gärnter, then an SS-Hauptsturmführer.

The evacuation of the Saurerwerke subcamp began on April 2, 1945, when there were 1,466 inmates in the camp. The camp elder was able to convince Gärnter not to follow orders by the Mauthausen commander to kill all the inmates that were considered too ill to be evacuated. Thus, 190 prisoners were left behind at the Saurerwerke, to be liberated a few days later by the Red Army. The other inmates, together with prisoners from other Mauthausen subcamps such as St. Ägydl, Hirtenberg, Melk, and Amstetten, were evacuated and arrived on April 18, 1945, in the Gusen camp. From there they marched on to Steyr-Münichholz, where, on April 23, 1,076 survivors of the death march from the Saurerwerke were registered. Since 16 inmates had died during the march, and 25 had escaped, at least 157 inmates disappeared without a trace.

In 1949, the Landgericht (Regional Court) Wien put former camp commander Gärnter on trial. The former acting commandant, Witkowski, a German, escaped trial in Austria in 1946 by fleeing to Germany.


The AG-M contains documents on the Wien (Saurerwerke) subcamp under references V/03/45 (Interviews und Häftlingsberichte: Bericht des Franz Kalteis, ehemaliger Häftling im Konzentrationslager Mauthausen sowie im Nebenlager Saurerwerke, September 15, 1969); and B/18/03 (Nebenlager Wien-Saurerwerke: Evakuierungsliste von Wien-Saurerwerke nach KL Steyr, 1282 Namen, April 2, 1945–April 23, 1945), B 38/04 (Bericht Kalteis), and B 38/6 (Evakuierungslisten).

**WIENER NEUDORF**

The founding of the subcamp Wiener Neudorf is directly related to the increasing demand of the aircraft industry in the German Reich as a consequence of the emerging defeat in the aerial warfare against Britain. Special importance was given to the construction and further development of aircraft engines. These were to be produced in a modern assembly line and with the use of special machine tools, in the mode of production developed by Henry Ford. The Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark were founded as an enterprise of the Reich Air Ministry and the Junkers Flugzeug- und Motorenwerke AG (Junkers Aircraft and Motor Works, Inc., JFM) in April 1941 as a license factory for the production of the Junkers aircraft engine (Jumo 222). Another factory for injection pumps in Brünn (Brno) and a propeller factory in Marburg on the River Drau (Maribor) were to be built next to the main factory in Wiener Neudorf. The choice for the location was supposedly explained by the protected location of Wiener Neudorf from Allied air raids. The construction of the factory was to be carried out in the shortest possible period of time in accordance with the so-called Göring Program. The goal of this program was the quadrupling of the armament production for the German Luftwaffe. The production of 500, later of 1,000, engines a month was planned to commence by March 1943.

Because it soon became obvious that the Junkers engine Jumo 222 had not reached the point where it could be manufactured by serial production, the plans were switched to a license production of Daimler-Benz (DB) engines initially of the type DB-603, later of the type DB-605, at the end of the year 1943. The further construction of the plant and, as a result, also the production of aircraft engines were to be carried out, because of a growing lack of workers, by foreign prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian forced laborers. However, the assignment of workers did not fulfill the high demands of the planning for the construction of the Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark. The lack of labor was responsible for the fact that the construction works fell behind the given time schedule. As a consequence, there were changes in the management personnel at the Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark in August 1943. The general director of Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG (SDP), Georg Meindl, was named the new managing director.

Meindl's good personal relationship to high-ranking SS officials was also probably behind the decision for the setting up of a concentration camp in Wiener Neudorf. He asked Heinrich Himmler in a personal letter dated July 14, 1943, for about 2,000 concentration camp prisoners for the further construction and operation of the Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark. This request was granted immediately by Himmler. A first transport of 201 prisoners from the Mauthausen concentration camp arrived on August 2, 1943. The prisoners' task was to remodel a former hut camp for construction workers into a concentration camp for future prisoners. The production of aircraft engines finally began at the end of 1943, and the number of concentration camp prisoners in Wiener Neudorf grew close to 2,000 by January 1944. The subcamp arrived at its maximum capacity in November 1944 with almost 3,000 prisoners. The majority of the people imprisoned in the camp were Poles; other larger national groups included prisoners from the Soviet Union, France, Yugoslavia, Italy, Germany, and Austria.

The Wiener Neudorf subcamp was first located in the village of Guntramsdorf (a few kilometers south of Vienna) and consisted of 17 huts for the housing of the prisoners, 2 infirmary huts, and 9 administrative huts. As was common for subcamps set up for the armament industry, the guarding of Wiener Neudorf was taken over by that branch of the Wehrmacht that benefited from the respective production. That is why, to a large extent, the guard force included soldiers from the Luftwaffe subordinated to a smaller permanent staff of the SS guard force. The campleader was SS-Hauptsturmführer Kurt Schmutzler. The function of Rapportführer was assigned to SS-Scharführer Rudolf Lamm. Hauptmann Ludwig Stier was the commander of the Luftwaffe soldiers.

Several cases of torture and deliberate killings of prisoners are detailed in the eyewitness report of the former prisoners' physician, Dr. Rudolf Busch-Waldeck. They were performed and ordered by different members of the SS and the Luftwaffe guard. It is believed that a total of about 400 to 450 prisoners died in the Wiener Neudorf subcamp as a result of undernourishment, illness, and ill-treatment.

The Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark became more and more the target of Allied air raids, starting in the early summer of 1944. The subcamp was hit and mostly destroyed during one of these raids on July 26, 1944. A total of 31 prisoners were
supposedly killed. The surviving prisoners were transferred the following day to a new camp in the village of Wiener Neudorf (Mitterfeld) because of the wide destruction of the subcamp.

Due to the intensified Allied air raids on strategically important factories of the armament industry, the decision was made in November 1943 to decentralize and move sections of the Flugmotorenwerke Ostmark underground. The partial transfer of the production from Wiener Neudorf to an underground factory in Dubnica, Slovakia, started in the summer of 1944. In spite of the reduced production, the Wiener Neudorf subcamp continued to operate.

The subcamp was evacuated on April 2, 1945, before the approaching Soviet troops. At this time, 2,517 prisoners were in the Wiener Neudorf subcamp. Supposedly 38 prisoners who were unable to march were left behind in the camp and murdered. The remaining prisoners were sent on a 13-day march in the direction of the Mauthausen main camp. The report of Busch-Waldeck mentions 243 deaths; other sources cite almost 150 deaths during the march. A minimum of 70 prisoners must have managed to flee during the march. The survivors finally arrived at the Mauthausen concentration camp on April 14, 1945.

The persons responsible for the violent crimes committed in the Wiener Neudorf subcamp were called to account in several trials. A few members of the SS guard as well as the captain of the Luftwaffe unit sat on the bench before a U.S. military court in Dachau in June 1947. The trial ended with the death penalty for the camp leader, Kurt Schmutzler; the captain of the Luftwaffe guard, Ludwig Stier; and the block leader, Alois Höllriegl. The executions took place in Landsberg. Another member of the guard unit, Franz Doppelreiter, was sentenced to death in 1946 before the Vienna state court. This sentence was then changed to lifetime imprisonment. Doppelreiter was granted amnesty in 1955. The block leader, Karl Lehnter, was sentenced to death in Poland in 1947. The last known trial concerning Wiener Neudorf took place before the Duisburg regional court in 1993. Accused were the SS canine officers Bruno Blach and Dominik Gleba. Blach, who had emigrated earlier to the United States and had been expelled after his real identity became known, was acquitted because of lack of evidence. Gleba was sentenced to two years of limited confinement.

NOTES

1. Letter from Meindl to Himmler, AG-M, B/49/7.
2. Transport list from August 2, 1943, AG-M, B/49/5.
3. AG-M, B/49/1 and 2.
4. See also the report of Dr. Rudolf Busch-Waldeck, AG-M, B/49/1 and 2.
5. The number of prisoners in the subcamps, list from April 9, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.
6. The number of 150 would coincide also with the information that can be gathered from the list of the prisoners' movements in KLM in the month of April 1945 (AG-M, E/6/7).
8. NARA, RG 153, Case 000-50-5-2, USA v. Ernst Dura, et al.
9. Proceedings against Franz Doppelreiter, LG Vienna, Vg 1 e Vr 1140/49.

WIENER NEUSTADT

Following the annexation of Austria by Germany in March 1938, the German company Henschel & Sohn took over the Austrian company Wiener Neustädter Lokomotivfabrik and manufactured up to 1943 mostly locomotive tenders. In 1942, the factory was given a new name, Rax-Werke Wiener Neustadt (Rax Factory Wiener Neustadt) and was restructured as an independent subsidiary of Henschel GmbH. Plans to expand production to include armaments (initially flak guns) made necessary an expansion of the factory. The Army High Command (OKH) gave a factory to the Rax-Werke that had been seized during the Balkan campaign in Kraljevo, Yugoslavia, dismantled, and rebuilt in Wiener Neustadt. This factory was known as the Serbenhalle.

Plans for the production of flak guns by the Rax-Werke were abandoned, and in April 1943, the Special Committee A4, established a short time before by the Reich Ministry for Armaments and Munitions to accelerate the production of rockets, chose the Rax-Werke as one of three locations (the others being the testing grounds at Peenemünde and the Zeppelin factory at Friedrichshafen—later there was also the Deutsche Maschinenfabrik AG [Demag] at Falkensee, Berlin) for the mass production of the A4 (Aggregat 4, otherwise known as V-2) rockets.
The decision to use concentration camp prisoners in the A4 project had been made as early as the spring of 1943. A camp was built on the Rax-Werke site to hold prisoners from the Mauthausen concentration camp. The first transport of approximately 300 prisoners arrived on June 20, 1943. The prisoners were first used to complete the assembly halls and to install the machines. Only later was it decided to involve the prisoners in the production of the rockets. On August 8, 1943, an additional 722 prisoners were transferred to Wiener Neustadt.1

During the first phase of the Wiener Neustadt subcamp, from June to November 1943, the prisoners were mostly Frenchmen. There were also large groups of Polish and Soviet prisoners. The number of prisoners reached a peak at 1,200. The majority of the prisoners were political prisoners.

During the first phase, it was planned to have about 70 SS men as guards under the command of the camp leader SS-Hauptssturmführer Anton Ganz, who later was to serve at Ebensee. As in some of the other camps that formed part of the armaments industry, the treatment of the prisoners in the Wiener Neustadt subcamp was relatively good. Nevertheless, there are several reported cases of mistreatment. There was a minimum of medical care in the infirmary. The infirmary was under the control of the Sanitätsdienstgrad (SDG) Gottlieb Muzikant, who served also in Melk and Grossraming as well as in the Mauthausen main camp. During the first period of the camp (June–November 1943), 30 prisoners died.

The Rax-Werke was bombed for the first time on August 13, 1943, and the subcamp was also hit. As the serial production sites of the A4 were the target of such raids, the decision was made in August 1943 to separate the production of the rockets from their development and to establish a central subterranean production plant, namely “Mittelwerke” in Nordhausen in Thuringia, which resulted in the establishment of the concentration camp at Mittelbau.

At the end of August 1943, the facilities for the production of fuel and examination of the propulsion chambers were transferred from the Rax-Werke to the Redl-Zipf beer cellars in Upper Austria. This was the beginning of the step-by-step dissolution of the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt. A bombing on November 2, 1943, so severely damaged the Rax-Werke that not even minimal production could continue. As a result, all equipment, building parts, machines, and the skilled workers were transferred to the Mittelwerk in Nordhausen. The prisoners were transferred in a number of transports to the newly established subcamps at Redl-Zipf (transport dates October 26, 1943,2 and November 9, 1943)3 and Ebensee (November 17, 1943).4 The last transport left Wiener Neustadt on November 20, 1943. It headed to the Mittelbau main camp (Dora) via the Buchenwald main camp.

The Rax-Werke resumed the production of tenders after the relocation of the manufacture of rockets from Wiener Neustadt and the dissolution of the subcamp. Attempts to get back into the armaments business were soon successful. The Rax-Werke received an order to produce naval artillery barges (Marinen- Artillerie-Leichter) as part of the naval construction program. Production began at the end of May 1944, and concentration camp prisoners were requested as laborers. A new Mauthausen subcamp was thus established in Wiener Neustadt.

A transport of 300 prisoners arrived in Wiener Neustadt on July 5, 1944;5 other transports followed on July 31, with 204 prisoners, on September 18, with 150, and on September 28, with 50 prisoners. All the transports originated in Mauthausen. On December 26, 1944, 150 prisoners were transferred to the subcamp at Floridsdorf in Vienna.6 During the second phase of the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt, prisoner numbers fluctuated between around 500 and 700. Most of the prisoners were from Poland, the Soviet Union, and Italy. Between July 1944 and April 1945, 42 prisoners died in the subcamp. This number incorrectly distorts the death rate, as there were a number of transports of prisoners who were no longer capable of working or who were seriously ill back to the main camp.

As was common with subcamps established for the armaments industry in Wiener Neustadt during this phase, security was provided by that branch of the Wehrmacht that benefited from the production. During the second period of the subcamp’s existence, from July 1944 to April 1945, the majority of the 120 to 140 guards were naval soldiers under the command of the camp leader Prchal.

On April 1, 1945, the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt was finally dissolved in the face of advancing Soviet troops. The prisoners were first marched in the direction of the Steyr-Münichholz subcamp. According to the camp records, 25 prisoners died on the march, and 10 went missing.7 On April 6, 1945, 496 of the former Wiener Neustadt work detachment reached the Steyr subcamp as their first destination.8 On April 10, 1945, 494 prisoners presumably arrived at the Mauthausen concentration camp.

After the war, indictments were laid against several SS members at the Wiener Neustadt subcamp. The first Lagerführer, Anton Ganz, was only sentenced by a Memmingen court in the 1970s to life imprisonment for crimes committed at the Ebensee subcamp.9 The Rapportführer during the first phase, Hans Bühner, was sentenced to death by a French military court for crimes committed in Hinterbrühl and Ebensee. He was executed.10 His successor, Heinz Bollhorst, was sentenced by a U.S. military court to life imprisonment.11 The SDG, Gottlieb Muzikant, who saw service in several other subcamps, was arrested in the 1960s and received 21 life sentences from a court in Fulda in Germany, especially for crimes committed in Melk, Lower Austria.

The Rapportführer from August 1944, SS-Scharführer Paul Tremmel, was convicted by a U.S. military court in Dachau for crimes committed on the evacuation march to Steyr. He was also sentenced to death.12 Prchal, the camp leader during the second phase, disappeared after the war. Proceedings commenced in the 1970s but soon stopped.13

**SOURCES** The most detailed work on the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt is by Florian Freund and Bertrand Perz: *Das KZ in der Serbenballe: Zur Kriegsindustrie in Wiener Neustadt* (Vienna, 1987). Further details can be found in the works by Freund on the planned rocket industry in Ebensee,

There are scattered original sources of the camp administration such as transport lists or variation reports. They are held in the APMO, IPN, and the AG-M. The latter archive also holds some survivors’ reports. Material on the postwar trials of the camp’s SS members is located in NARA, ZdL (now BA-L), and LG Vienna.

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NOTES

2. Variation Report, October 26, 1943, IPN, KZ Mauthausen 36.
3. Transport List, November 9, 1943, AG-M, B/50/2 and B/50/6.
5. Transport List, July 5, 1944, AG-M, B/50/5.
6. All details are from the Roll Call Book Mauthausen
Concentration Camp, AG-M, E/6/11.
7. List of the Camp Record Office re Prisoners’ Movements following the Evacuation of the Subcamps of April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/13.
8. List of the Camp Record Office re Prisoners’ Movements following the Evacuation of the Subcamps of April 9, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.
10. LG Vienna, AZ 20 Jr 3625/75 (Gogl) Bd.1, fl. 375.
12. NARA, RG 338, USA v. Paul Tremmel, Case 000-50-5-44.

WIEN-FLORIDSDORF AND JEDLESEE

[AKA FLORIDSDORF I AND II]

The history of the two subcamps in Wien-Floridsdorf is closely connected with the Schwechat work detachment. The subcamp at Schwechat was closed and evacuated on July 13, 1944, following a heavy aerial bombardment that resulted in the destruction of the camp. The prisoners were at first taken to Wien-Floridsdorf; later, many went on to the subcamps at Hinterbrühl and Santa I, II, and III near Schwechat. The prisoners who remained in Floridsdorf were distributed to two detachments, one at Hofherr & Schrantz or Akkumulatoren Fabrik AG (AFA) and one at Jedlesee. The prisoners from the first detachment were accommodated in a subcamp in Shuttleworthstrasse on the site of Hofherr & Schrantz, which served as a production site for AFA, while the prisoners of the Jedlesee detachment were accommodated in what is the present-day Hopfengasse. The detachment Floridsdorf I (Hofherr & Schrantz) operated as the command for the large Wien-Floridsdorf complex, which included the Jedlesee detachment and the Hinterbrühl subcamp. The Jedlesee camp was established on July 13, 1944, and the Floridsdorf I camp on July 14, 1944.

The history of the subcamps at Wien-Floridsdorf has generally not been the subject of research and in part still lies in the dark. What is known is that the prisoners in Floridsdorf, as in Schwechat, were used to produce parts for various types of Heinkel (He) aircraft. During the years 1942 and 1943, the Ernst-Heinkel-Werke had relocated large parts of its production and eventually its management from Rostock to Schwechat. Due to the increasing labor shortage, concentration camp prisoners were made available for the production of several aircraft types, among them the He 219 and He 280. Following the aerial bombardment of Schwechat, part of this production was relocated to Jedlesee in the 21st Viennese district (Floridsdorf) and continued there. The detachment AFA (or Hofherr & Schrantz, respectively) has to be seen separately from Heinkel. Before the war, Hofherr & Schrantz had specialized in the manufacture of agricultural machinery. During the war, it produced armaments. It has been suggested that its operation in Floridsdorf produced directional components for the A4 (Aggregat 4) rockets, but the possibility has not been verified. Originally based in Hagen, Germany, AFA was a specialized battery producer that during the war supplied batteries for different types of submarines. After bombardments of the AFA fabric in Hagen, the production had been relocated to Vienna and was accommodated in the facilities of the company Hofherr & Schrantz.

As in the other subcamps at the various Heinkel factories, it can be assumed that, as in Schwechat, the guards were at least in part members of the Luftwaffe.

It is difficult to determine how many prisoners were actually held in the Floridsdorf subcamps, how many died there, and how many were transferred to other subcamps in Vienna. The difficulty with the empirical data is that Floridsdorf was a camp complex comprising several subcamps. When the Schwechat subcamp was closed, the prisoners were distributed among several new camps, all of which were under the command of the former Schwechat camp leader Anton Streitwieser. He moved his headquarters from Schwechat to Floridsdorf, and it was from here that he commanded the camps at Floridsdorf, Jedlesee, Hinterbrühl, Schwechat (the remainder of the original subcamp at Schwechat), and the work detachments Santa I, II, and III. All these work detachments are classified in the documents of the Mauthausen main camp administration under “Floridsdorf,” thus making it almost impossible to separate out data about the individual detachments.

The Floridsdorf detachment reported on July 14, 1944, the day that it was established, that it had 1,993 prisoners. Over the succeeding months, the prisoner numbers remained more or less constant. The peak for the whole Floridsdorf complex was reached in the final months. In January 1945, there were more than 2,700 prisoners. The majority of them were from Poland and the Soviet Union. There were other large groups
from Italy and France. When the Floridsdorf complex was dissolved, there were 829 prisoners alone in Floridsdorf I and Floridsdorf II, of whom about 450 were in Floridsdorf I and the rest in Floridsdorf II.  

Both Floridsdorf subcamps were evacuated on April 1, 1945. The prisoners were not evacuated via the subcamp at Hinterbrühl, which was used as a collecting point for several other detachments in the area around Vienna, but via the subcamp of Steyr. The evacuation march reached the Mauthausen concentration camp on April 11, 1945. According to a list prepared by the camp clerk, 121 prisoners were killed on the march; 22 were reported as missing or as having escaped. Floridsdorf I reported 45 dead and 12 missing or escaped prisoners; Floridsdorf II had 76 dead and 10 reported as missing or escaped.  

The Lagerführer of the Vienna-Floridsdorf camp complex, Streitwieser, was initially held captive by the Americans. He was able to escape and assumed a false identity. In 1953, he was officially declared dead. However, he was subsequently identified and was arrested for the first time in 1956. Streitwieser was arrested and released several times again, but in 1967 he was sentenced by the Cologne state court to life imprisonment. He died in prison.


Some source material on Floridsdorf is to be found in AG-M. Interviews with survivors are also held here, as in the IPN. Sources on the Ernst Heinkel factories are to be found in the BA-MA.

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**NOTES**

1. The prisoner numbers are from the Roll Call Book, AG-M, E/6/11.
2. Reports from the Camp Record Office on Prisoner Movements during the Evacuation Marches from April 9, 1945, AG-M, B/60/11.
3. Reports from the Camp Record Office on Prisoner Movements during the Evacuation Marches from April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/13.
4. Ibid.
5. LG Cologne, 24 Ks 1/66 (Z) 40-9/65 Lg.

**WIEN-HINTERBRÜHL ("LISA")**

The history of the subcamp at Hinterbrühl, near Mödling, is closely connected with that of the work detachments at Schwechat and Floridsdorf. The subcamp at Schwechat was closed and evacuated on July 13, 1944, following the destruction of the camp caused by Allied bombing raids. As a result, the Ernst Heinkel factory relocated parts of its aircraft production facilities underground, first to Floridsdorf and later also to Hinterbrühl and to the brewery cellars at Schwechat.

The so-called Sea Grotto in Hinterbrühl was an ideal underground location for the Heinkel operation. The cave system, which is a present-day tourist attraction, was a former gypsum mine, which had been closed in 1912 after groundwater had flooded the mine. In the early 1930s the mine, which was still partly submerged, became a tourist attraction and was developed as such.

Once the Armaments Inspectorate became aware of the grotto, it was requisitioned for the Ernst Heinkel group. This was in May 1944, before the evacuation of the Schwechat subcamp. Expansion of the grotto started to allow for the subterranean production of the Heinkel (He) 162 aircraft known as the People’s Fighter (*Volksjäger*). As the grotto was affected by groundwater, it was necessary to install a permanent pumping system to keep the underground area dry. A heavy Allied air raid on the Sea Grotto on May 24, 1944, during the construction period, also hit the village of Hinterbrühl and killed several civilians.

The decision to establish a Mauthausen subcamp at Hinterbrühl was probably made shortly after the Sea Grotto had been requisitioned for the Heinkel factory. Nevertheless, the camp was only established later. The first prisoner transport is said to have arrived at the camp in September 1944.

The subcamp at Hinterbrühl was part of the camp system administered from Wien-Floridsdorf that comprised several camps for Heinkel factories in the area around Vienna. Once the Schwechat subcamp was closed, its prisoners were distributed among several newly erected camps, all of which remained under the command of the former Lagerführer at Schwechat, Anton Streitwieser. He had moved his headquarters from Schwechat to Floridsdorf, and from there he commanded the following camps: Floridsdorf, Jedlesee, Hinterbrühl, and Schwechat (what was left of the former subcamp at Schwechat) and the work detachments Santa I, II, and III. As in the other subcamps at the various Heinkel factories, the guards at the subcamp at Hinterbrühl were in part in the Luftwaffe.

The documents of the Mauthausen main camp administration group all the subcamps of the Wien-Floridsdorf camp complex together using the term “Floridsdorf.” It is nearly impossible, therefore, to analyze the sources by reference to each individual work detachment. Verified statements regarding the prisoner demographics can be made only for the whole camp complex. When considering the average prisoner numbers in the subcamp at Hinterbrühl, it is only possible to rely on statements by prisoners. Marian Siczyński, a Polish survivor of the subcamp at Hinterbrühl, refers to an average number of 800 prisoners. The majority of the prisoners came from Poland and the Soviet Union. There were also large groups of Italians and French prisoners.

The total number of prisoners in the Floridsdorf complex varied only slightly during the period in which the subcamp
at Hinterbrühl was established. One can, therefore, assume that the majority of prisoners from Floridsdorf and Jedlesee were transferred to Hinterbrühl. At least one transport of prisoners came from the subcamp at Wiener Neustadt in the middle of December 1944.

The camp was given the code name “Lisa.” It was only a few meters away from a vertical pit through which the prisoners passed daily to work in the underground production area. During the first weeks, before production started, the prisoners were involved in excavating the underground production facility and in constructing the subcamp. Mass production began in November. The underground factory was known as Lobster (Languste). The grotto had two levels, which were divided into a number of sections. In these sections, parts for the fuselage of the aircraft He 162 were produced. The prisoners worked in two shifts each of 12 hours. Once the fuselage had been assembled and fitted out with the complete technical equipment, it was shipped from the Hinterbrühl Sea Grotto to Schwechat, where the final assembly of the aircraft took place.

In comparison with the working conditions in other underground armaments production sites, the conditions for the prisoners in Hinterbrühl were presumably somewhat better. There was an existing cave system that did not, as in St. Georgen, Melk, Ebensee, or Peggau, require excavation. Nevertheless, the 12-hour shifts and the lack of rest and nutrition made the conditions difficult. In addition, there are documented cases of torture, mistreatment, and murder of the prisoners carried out by the SS, in particular by camp leader Anton Streitwieser and Rapportführer Hans Bühner. The documented treatment of the subcamps in the Wien-Floridsdorf complex, mentioned above, makes it impossible to determine how many prisoners died in Hinterbrühl. One can assume that repeatedly sick prisoners and those incapable of working were transferred back to the main camp, with the result that the number of victims of this subcamp exceeds the number of those who actually died in Hinterbrühl. Some of the prisoners who died in Hinterbrühl were cremated in the Vienna city crematorium.

The order to evacuate all camps within the greater Vienna area was given at the end of March 1945 as the Red Army approached the city. The subcamp at Hinterbrühl functioned as a collection camp for prisoners from the Schwechat-Heidfeld detachments and presumably also for those from the Santa I, II, and III detachments in Schwechat. On March 31, 1945, 1,884 prisoners from these detachments were concentrated in the Hinterbrühl subcamp. On April 1, 1945, the prisoners were sent in the direction of Mauthausen.

The day before the march to Mauthausen began, there was one of the largest mass killings of prisoners in the various subcamps: on the order of Streitwieser, the Lagerführer, a list was prepared of all prisoners in the infirmary who could not walk. There were originally 80 names on the list. The SS intended to kill them with an injection to the heart; 51 prisoners were actually murdered and their remains buried in a mass grave on the camp grounds; 1 prisoner was shot by Bühner. According to the former prisoner doctor, Josef Krakowski, the remaining 29 prisoners from the infirmary were saved at that occasion but died later on the evacuation march to Mauthausen.

The evacuation march that left Hinterbrühl on April 1, 1945, reached the Mauthausen main camp on April 7. In addition to the 52 prisoners who were murdered the day before the march started, another 152 died on the march, and 56 were reported as either missing or escaped.

After the war, Lagerführer Streitwieser was held by the Americans as a prisoner of war (POW). He was able to escape. He assumed a false identity, and in 1953, he was officially declared dead. His real identity was later discovered, and he was arrested again in 1956. After being arrested and released several more times, he was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Cologne state court in 1967. He died in prison. Rapportführer Bühner was sentenced to death by a French military court for crimes committed in Hinterbrühl and Ebensee and executed. SS-Rottenführer Willy Brümmer, SS-Unterscharführer Franz Huber, and the Kapo in the infirmary, Georg Gössl, were convicted by a U.S. military court in the first Mauthausen trial held at Dachau. The former orderly Karl Sasko and the Kapo Franz Dieplinger were tried before the Vienna state court. Sasko was accused of the murder of 51 prisoners in the infirmary and died during the trial. Dieplinger was sentenced to six months in jail for mistreating prisoners.

**Sources**


There are some documents on Hinterbrühl in the AG-M, including the memoirs of former prisoner Marcello Martini as well as survivor interviews. The trial files of Anton Streitwieser are held by the LG Cologne. Those of the trial against Hans Bühner are held by LG Vienna. The files to the first Mauthausen trial held at Dachau, which include the Hinterbrühl perpetrators, are held in NARA, RG 338. Files on the Ernst-Heinkel-Werke are in BA-MA.
The SS barracks in Schönbrunn were bombed several times. As a result, the remainder of the detachment, three prisoners, was transferred to a requisitioned scythe factory at Leonstein in Upper Austria. The experiments continued there until early May 1945.\(^1\) The detachment is said to have been dissolved shortly before the liberation of the Mauthausen main camp, and the remaining three prisoners were sent back to Mauthausen. All six prisoners of the Wien-Schönbrunn subcamp are said to have survived imprisonment.

Proceedings against unnamed perpetrators suspected of National Socialist crimes carried out in the Wien-Schwechat subcamp began at the Vienna state criminal court in the 1960s but ceased after a short time.

**SOURCES** It is Viktor Schauberger's memoirs and various biographical studies that are focused on his life and his scientific work, which largely provide the details of the history of the detachment at Schönbrunn. The biography by Siegbert Lattacher should also be mentioned: *Viktor Schauberger, Auf den Spuren des legendären Naturforschers* (Steyr, 1999); as should the magazine *Implosion* 113 (1995), which published Schauberger's memoirs.

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**NOTES**

4. Ibid.
5. A list of movements in the Mauthausen main camp during April 1945 (AG-M, E/6/7) refers to three prisoners from the detachment "Kraftfahrtechnischen Lehranstalt" on April 29.

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**VIEN-SCHÖNBRUNN [AKA SONDERKOMMANDO WIEN]**

The establishment of the Schönbrunn subcamp, also known as the Sonderkommando Wien (Vienna Special Detachment), is connected to the hopeless situation of Hitler's Germany and the utopia of “miracle weapons” that were to turn Germany’s impending defeat into victory. The Austrian forester Viktor Schauberger, who since the 1920s had been a researcher of the optimal use of kinetic energy (*Bewegungenergie*), presumably met Hitler in 1934 in Berlin in an attempt to convince Hitler of the benefits of his plans for an alternative source of energy.

The looming defeat of Germany and the belief in a turn of the course of events through miracle weapons gave even esoteric projects such as those promoted by Schauberger a chance that they would not otherwise have had. The motive behind that was the desperate hope to change the course of the war in Germany’s favor. In the late summer of 1944, Schauberger was given an opportunity to undertake physical experiments at the Mauthausen concentration camp. Although his records do not explain what they exactly involved, Schauberger talked about “implosion,” and various sources refer to the development of alternative methods of propulsion. Schauberger himself has referred to “flying submarines.” Schauberger was first given five prisoners (two Czechs, two Germans, and one Pole) who had technical skills for the experiments. Originally, the experiments took place at Mauthausen. However, at Schauberger’s insistence, the detachment was transferred to Wien-Schönbrunn on September 28, 1944.\(^1\) The detachment was accommodated in a separated room at the SS-Kraftfahrtechnischen Lehranstalt (Motor Vehicle Technical Education Institute), located within the area of present-day Maria-Theresien-Kaserne. The date that the Schönbrunn subcamp was established is the date of the transfer.

As early as October 28, 1944, one of the prisoners was transferred back to Mauthausen. The prisoner was replaced the next day, October 29, by a prisoner from the main camp.\(^2\) There is one reported case where a prisoner guarded by one SS man slept overnight at his wife's apartment. As punishment, he was transferred back to Mauthausen in January 1945.\(^3\) It is likely that in January 1945 another prisoner was sent back to the main camp. As a result, the detachment only consisted of three prisoners. During its existence, there were a total of six prisoners (two Germans, two Czechs, one Pole, and one Austrian). The treatment of the prisoners was relatively good. According to the report of one former prisoner, he and his comrades were not exposed to any mistreatment.\(^4\) On Sundays it was even possible occasionally to leave the barracks accompanied by one of the SS guards.

The head of the SS-Kraftfahrtechnischen Lehranstalt, also known as the SS-Engineer’s School, where the detachment Wien-Schwechat was accommodated, was SS-Staffführer Dr. Hermann Schröder. Military supervision was under the command of Hauptsturmführer Lindner. Schauberger was the scientific head of the detachment. According to his own statements, he had to pay a use fee to the SS for the prisoners.

The SS barracks in Schönbrunn were bombed several times. As a result, the remainder of the detachment, three prisoners, was transferred to a requisitioned scythe factory at Leonstein in Upper Austria. The experiments continued there until early May 1945.\(^5\) The detachment is said to have been dissolved shortly before the liberation of the Mauthausen main camp, and the remaining three prisoners were sent back to Mauthausen. All six prisoners of the Wien-Schönbrunn subcamp are said to have survived imprisonment.

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4. Ibid.
5. A list of movements in the Mauthausen main camp during April 1945 (AG-M, E/6/7) refers to three prisoners from the detachment "Kraftfahrtechnischen Lehranstalt" on April 29.
In the summer of 1942, the Ernst Heinkel factory, following a series of massive Allied air raids, relocated part of its aircraft production from Rostock in northern Germany to the air base at Schwechat, close to Vienna. A delegation from the factory inspected the site in June 1942, whereupon the fighter training school based at Schwechat was relocated and the air base was handed over to the Heinkel factory. Initially, only the departments for construction, plans, and samples were transferred to Schwechat. Civilian forced laborers and prisoners of war (POWs) were used to construct a runway, assembly halls, and administrative buildings. In the late spring of 1943, the Heinkel main office was transferred to Schwechat.

The growing labor shortage and increasing Allied air superiority, which accelerated the production of fighters, resulted in an increasing use by the armaments industry of concentration camp prisoners as labor. In August 1943, a subcamp of the Mauthausen concentration camp was erected at Schwechat next to the existing forced labor and POW camps. The prisoners were to produce different types of Heinkel (He) fighter aircraft.

The first verifiable transport of 92 skilled workers from the Mauthausen main camp, the majority of whom were Republican Spaniards, arrived at Schwechat on August 30, 1943. Successive transports quickly increased the numbers of prisoners. One of the largest transports consisting of 600 prisoners from the main camp arrived at Schwechat on September 19. In April 1944, there were 2,600 prisoners in the camp, the maximum that would be reached.

Poles were the largest national group, followed by Soviet prisoners. Italians were also a large percentage of the prison population.

The guards in Schwechat, as in most subcamps that were connected with armaments production, were from the section of the Wehrmacht that profited most from the production. The majority of the guards were Luftwaffe soldiers commanded by a small group of SS. The first camp leader was SS-Obersturmführer Erich Engelhardt. He died during a bombing raid on the camp on April 23, 1944. His successor was SS-Untersturmführer Anton Streitwieser. Other than for a few short breaks, Streitwieser had served at the Mauthausen concentration camp since 1938. He had been work leader and a roll-call leader at the Gusen subcamp and third detention camp leader at the main camp. Between March and April 1944, he was Lagerführer at Melk. He then assumed command in Schwechat. One of the roll-call leaders was Rapportführer Hans Bühner, who had seen service at Wiener Neustadt.

The prisoners’ living conditions in Schwechat, as in many of the other subcamps that served the armaments industry, were relatively good. However, there are indications that the camp was overcrowded from the spring of 1944, which must have made the conditions worse. There are also numerous documented cases of torture and murder by the guards. A particularly gruesome form of torture and murder practiced at Schwechat was to lock a prisoner in a wooden box, hammer long nails into the box, and then roll the box for several hours around the roll-call square. Lagerführer Streitwieser and Bühner often set their dogs on the prisoners who were severely injured and in several cases died.

It can be assumed that more than 200 prisoners died at the Schwechat subcamp, the majority during Allied air raids on the Ernst-Heinkel-Werke. As small groups of prisoners or individual prisoners were constantly being sent back to the main camp at Mauthausen, it can be assumed that the ill and those who were no longer capable of working were sent back to Mauthausen to die and were replaced by healthier prisoners.

Beginning in the spring of 1944, the Heinkel factory at Schwechat was subject to repeated Allied bombing raids. One of the heaviest was on April 23, 1944. At least 47 concentration camp prisoners died during this raid, together with 16 guards and the camp commander Engelhardt. There was another raid on the factory on June 26, 1944, which again hit the camp and killed 140 prisoners.

The Heinkel factory was completely destroyed. The Schwechat subcamp was therefore evacuated on July 13, 1944, and the prisoners were transferred to the camps at Wien-Floridsdorf or Jedlesee. Later they were transferred to Hinterbrühl, where they resumed work for Ernst Heinkel in manufacturing aircraft. The camp command was also transferred from Schwechat to Floridsdorf.

From this point, the history of the Schwechat subcamp is less clear. It is not completely certain that all the prisoners were evacuated on July 13, 1944, only later to be brought back to Schwechat, or whether some remained in Schwechat. What is certain is that from July there was a small work detachment in Schwechat that was under the command of the camp administration now based in Floridsdorf. There are also indications that on August 15, 1944, 350 prisoners from the detachments Santa I, II, and III based in the brewery cellars at Schwechat were sent back to the Schwechat camp. The prisoners who remained in Schwechat worked on the final assembly of the He 162 jet fighter. The fuselages for these aircraft were delivered from the Hinterbrühl subcamp.

The remaining prisoners of the Schwechat detachment were marched on March 31, 1945, to the Hinterbrühl subcamp and then evacuated to Mauthausen. On April 1, 1945, 1,884 prisoners from the detachments at Hinterbrühl and Schwechat (possibly also the inmates of the camps Santa I, II, and III) marched from Hinterbrühl in the direction of the Mauthausen main camp. On April 7, 1945, 1,624 prisoners reached Mauthausen.

On the march, 204 prisoners were killed, and 59 escaped. Lagerführer Streitwieser was captured by the Americans but was able to escape. He assumed a false identity and was officially declared dead in 1953. However, Streitwieser’s cover identity was detected. He was arrested again in 1956 (the first of several arrests), released several times, and in 1967 sentenced by the state court in Cologne to life imprisonment.
He died in prison. Rapportführer Bühner was sentenced by a French military court to death for crimes committed at Hinterbrühl and Ebensee. He was executed. Former Kapo Franz Dieplinger was tried before the Vienna state court. Dieplinger was sentenced to six months’ imprisonment for mistreating prisoners.

**Sources**


Adolf Ezsöl has collected a considerable number of source documents for the AST-Schw. The AG-M also holds a collection on Schwechat, including interviews with survivors. There is also a collection in the IPN. Source material on the Ernst Heinkel group and the construction of the factory at Schwechat are kept by the BA-MA. Some documents involving Schwechat may be found in DÖW, ed., *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Niederösterreich, 1933–45: Eine Dokumentation* (Vienna, 1987).

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**Notes**

8. List of the Evacuation Transports from the Subcamps, AG-M, B/60/11.
10. LG Cologne 24 Ks 1/66 (Z) 40-9/65 Lg.
11. LG Vienna, AZ 20 Vr 3625/75 (Gogl), vol. 1, 375.
12. LG Vienna, Vg 8e Vr 781/55.

**WIEN-SCHWECHAT—“SANTA” KOMMANDOS**

The work detachments Santa I, II, and III, which were located in the cellars of the brewery in Schwechat, a village a few kilometers east of Vienna, are some of the least researched subcamps of the Mauthausen concentration camp. For that reason, there is scarcely any reliable information on these camps. However, the history of these work detachments is presumably closely connected with the history of the work detachments at Schwechat-Heidfeld and Floridsdorf. The Schwechat-Heidfeld subcamp was heavily damaged during an Allied air raid on July 13, 1944. As a result, the camp was closed and evacuated, and parts of the Ernst Heinkel factory producing airplanes were relocated underground first to Floridsdorf and later to Hinterbrühl and also to the brewery’s cellars in Schwechat. The entire complex of camps was referred to as Wien-Floridsdorf.

A report by former Polish prisoner Marian Kryszak refers to the detachments known under the code name “Santa.” Kryszak mentions the bombing and the following transfer of the detachment Schwechat-Heidfeld to Floridsdorf. Some of the prisoners transferred to Floridsdorf, according to Kryszak, were transferred partly to the subcamp at Hinterbrühl and partly to the work detachments Santa I, II, and III at Schwechat.

Different dates are given for the establishment of the Santa detachments. The former camp recorder Hans Marsálek states in his book on Mauthausen, the standard work on the camp, that the detachments were formed in December 1944. Some hints given by Kryszak, on the other hand, allow the conclusion to be drawn that prisoners were allocated to the Santa I, II, and III detachments even before August 15, 1944.

The discrepancies presumably are a result of the confusion of the various detachments. This is the result of the imprecise and contradictory recording of the subcamp names in the camp administration records. For example, the International Tracing Service (ITS) lists Wien-Floridsdorf II and III with the code names Santa, whereas some camp administration documents, when referring to Floridsdorf I and II, are obviously referring to the detachments at Floridsdorf and Jedlesee.

The prisoners were presumably involved in the manufacture of aircraft parts for the Ernst Heinkel group. However, there are suggestions that the Santa detachments were connected somehow to the Flugmotorenwerke (Aircraft Motor Works) Ostmark, which was located in Wiener Neudorf. It is very likely that the detachments Santa I, II, and III were part of the Wien-Floridsdorf camp complex and were under the direction of its commander Anton Streitwieser.

At the end of March 1945, when the Red Army was getting close to Vienna, the order was given to evacuate all camps from the Vienna region. There is no direct evidence when the Santa detachments were evacuated or the manner of their evacuation. Reports on prisoner movements suggest that it is most likely that these detachments were evacuated on March 31, 1945, via the subcamp at Hinterbrühl to Mauthausen. Hinterbrühl served as a collecting point. On April 1, 1945, 1,884 prisoners were sent from Hinterbrühl on a death march in the direction of Mauthausen; 204 prisoners died on this march, and 56 were reported as either missing or having escaped.

**Sources**

There are hardly any archival sources that explicitly refer to the Santa I, II, and III detachments. Marian Kryszak’s report and some survivor interviews are held in the AG-M. The ASt-Schw also holds a few documents referring to these detachments.

NOTES
1. AG-M, B/53/3.
2. List of the Evacuation Transports from the Subcamps, AG-M, B/60/11.
3. Reports from the Camp Record Office on Prisoner Movements during the Evacuation Marches from April 11, 1945, AG-M, B/60/13.