

LOOKING FOR TRACES

5 years of Active Remembrance at
Zeitgeschichte MUSEUM.



“I was only nine years old when my grandpa died. I loved him very much, and his stories about his resistance against fascism and the time of his imprisonment had a profound anti-fascist influence on me. ... We are not responsible for what German fascism did. But we are responsible for today and tomorrow.”

Jenny Mendl, granddaughter of Johannes Müller, in her speech on the occasion of the 67th anniversary of the liberation of the Mauthausen concentration camp, 13 May 2012.^{1,2}

IMPRINT

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ALBERT FAURE



Albert Faure, 1940

Albert Faure, blacksmith from southern France, employed in Linz as part of Service du Travail Obligatoire (STO) from 1 February 1943 to 4 May 1945.

FORCED LABOR IN THE “REICH”

Estelle Fages, granddaughter of Albert Faure, on her grandfather's forced labor:

22 January 1943: My grandfather, Albert Faure, was a forced laborer in the Third Reich (Service du Travail Obligatoire). A few days earlier, he had received the draft order from the police. “If you don’t go, another member of your family will have to go in your place,” he was told. At the time, resistance had not been organized in this region of France. He was forced to leave his home village of Eyburie, Corrèze, and his entire family. “German deportation activities continued relentlessly,” he wrote in his memoirs. He reached Linz together with three friends from Corrèze. Until he was freed, he remained in Camp 53 (Barrack 22, Room 5) and worked for more than two years as a burner in the Oberdonau ironworks. My grandfather was a victim of forced labor in Nazi Germany. He survived the bombings, but some of his friends weren’t as fortunate. On May 5 1945, the Americans freed my grandfather’s camp in a deafening parade of jeeps and airplanes. He didn’t find his parents and sister until 22 May 1945.

COLLABORATION: SERVICE DU TRAVAIL OBLIGATOIRE ³

After the armistice agreement between the German aggressor and France on 22 June 1940, the French State (État français) was formed in the previously unoccupied part of the country. Known as the Vichy regime, this French southern zone, formally independent under constitutional law, collaborated with Nazi Germany; it deported Jewish fellow citizens

and recruited hundreds of thousands of young Frenchmen for its compulsory labor service “Service du Travail Obligatoire” (STO). Compulsory service was introduced on 16 February 1943, after voluntary service had not provided the quotas demanded by Fritz Sauckel, one of the chief representatives of the German army. The primary demand was for specialists to be deployed in the arms industry. Agricultural workers and repair specialists for the transport infrastructure were also required. As a result of stringent measures enforced by the Vichy regime, more than 630,000 French people were forced to go to the German Reich and occupied territories as part of STO and predecessor programs. As an unwanted side effect, recruitment pressure caused STO threats to submerge more into the underground.

BIOGRAPHY

Albert Faure was born on 8 April 1920 in Eyburie, Corrèze. As a trained blacksmith and factory worker, he hoped that he would not be enlisted by the STO. Despite an attempt by the mayor in his home village to intervene, he was forced to work in the Third Reich. From 1 February 1943 until his liberation on 4 May 1945, he was employed as a burner a workshop of the Oberdonau ironworks. After his return, Albert Faure worked with his father as a locksmith and blacksmith. He married in 1951 and, together with his wife Denise, ran a café and restaurant in Eyburie, which they converted into a hotel in the 1960s. Their daughter Annie was born in 1952. In his old age, Albert Faure devoted himself to his passion for music and the accordion. He died in 2006.

The image shows a German recruitment certificate (Vorzugsschein) for Albert Faure. The document is from Eisenwerke Oberdonau, Linz/Donau. It includes fields for personal information such as name (Faure, Albert), birth date (12.04.1920), and birthplace (Eyburie, Frankreich). It also contains administrative details like the company name, job title (Brenner), and the date of recruitment (1.2.1943). The document is stamped with 'Lohnbüro' on the left side.

Recruitment certificate of Albert Faure, 1943

The image shows a confirmation letter from the Mayor of Eyburie, dated 30.3.43. The letter is addressed to the Eisenwerke Oberdonau and confirms the employment of Albert Faure as a blacksmith. It mentions that Faure is a family supporter and that his family (wife and 15-year-old daughter) depends on him. The document is signed by the Mayor and stamped with 'Stempel Rathaus von Eyburie Corrèze'.

Confirmation of the Mayor of Eyburie, 1943



Postcard from Eyburie, on the right the hotel of Albert Faure and his wife, 1950



Albert Faure with granddaughter Estelle Fages, 2000



Albert Faure, 1980

LADISLAV ZÁVODSKÝ



Ladislav Závodský
(approximately 1940)

Ladislav Závodský, forced laborer in Linz;
member of a football team of Czech forced laborers.

“I PLAYED FOOTBALL FOR HITLER.”

Jana Staffa, the eldest daughter of Ladislav Závodský, has visited the Contemporary History MUSEUM several times in search of clues about her father, who was a forced laborer in the Linz area during the Second World War. In a conversation in May 2019, she spoke about her family history and her father’s sparse reports about this time and the sometimes very difficult search for information:

Asked by his daughters after the war about the time of forced labor in Linz, their father replied: “I played soccer for Hitler.” Or he would say, “I cooked on the Danube for the Queen of England.” His daughters did not understand these statements until Jana Staffa discovered a photograph of a Czech soccer team during a visit to the Contemporary History MUSEUM. At that moment she realized that her father had not been joking, but that he had probably been a member of one of these football teams that consisted of forced laborers. Mrs. Staffa remembers that her father mentioned a football pitch near the Hotel “Roter Krebs” in Linz. Mr. Závodský was very athletic. Shortly before his death, he asked for a conversation with his eldest daughter. What she remembers most was him repeatedly saying, “You don’t know everything.” According to Mrs. Staffa, the most indelible memory of Ladislav Závodský was the hunger that he had to suffer. He used to cook large amounts of food and serve huge portions to everyone. The cold was apparently another thing that he hated. As he grew older, he would put on as many as five layers of clothing to keep warm.

BIOGRAPHY

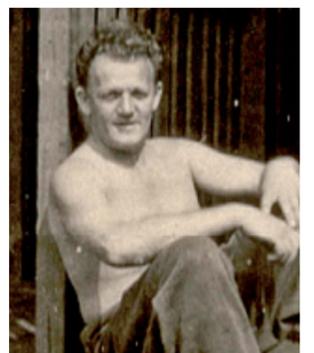
Ladislav Závodský was born on 17 July 1921 in the Moravian town of Bučovice (near Brno) in the Czech Republic. He was the second of three children to grow up in the countryside. After his forced labor time in Linz, he returned to his home country and worked there as a lift technician, among other things. In 1949 he married and adopted his wife’s daughter as his own child. Another daughter was born after this. The daughters characterize Ladislav Závodský as a helpful person and loving family man. In 1953 he moved with his family to Brno, where he died in January 1999.



Football match of Czech forced laborers against a team from the Hermann Göring works, Linz, 1943



Ladislav Závodský with his wife in the 1950s



Ladislav Závodský, 1940s

WINCENY GOŁĘBIEWSKI



Wincenty Gołębiewski (undated)

Aleksander Mroziński, alias **Wincenty Gołębiewski**, was a member of the Polish Armia Krajowa. As a prisoner of the Mauthausen concentration camp, he performed forced labor at the Hermann Göring works from 6 October 1944 until his death on 8 November 1944.

UNDER A FALSE NAME

Even decades after the fall of the Third Reich, relatives are still searching for signs of its victims. Zbigniew Gołębiewski set himself the task of explaining in detail the life story of his grandfather Wincenty, who was probably killed in the Mauthausen sub-camp III of Linz in 1944. Wincenty Gołębiewski fled to Warsaw as a member of the Polish army in December 1943 after a denunciation, where he was arrested one year later and deported to forced labor. A card he wrote during this time was his last sign of life. Wincenty's grandson Zbigniew Gołębiewski found another sign:

According to his sister, Jadwiga Koper, he had falsified documents with him during his escape from Łowicz, issued in the name Aleksander Mrozek (the name of his schoolmate who disappeared in 1942) or Aleksander Mroziński (most likely an invented figure), born on 15 August 1908 in Podhajce, where his grandfather had lived for several years before the outbreak of the war. ... Based on the circumstances, I suspected that Aleksander Mroziński was a purely fictitious figure. That is why I launched a verification process in the middle of 2018 to determine if there was any documentary evidence in any archive, parish book or official record. I have received negative replies from all every single office. The date of birth, an important Christian holiday in honor of Mary, seems to have been invented by the religious man when he invented a fictitious identity under the name of a deceased schoolmate. ... The Institute for National Remembrance confirmed that the International Tracing Service in Bad Arolsen had issued the death certificate for Aleksander Mroziński on 23 November 1955 based on documents from the Mauthausen concentration camp."

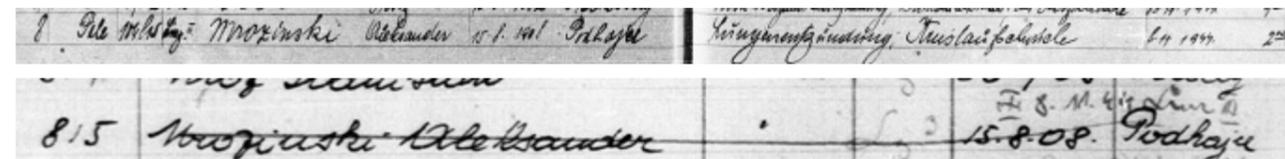
The Gołębiewski family is still looking for any information about the fate of their father and grandfather, who most likely used the name Aleksander Mroziński for security reasons.

BIOGRAPHY

Wincenty Gołębiewski was born on 19 July 1909 in Biezuń, a small town in the northern Mazovia region of Poland. He was employed in 1928 by the Polish postal service and worked in various different locations. He married in 1930 and became the father of four children by 1940. At the time of the German occupation, he lived with his family in Łowicz, where he was employed as an adjunct laborer in the postal



Zbigniew Gołębiewski searching for information in the Contemporary History MUSEUM in 2018



Entry for Alexander Mrosinski in the death registry of the Mauthausen concentration camp, 8 November 1944

service. In this position, he supported "Armia Krajowa" (the Polish home army), the largest military resistance organization of World War Two in Europe, to which he had belonged since 1940. Thanks to his excellent knowledge of German, he was able to intercept letters of denunciation to the local Gestapo office before delivery. After being betrayed himself, he had to leave Łowicz and his family on 5 December 1943. He fled to Warsaw, stayed with a family of friends and helped hide other Jews. During the Warsaw Uprising he fled from the massacre of the civilian population and was captured on 2 September 1944 and taken to Transit Camp 121 in Prusków. A card sent to his family informing them in autumn 1944 about his deportation to Germany was the last sign of life of Wincenty Gołębiewski. It is assumed that he had already fled from Łowicz under his alias Aleksander

Mroziński, born on 15 August 1908 in Podhajce. It can also be assumed that he was registered under this name as prisoner No. 104815 in the Groß Rosen concentration camp and was committed to the Mauthausen concentration camp on 20 September 1944. From the Linz III sub-camp, he worked from 6 October 1944 as an unskilled worker in the Hermann Göring works. He died on 8 November 1944 of "pneumonia and acute circulatory failure."



Identity card of Wincenty Gołębiewski in approximately 1940



Wincenty Gołębiewski (beginning of the 1940s)

ANGELO GESIOT



Angélo Gésiot (undated)

Angelo Gesiot, French resistance fighter. As a prisoner of the Mauthausen concentration camp, he was forced to work at the Hermann Göring works from 17 June 1944 until his death on 26 June 1944.

WORKED UNTIL HIS DEATH

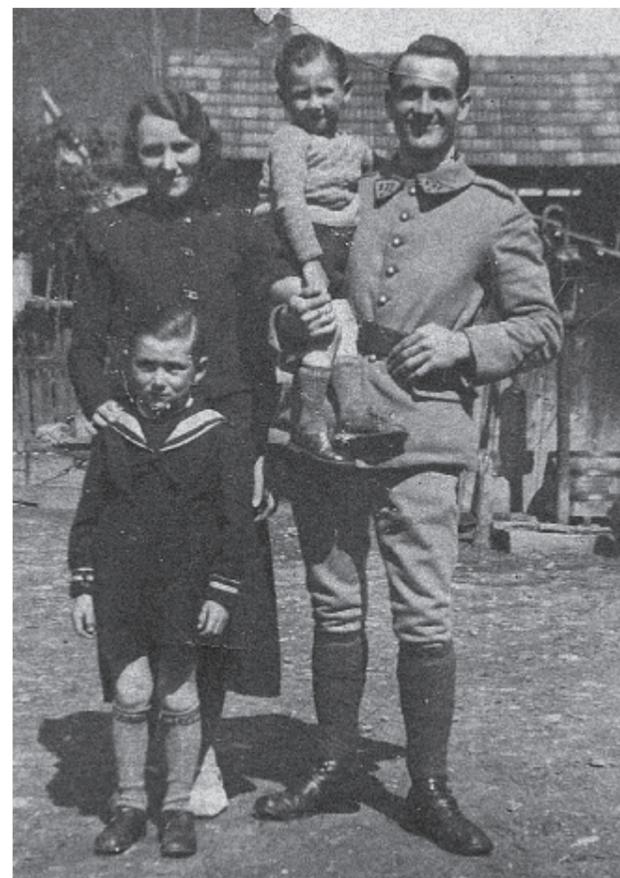
The prisoners of the Mauthausen concentration camp who were assigned to forced labor at the Hermann Göring works in Linz were accommodated in the Linz I (destroyed by an air raid on 25 July 1944) and Linz III sub-camps. In armaments production and especially in the utilization of blast furnace slag, the prisoners (whose business value to the Hermann Göring works was worth millions to the SS), experienced by far the most difficult working conditions of all forced laborers. Death rates of seven to eight prisoners a day who lost their lives in the Linz III camp or directly at their workplace bear witness to this ruthless exploitation.⁴ Some 4900 prisoners were said to have been present when the camp was liberated on 5 May 1945.⁵

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HER GRANDFATHER

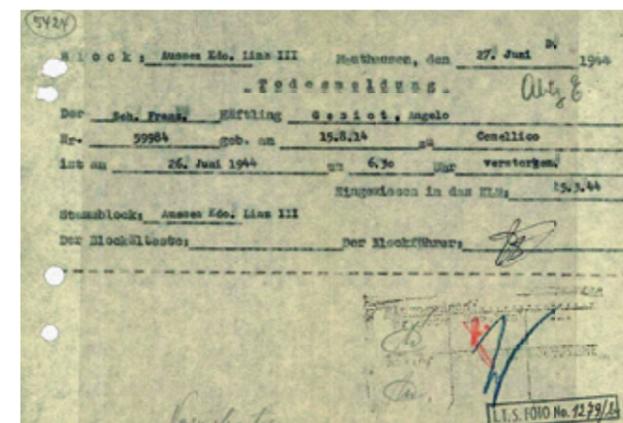
Cathérine Gésiot, the granddaughter of Angélo Gésiot, began studying the history of her grandfather a few years ago. "I was immersed in my grandfather's life as I kept finding so many different documents. ... Since then I have not stopped making every effort to find out everything I can about my grandfather. Traveling to Mauthausen and visiting the Contemporary History MUSEUM were essential experiences in this endeavor. I wanted to go where he suffered so horribly. I have tried ... to leave a legacy for our posterity and future generations so that they cannot forget these dark years in our history. I am planning to write a documentation or a book as soon as I have completed my research.

BIOGRAPHY

Angélo Gésiot was born on 15 August 1914 in Comelico, Veneto, Italy. His family emigrated with their five children to the Alsace region of France in search of better living conditions. Angélo Gésiot married here in 1933 and adopted his wife's son in the same year that their son Angelo was born. In 1938 the family became French citizens. Drafted in 1939, Angélo Gésiot worked as a mechanic in Dijon and found refuge with his family in Vichy France after surrendering in 1940. In 1943 he joined the resistance, was denounced in 1944 and arrested together with 43 colleagues. He was sent to a prison camp and then to prison in Lyon. On 22 March 1944, he was transferred to Mauthausen and from there to Sub-camp Linz III on 17 June 1944. He died there nine days later on 26 June 1944. Pneumonia was recorded as a cause of death in the death registry.



Angélo Gésiot with his wife Maria and his sons Marcel and Angelo (approximately 1939/1940)



Death note of Angélo Gésiot⁶

GINO DI GIUSTO



Gino di Giusto as a chauffeur in the early 1940s

Gino di Giusto, agricultural worker and bicycle mechanic, employed as an Italian military intern at the Hermann Göring works from 18 September 1944 to 4 May 1945.

PERSONAL DIARY

Gino di Giusto kept a diary about his time as a prisoner of war and forced laborer. He wrote about lack of food, harassment, the strain of work and ruthlessness toward his Catholic faith, but he also recorded a few joyful moments that he experienced during this time.

... We arrived in the morning on the 10th. After arriving at the station, they let us go out to drink some coffee, which meant hot water and a quarter loaf of bread. They distributed the first rations at about eleven o'clock. Later they led us to the washing and disinfection rooms and then back to the station, where we rested in the railcars. The next morning we made our way to the Haid distribution camp. ... On the morning of the 15th, we were assigned to Camp 22. That is when I was separated from my best friends. ... We were transferred on 31 October to Camp 54, which looked like a big prison surrounded by barbed wire. On 1 November, All Saints' Day, we had to work as if it were a regular work day. Snow fell from 6 to 11 November. The cold was horrible under these circumstances. We all had so little to eat and had to work so hard. The morning ration was 40 grams of margarine or 20 grams of jam and a sip of coffee. In reality it was hot water that did not deserve the name of coffee. Beets at noon and beets again in the evening with a tiny main course too small for a fly, yet we had to work more than twelve hours nonstop. German law reserved harsh punishment for any unauthorized breaks. ... 14th day, in the camp we got three quarters of a kilo of bread, which was a big surprise. On the 17th we received our first wage in marks, money we are not allowed to spend outside the camp. And on with the work. The days passed

without us having any time to think about our captivity. On the 20th, a lieutenant, a chaplain who was a prisoner himself, commemorated Holy Mass in the camp for the first time. That was a wonderful thing for me under these circumstances. That made me hopeful to receive Holy Communion on Christmas Eve. 25th: Christmas (what a word) but I had a relatively good time despite the circumstances. Holy Mass, which was the most important event of the day, and then some food. A kilo of bread, 100 grams of jam, 200 grams of margarine, and the same again on St. Stephen's Day. In order to appreciate the holiday from the perspective of food, everyone wanted to prepare something special like puree or gnocchi. ... 16 January 1945: We received the first company bonus. One kilogram of bread per month, a quarter salami and 100 grams of margarine. 17th: My work team had to work outside, where we were exposed to the weather. ... 30th: We were given some cigarettes again, Eleganti (Francesca) N. 75, plus the news that would be designated as civilian workers. January passed without any news. Bombardments in several places, including near Linz. 1 February: When coming home from work, I was very happy to see a postcard from my family. I cried for joy after reading the two lines. I hadn't heard from home in five months. ... 13 February: early-morning roll call, as always, then Holy Mass. There was another roll call in the afternoon while it snowed heavily. We thought it would be quick, but they inspected caps and shoes while we were standing in a blizzard. They only did it to make us suffer. It is something you cannot forget for the rest of your life.

SILENT MEMORIES

Gino di Giusto was an Italian military internee, later a civilian worker, in Barracks Camp 54 in the immediate vicinity of Linz sub-camp III. The laborers were guarded continuously, and indiscriminate abuse by the guards was frequent. The diary and notes written by di Giusto were carefully hidden when the Gestapo and works security regularly raided the laborers' living quarters at the beginning of 1945. After the war, he wrote his experiences again. After returning home, Italian military internees who were used as forced laborers in the German armaments industry beginning in 1943, were denied recognition for a long time as an independent group of victims (as were Jews and other persecuted ethnic groups and religious communities). Relatives have made and continue to make the most valuable contribution to the documentation of this dark chapter in history. In the case of Gino di Giusto, it was his grandson Davide Zoratti who with his family visited the Contemporary History MUSEUM and the memorial stone at Lunzerstraße in May 2018.



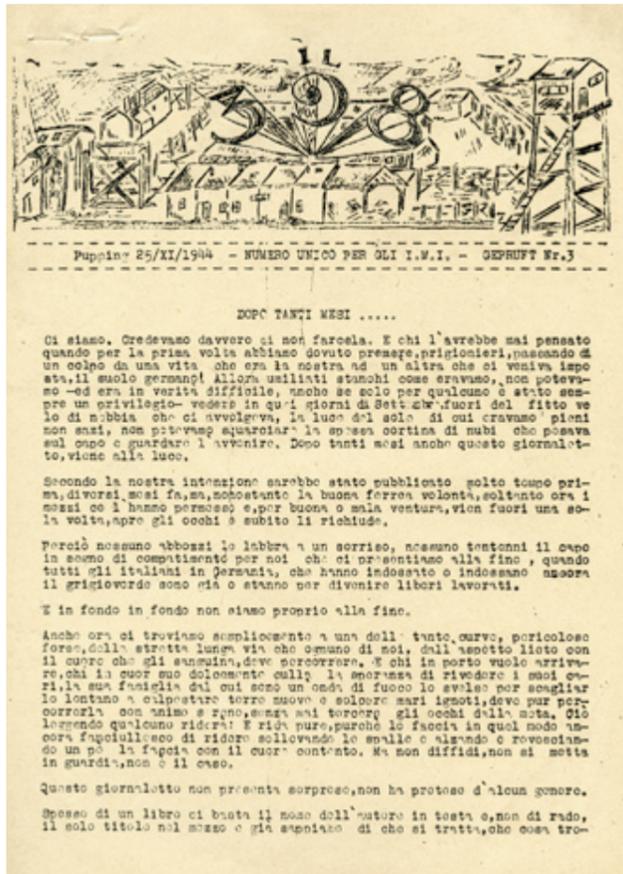
Relatives of Gino di Giusto at a wreath laying, memorial stone at Lunzerstraße, 2018

BIOGRAPHY

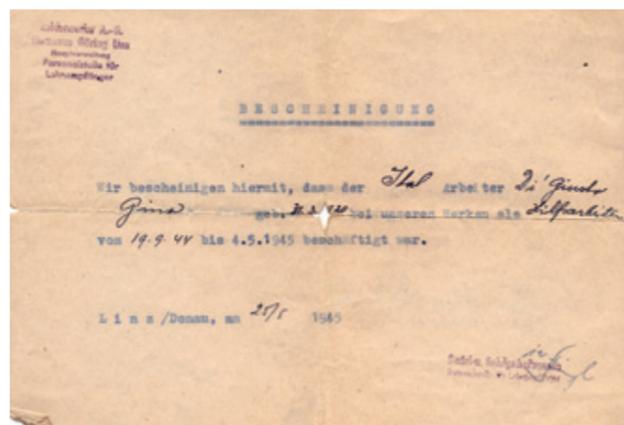
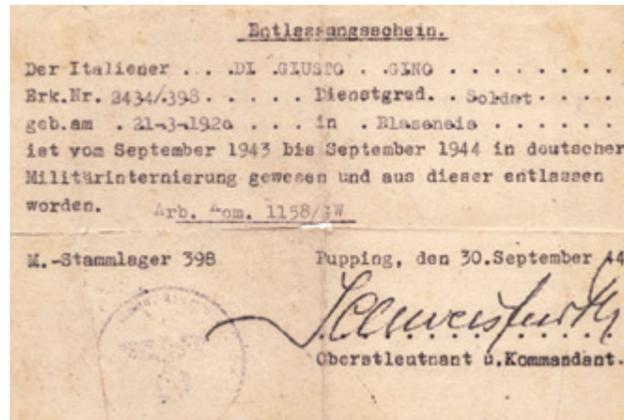
Gino Di Giusto was born on 31 March 1920 in Plasencis, (province of Udine, Italy). He worked as a farmhand and completed training as a bicycle mechanic. Drafted in 1940, he was trained as a military chauffeur. From 2 January 1941 until October 1942, he was deployed in Albania. After an illness, he recuperated in Italy before returning to Albania in June 1943, where he was taken as a prisoner of war to Germany in September 1943. He was interned at Stalag 398 in Popping (Upper Austria) and deployed from 18 September 1944 to 4 May 1945 as an unskilled worker in the Hermann Göring works. After he was freed, Gino di Giusto returned to Italy and married in 1950. He and his wife had two children. He worked in various factories in the region, and the purchase of a seed sowing machine enabled him to work in the fields and improve his family income. Gino di Giusto died in 2015 at the age of 95.



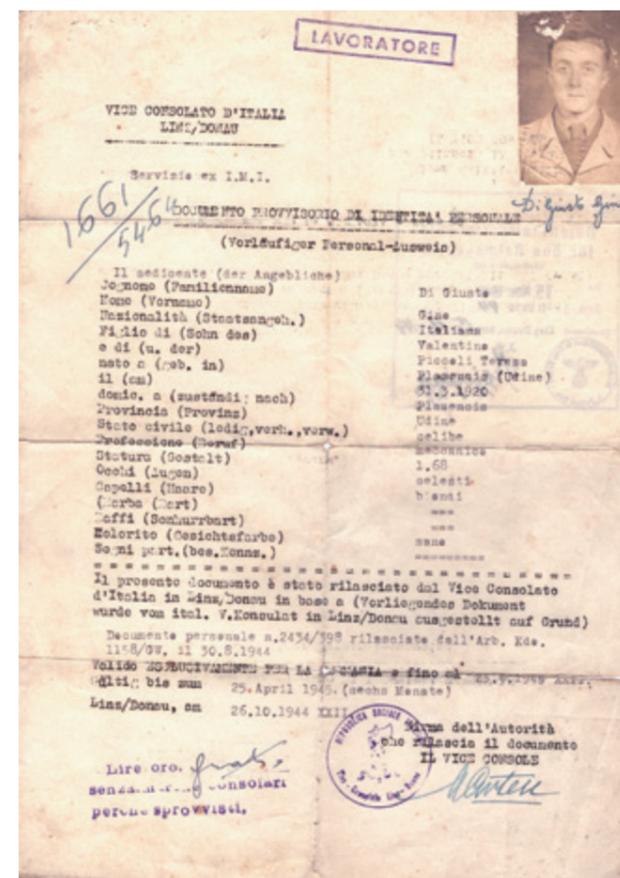
Gino Di Giusto (undated)



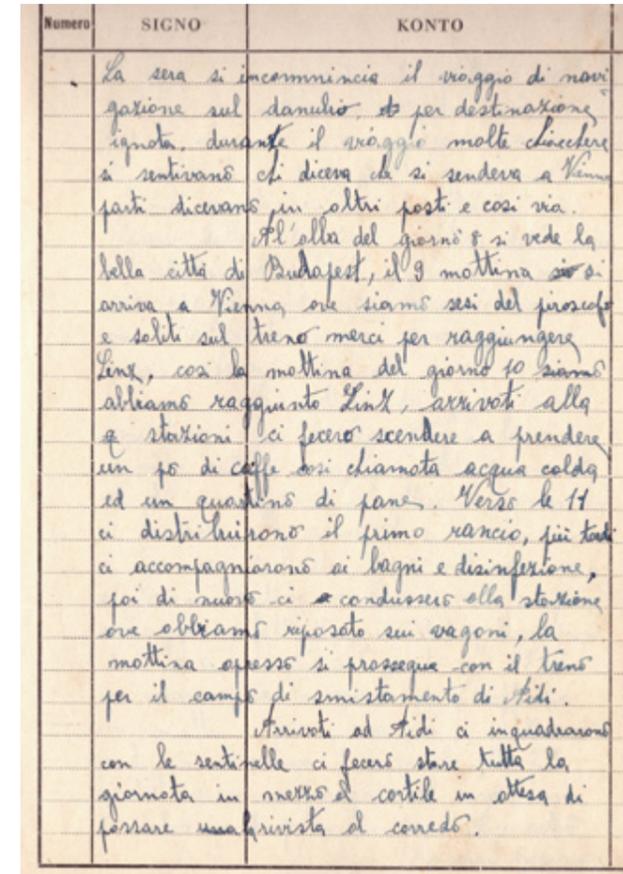
Articles of Italian prisoners of war, STALAG Puppung camp newspaper, April 1944⁷



Confirmations of Gino di Giusto's releases from STALAG Puppung and from work at the Hermann Göring works



Provisional identity card of Gino di Giusto issued by the Italian Consulate in Linz, 1944



Excerpt from the diary of Gino di Giusto, transcript after 1945

JOHANNES MÜLLER



Johannes Müller, 1945⁸

Johannes (Hans) Müller, German, Communist resistance fighter, prisoner in the Mauthausen concentration camp, block clerk from 9 July 1944 to 5 May 1945 in the sub-camp III of the Mauthausen concentration camp in Linz.⁹

SOLIDARITY AND LEGACY

Johannes Müller had been sentenced On 1 August 1941 by the People's Court of Nazi Germany to life imprisonment for high treason. He spent the first two years of his imprisonment in German prisons and was transferred to the Mauthausen concentration camp in October 1943. On 9 July 1944 it was transferred to the Linz III sub-camp. He began working as a block recorder for the International Camp Committee. 60 years later, the German Mauthausen Committee cites the memoirs of Johannes Müller: "These relatively favorable positions helped us make camp life as bearable as possible and helped many comrades survive. That was our objective. For example, we tried to find additional food for weak and sick prisoners, free them from heavy physical labor, hide endangered comrades and so on. My main task was to protect the Jewish prisoners from the camp leadership and their mission of extermination." Johannes Müller was one of the prisoners liberated by American troops in the Linz III sub-camp on 5 May 1945. Throughout his life he remained committed to the legacy of the Mauthausen concentration camp survivors, worked actively in the International Mauthausen Committee and was chairman of the Mauthausen camp working group of the GDR.¹⁰

HOLLERITH: HELP IN AUTOMATED EXPLOITATION

"Hollerith-coded": Johannes Müller's prisoner identity card bears this striking note. The red stamp is proof of the automated exploitation of labor in the extermination camp system of the National Socialists. At the end of the 19th

century, US engineer Hermann Hollerith revolutionized the pace of statistical administration with a new punch card system. The use of Hollerith devices and cards in the United States Department of War and in censuses proved their high efficiency. A few decades later, the system was used in war logistics and in the planning and organization of exploitation and the Holocaust in the Third Reich. With the help of the Hollerith card index system, the SS Main Economic and Administrative Office began centrally registering concentration camp prisoner workers in the summer of 1944. "Hollerith-coded" on prisoner identity cards referred to the fact that the data of this concentration camp inmate had been transferred to a so-called Hollerith pre-card and then punched into the actual punch card. Of particular importance were the detention and mission-relevant data such as prisoner number, reason for imprisonment and date of birth, but above all professional opportunities.¹¹ DEHOMAG (Deutsche Hollerith-Maschinen Gesellschaft mbH) proved to be a willing helper in the objectives of Nazi bureaucracy with the provision of punch cards and the rental, maintenance and coding of punching and reading devices. This included no less than the use of their expertise in the registration of Jews and Romani people within the sphere of influence of the National Socialists. The DEHOMAG parent company, IBM in the United States, was confronted with accusations of an ideological-technical alliance with the Third Reich (as argued by columnist and book author Edwin Black), particularly since company president Thomas J. Watson was an admirer of Hitler, who awarded him the Order of the German Eagle in 1937.¹²

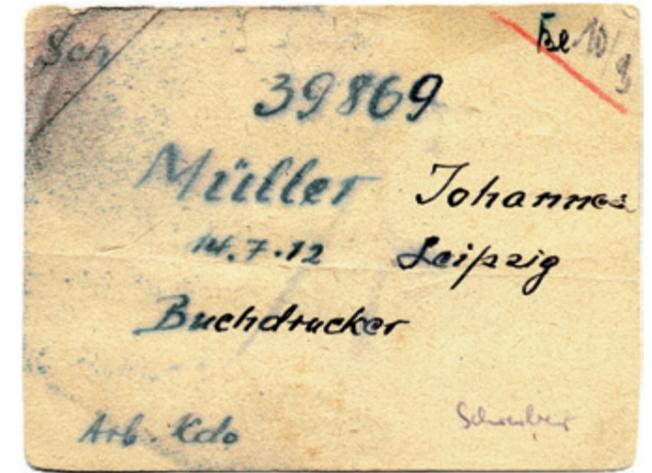
Without Hollerith and IBM, the extermination system, concentration camps, work detachments and persecution of the Third Reich, as well as the Holocaust, would have existed nonetheless. The fact that punched card technology became part of the "industrialization of mass murder," as it was put by the German news magazine DER SPIEGEL, quotes the American historian Sybil Milton of the Washington Holocaust Memorial Museum¹³, enabled the Nazi regime to kill even more efficiently.

BIOGRAPHY

Johannes Müller was born on 14 July 1912 in Leipzig. The son of a baker, Johannes Müller completed his training as a book printer and became involved in the communist youth movement. In 1931 he joined the Communist Party of Germany. After the National Socialists seized power, he joined the resistance as an instructor, organizer and courier. He was arrested in 1940 because of these activities and sentenced to life imprisonment by the People's Court of Nazi Germany in 1941. In 1943 he was transported to the Mauthausen concentration camp. In July of 1944 he was transferred to the Linz III sub-camp, the youngest sub-camp in the Hermann Göring works in Linz, where he worked as a block clerk. After being liberated on 5 May 1945, Johannes Müller returned to Leipzig, where he studied social sciences. In the GDR he held positions in ministries and departments of the Central Committee of the SED. Until his death on 7 January 1987, he was active in the International Mauthausen Committee and the Mauthausen Camp working group of the GDR.



Johannes Müller (r.) with former prisoner Peter Edel in Mauthausen (1980)¹⁴



Johannes Müller's camp identity card



Prisoner identity cards of Johannes Müller punched using the Hollerith system

ERICH BECKMANN



Erich Beckmann and his wife
(late 1940s)

Erich Beckmann, a German skilled worker, was ordered to leave the front line in order to work in the Hermann Göring works. He worked in the drop forge of Oberdonau ironworks from 20 October 1943 to 4 May 1945.

FROM THE EAST TO THE PRODUCTION FRONT

Experts were more than scarce in the Nazi armaments industry. This major lack of expertise was to the advantage of Erich Beckmann, a trained drop forging specialist from Dortmund: In October 1943 he was ordered to leave the Eastern Front and come to Linz to work in the Hermann Göring works, where he worked as a foreman in the drop forge of the Oberdonau ironworks. In the 1970s, he wrote down some of his memories:

On a dark night at the end of October ... the guards kept shouting my name: "Private Beckmann, report to the boss!" They continued to shout. I thought they might ask me to carry out a nighttime inspection, as I had often done. I did not enjoy such adventures and hesitated to say I was ready. I pretended I had been sleeping and finally responded to their calls. "Report to the boss immediately!" Sitting in his sparsely lit tent, the boss told me, as I stood at attention, something unbelievable to me at the time: "Private Beckmann, you are returning to Germany immediately! You are to report to High Command in Berlin. Return your weapons. My chauffeur will take you to the station. Do you understand?" Of course I did. Was I leaving Russia so quickly? It was hard to believe. ...

Beckmann writes this about the work activities in the Oberdonau ironworks:

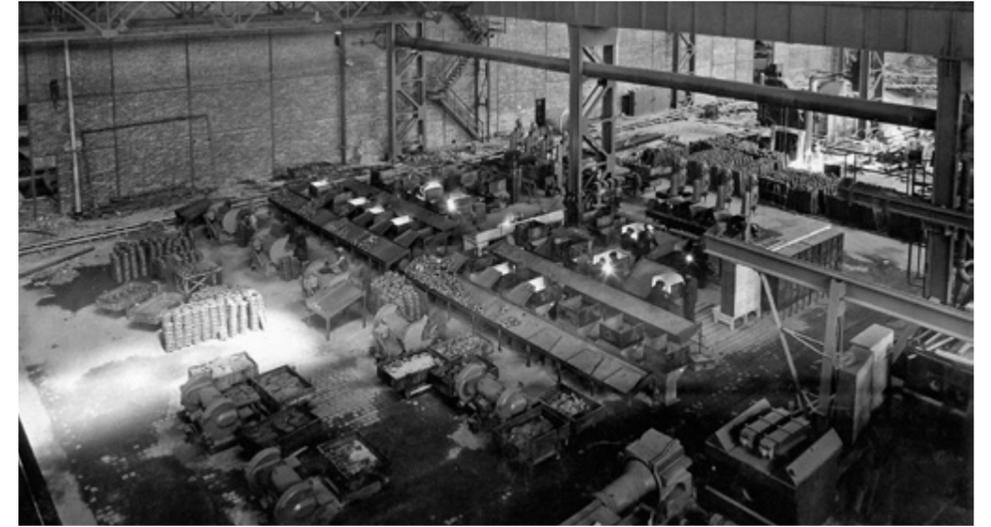
The French were assigned to the heavy machinery, the Yugoslav people to the cranes, the others to the stoves. During the long nights I felt sorry for my people. Many of the men had to walk for hours to make it to work. According to what

they said, I had my doubts about whether they ever had enough to eat in spite of the hard work they had to perform. The foreigners all lived in barrack camps around the city of Linz when we Germans commanded them to make armaments. ... A break of only half an hour at night didn't provide much rest, and the production teams were in constant competition with each other. This competition was documented by production volumes and publicly displayed inside the works. ...

In night-long deliberations, I had devised a plan that would increase performance while at the same time permitting an increase in rest periods for everyone. ... Though my method resulted in more stress on the machinery, it increased production by 20 to 25 percent. The newly introduced production method gave the teams one to two hours sleep during the night. ... The workers kept completely quiet about it, and the solidarity was enjoyed by everyone.

Erich Beckmann describes his encounters with the prisoners in concentration sub-camps I and III in Linz. They were forced to work not far from his workplace:

Hundreds of these highly unfortunate people were escorted at each shift change ... heavily guarded by army soldiers. These people from the concentration camps were divided into eight large production units, and the groups of workers were separated from each other by man-high barbed-wire fences. ... It was very heart-wrenching to see these emaciated figures ... who worked just as hard for the final German victory as all the other workers, albeit under much more difficult and degrading circumstances.



Interior view of the drop forge,
1943

BIOGRAPHY

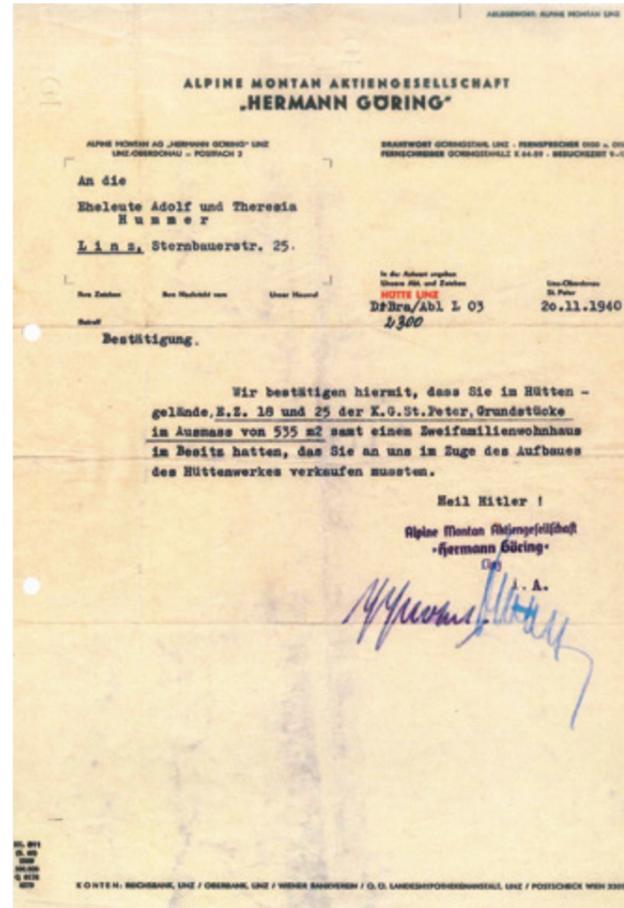
Erich Beckmann was born on 9 September 1921 in Dortmund. He grew up on his parents' farm and began training as a locksmith at the age of 14. He later completed an apprenticeship as a drop forge in a company in Dortmund. He was later drafted and served in a maintenance and repair unit for trucks and tanks, after which he became a chauffeur on the eastern front line. In October 1943 he was transferred from the front to the Hermann Göring works. From 20 October 1943 he commanded a shift of French, Yugoslav, Italian and Polish forced laborers as a foreman at the drop forge. On the night of 7 May 1945, he secretly left Linz and went more than 900 kilometers, mainly on foot, with comrades to Dortmund, arriving on 25 June 1945. In the 1970s, Erich Beckmann wrote memories of his time in Linz. After his death, grandson Carl David Kratzsch began working through the history of his grandfather.



Erich Beckmann,
1970s



House of the Hummer family, St. Peter-Zislau, 1938



Confirmation of Hermann Göring works for replacement of property owned by the Hummer family, 20 November 1940



Part of the newly built settlement at Sternbauerstraße, 1936



It took a lot of manual work to demolish the home of the Hummer family.



Construction of the Hummer family home in Knittelfeld (Styria, approximately 1941)

- 1 Jenny Mendl, granddaughter of Johannes Müller, in her speech on the occasion of the 67th anniversary of the liberation of the Mauthausen concentration camp, 13 May 2012. In: Deutsches Mauthausen Komitee Ost e. V. (Hg.): Mauthauseninformation, Berlin, Juni 2012.
- 2 In: ORF.at (<https://ooe.orf.at/v2/news/stories/2532812>).
- 3 Roger Frankenstein: Die deutschen Arbeitskräfteaushebungen in Frankreich und die Zusammenarbeit der französischen Unternehmen mit der Besatzungsmacht, 1940–1944. In: Wacław Długoborski (Hg.): Zweiter Weltkrieg und sozialer Wandel, Göttingen, 1981, S. 211–223.
- 4 Perz, Bertrand: KZ-Häftlinge als Zwangsarbeiter der Reichswerke „Hermann Göring“ in Linz. In: Oliver Rathkolb (Hg.): NS-Zwangsarbeit: Der Standort Linz der Reichswerke Hermann Göring AG Berlin, 1938–1945, Band I, Wien, Köln, Weimar, Böhlau, 2001, S. 572 f.
- 5 Ebd.
- 6 Todesmeldung des KZ Mauthausen, Angélo Gésiot, 1.1.26.3 / 1457349, ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives
- 7 Quelle: Oberösterreichisches Landesarchiv
- 8 Johannes Müller 1945. In: Deutsches Mauthausen Komitee Ost e. V. (Hg.): Im Tod lebendig. Erinnern heißt handeln. Wanderausstellung, Berlin 2008–2010, S. 26.
- 9 Ebd.
- 10 Ebd., S. 25.
- 11 „Hollerith-Vorkarte“. In: Arolsen Archives – International Center on Nazi Persecution (<https://eguide.its-arolsen.org/archiv/anzeige/41>).
- 12 Christian Habbe: Der programmierte Massenmord. In: DER SPIEGEL, 7/2001 (12.2.2001), S. 36–44.
- 13 Wie 7.
- 14 Johannes Müller 1945. In: Deutsches Mauthausen Komitee Ost e. V. (Hg.): Im Tod lebendig. Erinnern heißt handeln. Wanderausstellung, Berlin 2008–2010, S. 25
- 15 Die letzte Zeitzugin der Auslöschung von St. Peter, Oberösterreichische Nachrichten, 12.5.2018.
- 16 Vgl.: Maria Karl / Stefan Kurowski: Mit heißen Wünschen, Hermann Göring, Grünbach, 1998, S. 99–103.
- 17 Vermutete Entwicklung anhand der Adressbücher Linz von 1936 bzw. März 1940 sowie der Aussagen des Sohnes.

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