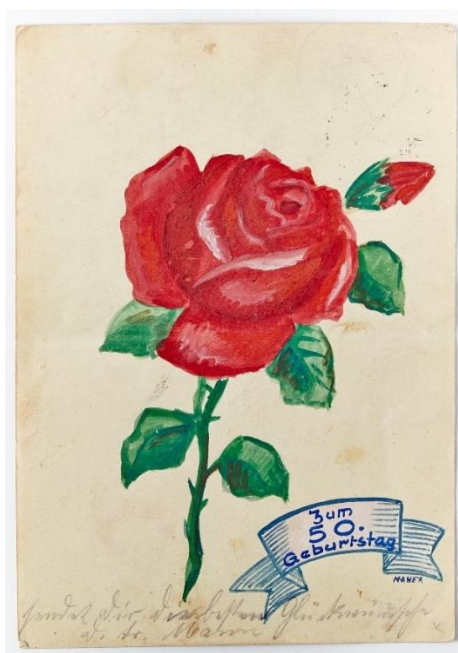


A Red Rose for Eva: The Nazi Crackdown on Augsburg's Socialists and Communists

By Kevin Ostoyich, Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation

January 31, 2025



**Post card sent by Friedrich (Fritz) Hoyer from Dachau concentration camp to his wife, Eva Hoyer, for her 50th birthday.
Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation Holocaust Collection.**

On June 8, 1933, a group of Socialists and Communists from Augsburg entered the Dachau concentration camp. The intake was reported in the *Augsburger Lokalanzeiger* newspaper, which was a supplement of the Nazi-run *Neue National-Zeitung*. The report highlighted that the two socialists, Johann Edelman and Karl Wernthaler, were among the new prisoners of the camp. Edelman and Wernthaler were prominent figures in the socialist political scene of Augsburg. Wernthaler had played a leading role during the events of November 9, 1918, in Augsburg when revolution swept through the country and Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated.¹ Regarding Edelman and Wernthaler, the reporter wrote:

Edelman and Wernthaler, two worthy representatives of Marxism, have made a pilgrimage to Dachau. Our blessing accompanies them. Augsburg cannot shed a tear for them. There will

¹ Reinhold Forster, "Die rote Fahne über Augsburg, *Augsburger Allgemeine*," November 2, 2019. Online: <https://www.augsburger-allgemeine.de/augsburg/kultur/Serie-Augsburg-und-die-Revolution-Die-rote-Fahne-ueber-Augsburg-id52642131.html> (Accessed July 17, 2024).



hardly be a worker left in all of Augsburg who would be able to conjure even a spark of sympathy for these two red bigwigs.²

Readers were reminded of Wernthaler's participation in the November events, which were referred to as a coup. The National Socialists viewed the events of November 8, 1918, not as a positive revolution for the people, but rather as a "coup" in which politicians of the left "stabbed" virtuous soldiers in the back. The reporter utilized this trope by stating that Wernthaler was flanked by two Spartacists in sailor uniform. This reporter further underscored the trope by writing that Wernthaler ran his mouth like a "machine gun" and that Wernthaler would not have been familiar with a machine gun through actual service at the front but only by hearsay:

Who doesn't think of the days of the coup, when Wernthaler stood on the balcony of the town hall between two Spartacists in sailor uniforms and gave a speech to his people. Wernthaler did not yet then have the soapy neck and the anti-worker roundness around his stomach, which he accumulated over the last 14 years through his concerns about the proletariat, but his mouth was already then firing off like a machine gun, which he certainly was not familiar with from the front, but rather by hearsay.³

On that June day, along with Wernthaler and Edelmann, twelve other men—all either Socialists or Communists—were admitted to Dachau. Among them was Friedrich Hoyer, a boiler maker and Communist Party functionary who lived in Augsburg.

Just a few months before Hoyer, Wernthaler, Edelmann, and others were sent to Dachau, the Reichstag had been set on fire in Berlin. The National Socialists quickly arrested the alleged culprit and blamed the Communists for the fire. The precise details of who started the fire are still shrouded in mystery, but it is plausible that the National Socialists were behind the arson. Regardless of who caused the fire, the National Socialists quickly acted by issuing the Reichstag Fire Decree. The infamous law essentially stripped Germans of basic freedoms. The first paragraph of the Decree read:

§ 1

Articles 114, 115, 117, 118, 123, 124, and 153 of the Constitution of the German Reich are suspended until further notice. Thus, restrictions on personal liberty, on the right of free expression of opinion, including freedom of the press, on the right of assembly and the right of association, and violations of the privacy of postal, telegraphic, and telephonic communications, and warrants for house searches, orders for confiscations as well as restrictions on property are permissible beyond the legal limits otherwise prescribed.⁴

² *Augsburg Lokalanzeiger* newspaper clipping: „Dachau erhält Zuwachs aus Augsburg. Darunter zwei bekannte SPD-Bonzen,“ [Dachau has an increase from Augsburg. Including two well-known SPD-bigshots], June 10, 1933. The newspaper clipping is from the Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation Holocaust Collection. Translation by Kevin Ostoyich. [Note on translation: "Bonzen" has been translated as "bigshots" and "Oberbonzen" has been translated as "bigwigs". "Top brass" or "big cats" could have been used as well.]

³ Translation by Kevin Ostoyich.

⁴ "Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of the People and State ("Reichstag Fire Decree") (February 28, 1933)," German History in Documents and Images (GHDl), German Historical Institute: https://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=2325 (Accessed November 15, 2024).



In the aftermath of the Reichstag fire, Socialists and Communists were targeted throughout the country. Concurrently, there was a cascade of changes in the government and police force in the German state of Bavaria. These changes brought about the meteoric rise of Heinrich Himmler as a police chief and initiated the construction of the concentration camp system of the Third Reich.

When Hitler had been appointed chancellor on January 30, 1933, another member of the NSDAP, Wilhelm Frick, had been named Minister of the Interior of Germany. On March 9, 1933, Frick aligned Bavaria with the National Socialist movement by installing Franz Ritter von Epp as Reich Commissioner of Bavaria.

Michael Bollmann describes how the appointment of Franz Ritter von Epp led to Heinrich Himmler's control over the Bavarian police:

Von Epp immediately appointed the Bavarian NSDAP Gauleiter Adolf Wagner as acting head of the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior and Heinrich Himmler as acting police chief of Munich. Reinhard Heydrich temporarily took over Department VI of the Police Headquarters, the Political Police of Bavaria.

On March 15, 1933, Himmler was appointed political advisor in the State Ministry of the Interior. With these steps in quick succession, Himmler had taken control of the Political Police of Bavaria. In the same month, Himmler was also appointed commander of the Bavarian Political Auxiliary Police; as a result, Himmler, in conjunction with his office Reichsführer SS, was able to use SS members as auxiliary policemen. On April 1, he was appointed Political Police Commander of Bavaria. Shortly thereafter, he was finally given formal responsibility for all protective custody matters. From then on, Himmler had the Political Police, the Political Auxiliary Police and the concentration camps in Bavaria under his control. The Political Police had been separated from the other police apparatuses and set up in such a way that it was economically independent of the other authorities.⁵

On March 22, 1933, the first concentration camp of the Third Reich was set up in a munitions factory in Dachau. The camp was initially guarded by members of the *Bayerische Landespolizei* [Bavarian State Police]. Immediately upon the opening of the Dachau concentration camp, leading Socialists and Communists were sent from various police branches of Bavaria to the camp for "protective custody" [*Schutzhaft*]. The files of these transfers are available through the Arolsen Archives. On April 11, 1933, control of the camp was transferred to the SS.

Historian Christopher Dillon has highlighted the degree to which the early history of Dachau was connected to memories of the end of the First World War and the period of civil warfare in the country as a whole and Bavaria in particular:

⁵ Michael Bollmann, "The German Police under National Socialism – A History of Development," Zukunft braucht Erinnerung. Das Online-Portal zu den historischen Themen unserer Zeit (website): <https://www.zukunft-braucht-erinnerung.de/die-deutsche-polizei-im-nationalsozialismus/> (Accessed November 19, 2024). Note: This is the English version of the website. The original text is in German.



The lethal spiral of paramilitary violence between Left and Right in the closing years of the Weimar Republic had rekindled memories of political violence from the era after the first world war, conflict which frequently had met the civil war criteria [...]. In Bavaria, 'springboard' for the unfolding system of SS terror, these perceptions were particularly acute, shaped by a notably volatile postwar experience which had nourished a sense of legitimacy for the use of extreme counter-revolutionary violence against the Left in times of crisis.⁶

Dillon summarizes the specific Bavarian historical political legacy as follows:

On 7 November 1918, the House of Wittelsbach, ruler of Bavaria for more than seven centuries, was the first German monarchy to be swept away. Three successive, [short-lived], radical left-wing regimes ensued in Munich, provoking an incremental bitterness and obsession with the threat of Bolshevism which was to poison Bavarian politics throughout the Weimar Republic.⁷

As Dillon notes, the early history of Dachau was connected to this past, as scores were settled between those who had fought in the political battles of the Weimar years. Dillon notes the symbolic importance of the very site of the Dachau camp—the munitions factory—in the civil war that raged between the political Right and the political Left in the spring of 1919.⁸ The brief biographical portraits of some of the leading SS guards during the early months of the camp provided by Dillon demonstrate the high degree to which the SS guards were involved in those political battles of the past, and thus were ready to enact revenge on the leading figures of the Left when the latter arrived as protective custody inmates at the camp.



SS Guards arriving at Dachau on May 27, 1933.

These guards arrived at Dachau slightly more than two weeks before Friedrich Hoyer did. Photo Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dachau_concentration_camp#/media/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_152-01-16,_KZ_Dachau,_SS-Wachmannschaft.jpg (Accessed August 14, 2024.)

Photo Source Information: Bundesarchiv, Bild 152-01-16 / Friedrich Franz Bauer / CC-BY-SA 3.0.

⁶ Christopher Dillon, "'We'll Meet Again in Dachau': The Early Dachau SS and the Narrative of Civil War," *Journal of Contemporary History*, July 2010, Vol. 45, No. 3, 536.

⁷ Dillon, 539.

⁸ Dillon, 540, 544-545.





Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908434> (Access November 15, 2024).

Wäckerle was the commandant when Friedrich Hoyer entered Dachau on June 8, 1933. Wäckerle was most likely familiar with the men who entered the camp from Augsburg that day. As Dillon notes, “Wäckerle was the founder of SS *Standarte* Augsburg’s Kempten *Sturm* and led street battles with the Bavarian Left, with scars to prove it. He came to Dachau as leader of the Kempten *Hilfspolizei* and was appointed commandant as the highest-ranking SS man in the camp.” Moreover, according to Dillon, Wäckerle “took a close interest in his KPD [Communist Party] functionaries[.]”

This was the historical context for the transfer of Friedrich Hoyer and the thirteen other men from Augsburg to Dachau on June 8, 1933. It is highly likely that Hoyer and the other men who entered Dachau on that day were subjected to substantial beatings upon arrival. As Dillon notes of the SS guards,

One of their functions was to carry out the so-called 'welcome beating' accorded to prominent newcomers. All prisoner memoirs note the SS feeding frenzy which attended the arrival of a fresh prisoner transport: “woe betide,” as one recalled, “the prisoner an SS man recognized from his home town.” This reflected the kinds of civil hatreds and feuds which had built up over previous years. [One SS guard] even suggested that his colleagues had shown commendable restraint under the circumstances, since they could remember “only too well and painfully” the injuries they had sustained from paramilitary formations of the Bavarian Left.⁹

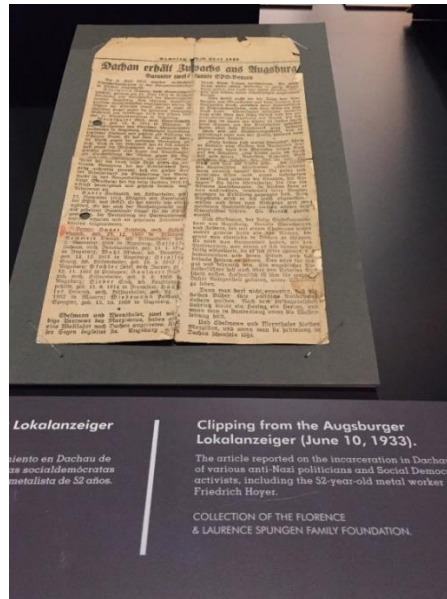
A police document available through the Arolsen Archives provides the political background of the fourteen men from Augsburg who were sent to Dachau on June 8. Given the document lacks identifying information and contemporaneous stamps, it is not clear what specific police force generated it. The Arolsen Archives heading for the collection in which the document is housed is “Confinements and transfers by the police of protective custody prisoners to various police prisons and to Dachau, 3.6.1933 - 19.8.1933.”¹⁰ Regarding the “scope and content” of the collection, the following statement is provided: “The lists are dealing with confinements and transfers by the police of protective custody prisoners to various police prisons and to the concentration camp Dachau. There are also arrest warrants and 2 articles from “*Völkischer Beobachter*” from 11.08.1933.”¹¹ Other documents in the collection come from various police branches in Bavaria. It is likely that the document originated from the Augsburg branch of the *Bayerische Landespolizei*.

⁹ Dillon, 548.

¹⁰ <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908752> (Accessed November 13, 2024).

¹¹ <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908752> (Accessed November 13, 2024).





Clipping from the *Augsburger Lokalanzeiger* (June 10, 1933) announcing the transfer of Socialists and Communists from Augsburg to the Dachau concentration camp. The *Augsburger Lokalanzeiger* was a supplement of the *Neue National-Zeitung*, the major organ of the NSDAP in the Gau [district] of Schwaben [Swabia].¹² In the newspaper article, Hoyer is identified as being married, a boiler maker (*Kesselschmied*), and being from Erlangen.

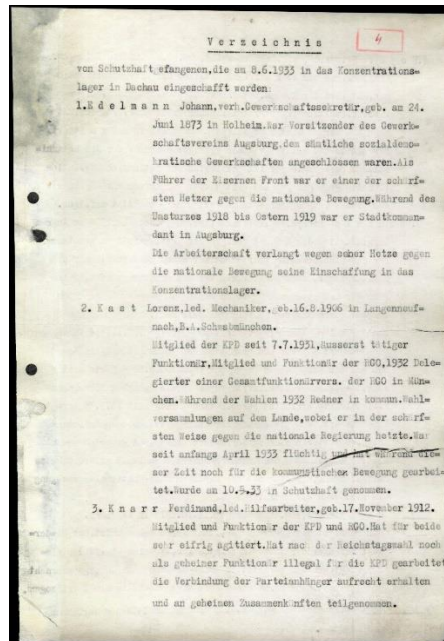
Part of the text of the *Augsburger Lokalanzeiger* article is lifted verbatim from a police report regarding the fourteen men who were sent from Augsburg to Dachau on June 8, 1933.¹³ Given the newspaper was an organ of the NSDAP, the police report was most likely supplied to the reporter.

The following report on the individuals sent to Dachau on June 8, 1933 most likely provided by Augsburg police branch:

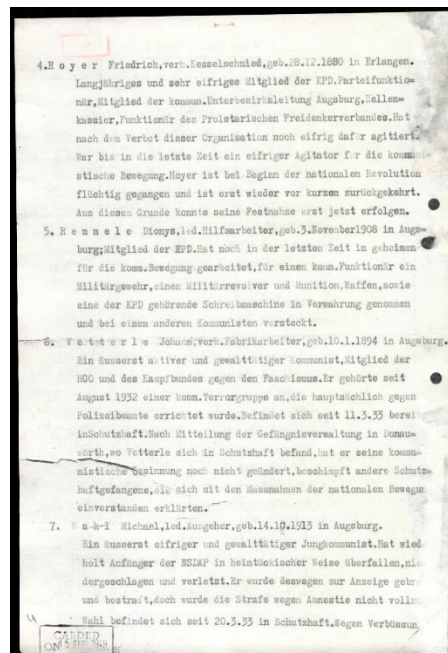
¹² Zeitschriften Datenbank website: <https://zdb-katalog.de/title.xhtml?idn=01686705X&view=full> (Accessed November 18, 2024).

¹³ The newspaper article and the police report texts regarding Ferdinand Knarr are identical.





First page of the police report on the men sent from Augsburg to Dachau. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908752> (Accessed July 15, 2024).

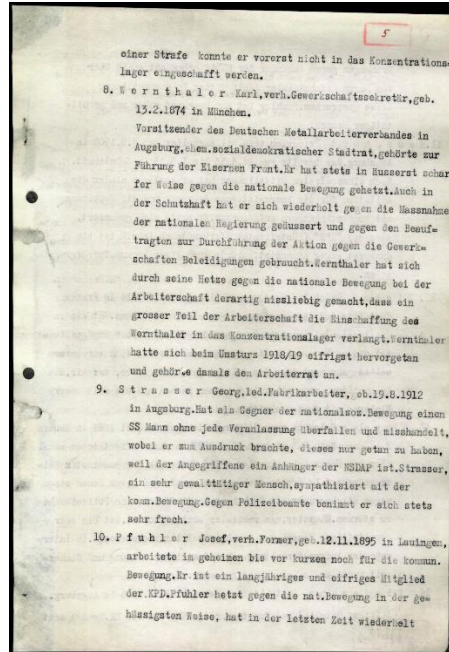


Second page of the police report on the men sent from Augsburg to Dachau.

This page contains the entry for Friedrich Hoyer.

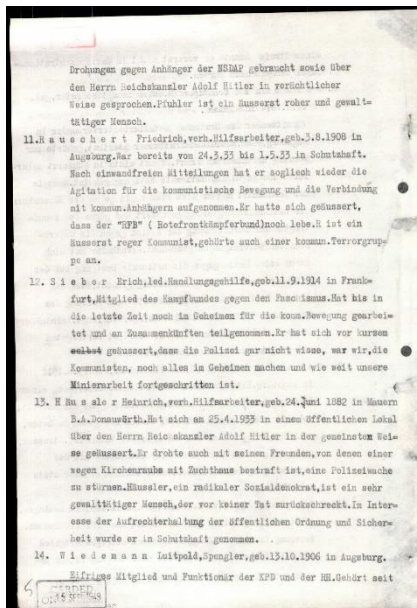
Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908752> (Accessed July 15, 2024).



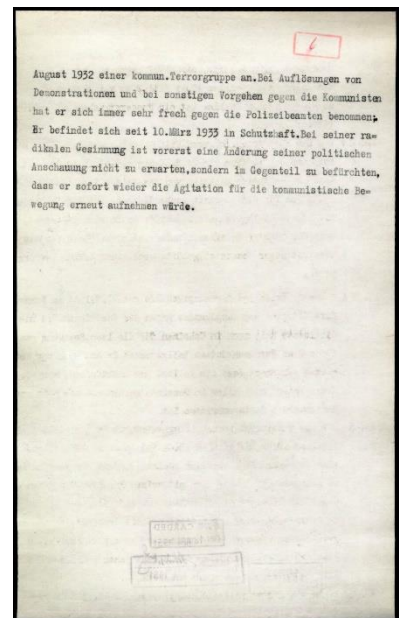


Third page of the police report on the men sent from Augsburg to Dachau.

Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908753> (Accessed July 15, 2024).



Left: Fourth page of the police report on the men sent from Augsburg to Dachau. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908753> (Accessed July 15, 2024).



Right: Fifth page of the police report on the men sent from Augsburg to Dachau. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908754> (Accessed July 15, 2024).



Text regarding Friedrich Hoyer from the second page of the police report on the men sent from Augsburg to Dachau:

Transcription of the German text:

Hoyer Friedrich, verh. Kessleschmied, geb. 28.12.1880 in Erlangen. Langjähriges und sehr eifriges Mitglied der KPD. Parteifunktionär, Mitglied der kommun. Unterbezirksleitung Augsburg, Zellenkassier, Funktionär des Proletarischen Freidenkerverbandes. Hat nach dem Verbot dieser Organisation noch eifrig dafür agitiert. War bis in die letzte Zeit ein eifriges Agitator für die kommunistische Bewegung. Hoyer ist bei Beginn der nationalen Revolution flüchtig gegangen und ist erst wieder vor kurzem zurückgekehrt. Aus diesem Grunde konnte seine Festnahme erst jetzt erfolgen.

English translation:

Hoyer Friedrich, married boiler maker, born December 28, 1880, in Erlangen. Long-time and very active member of the KPD [Communist Party of Germany]. Party functionary, member of the Communist sub-district leadership Augsburg, cell treasurer, functionary of the Proletarian Free Thinkers Association. After the ban of this organization, [he] still agitated actively for it. [He] was until recently an active agitator for the Communist movement. At the beginning of the National Revolution [the National Socialist takeover in 1933], Hoyer fled and only returned very recently. For this reason, his capture could only be carried out now.¹⁴

Information regarding the Proletarian Free Thinker Association:

According to the Volkshochschule Weimar website, The Proletarian Free Thinker Association advocated for the separation between Church and State in Germany. The association was banned upon the proclamation of President Paul von Hindenburg's decree regarding the "Auflösung der kommunistischen Gottlosenorganisationen" ["Dissolution of Communist Godless Organizations"] of May 3, 1932. It is furthermore noted on the Volkshochschule website that the National Socialists banned all Free Thinkers organizations a year later.¹⁵ The organ of the association was *Der Atheist*.¹⁶

¹⁴ Translation by Kevin Ostoyich.

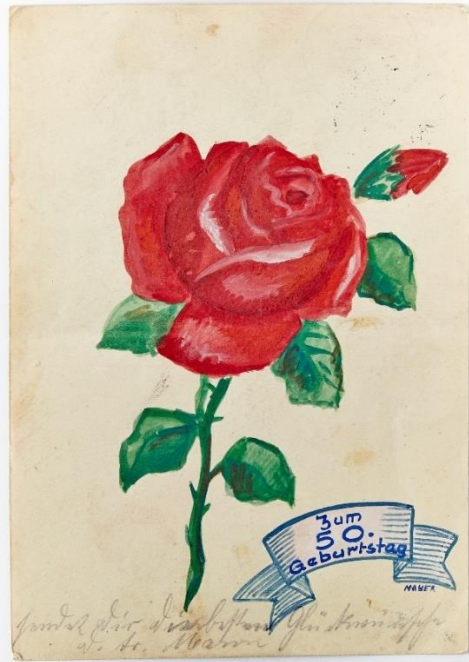
¹⁵ <https://kirszenbaum.vhs-weimar.de/proletarische-freidenker/> (Accessed July 16, 2024).

¹⁶ Die Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek: <https://www.deutsche-digitale-bibliothek.de/item/OYHVQZFUKNWXKZDKYZBBRMTVCNLD2I72> (Accessed November 13, 2024).



regulations that were later adopted in all other concentration camps. His “Disciplinary and Punishment Orders for the Prison Camp” regulated methods of torture to be used as punishment, including methods of execution. Under Eicke’s leadership, Dachau became a “School of Violence” and a model for concentration camps established afterward.¹⁸

The post card sent from Friedrich Hoyer to Eva Hoyer (August/September 1933):



Front of post card sent by Friedrich Hoyer to Eva Hoyer.

Artistic Text: German: Zum 50. Geburtstag; English: For your 50th birthday

Handwritten Text: German: Sendet Dir die besten Glückwünsche. D[ein] tr[auer] Mann;

English: Best wishes sent to you. Y[our] f[aithful] husband¹⁹

Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation Holocaust Collection.

Friedrich (Fritz) Hoyer sent the post card to Eva Hoyer for her 50th birthday. Given that Eva Hoyer was born on August 31, 1883, Friedrich most likely sent the post card before August 31, 1933.²⁰ The cancellation on the post card (see below) is dated either the 3rd or 8th of September. The delay was most

¹⁸ Barbara Distel, trans. Stephen Pallavicini, “Dachau Main Camp,” in Geoffrey P. Megargee, ed., *The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933-1945, Volume I: Early Camps, Youth Camps, and Concentration Camps and Subcamps under the SS-Business Administration Main Office (WVHA)* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2009), 442.

¹⁹ Translation by Kevin Ostoyich.

²⁰ The birthdate for Eva Hoyer comes from the file pertaining to the attempt made in 1913 to naturalize Eva and Friedrich and Eva’s son, Nikolaus. Both Eva and Nikolaus were born outside of Germany in Horní Lomany (Czech) Oberlohma (German) in Bohemia (then under Habsburg rule; presently, the Czech Republic). Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe; Title: Naturalisationsgesuch: Friedrich Hoyer, geb. 28.12.1880 in Erlangen, wohnhaft in Mannheim, seine Ehefrau Eva Hoyer, geb. Förtsch, geb. 31.08.1883 in Oberlohma (Böhmen), und sein Kind Nikolaus Hoyer, geb. 17.11.1904 in Oberlohma (Böhmen); Bestellsignatur: Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe 318 Nr. 509. <http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/plink/?f=4-456782> (Accessed November 27, 2024).



likely because the post card had to go through the Dachau censor. The post card bears the stamp of the censor. (See below.) Thus, it seems that Eva received her birthday postcard belatedly.

The artist named Mayer:

The red rose on the birthday post card is signed “Mayer”. It is not clear who this “Mayer” was. A search of the Dachau registry books for 1933 has revealed that there were seven men with the surname “Mayer” incarcerated in the camp during 1933. The names, birthplaces, entry dates in Dachau, and prisoner status of the seven men are the following:

Josef Mayer; Augsburg; May 28, 1908; Entered Dachau: April 24, 1933; Schutzhaft.²¹

Josef Mayer; Trostbert; No birthdate listed; Entered Dachau: April 25, 1933; Schutzhaft; No. 720/K.P.D.

Leo Mayer; Göggingen; January 15, 1879; Entered Dachau: May 5, 1933; Schutzhaft.

Kaspar Mayer; Gablingen; August 26, 1902; Entered Dachau: May 5, 1933; Schutzhaft.

Franz Mayer; Immenstadt; no birth date given; Entered Dachau: May 8, 1933; No prisoner status listed.

Paul Mayer; Munich; April 11, 1906; Entered Dachau: May 16, 1933; Schutzhaft.

Ludwig Mayer; Ingolstadt; August 11, 1904; Entered Dachau: June 30, 1933; Schutzhaft.

Perhaps future research will reveal the identity of the artist. These names are provided here as possible leads for such research.



**Reverse of post card sent by Friedrich Hoyer to Eva Hoyer.
Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation Holocaust Collection.**

²¹ Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/130429022> (Accessed July 17, 2024)



Addressee:

Eva Hoyer
Augsburg
Schönspergerstr. 7 III

German Text:

Liebe Mama!

Spiegel Kamm und Karten erhalten. Fritz bekam ein Packet[,] sein Kuchen und Medizin waren aber beschlagnahmt. Für Alles besten Dank. Die Karten trugen gar nichts. Habe doch ausdrücklich 32 Blatt verlangt. Brief erhalten Irmi ihre Zeilen haben mich sehr gefreut. **Friseus seine Kumple**²² hier. Bin gesund. Ihr hoffentlich auch. Gruß Fritz

English Text:

Dear Mama!

Mirror, comb and playing cards received. Fritz received a package, but his cake and medicine were confiscated. Best thanks for everything. The playing cards are worthless. I explicitly requested a 32-card deck. Letter received[.] **Irmi's** lines made me very happy. **The barber's pals are here.**²³ I am healthy. I hope you are too. Greetings, Fritz.

Note about the Playing Cards: Fritz notes that he expressly requested a 32-card deck. Such a deck is used for a variety of games, including the popular German card game known as Skat. Fritz most likely wanted to play Skat.²⁴

Official Policy Text Written on the Card:

German Text:

Konzentrationslager Dachau

Auszug aus der Lagerordnung:

Schutzgefangene dürfen im Monat 1 Paket mit Wäsche bis zu 10 Pfd. (Lebensmittel, Rauchwaren etc. ausgenommen) empfangen, desgl. einen Brief und eine Karte. Bei Nichtbeachtung erfolgt Annahmeverweigerung. Sprecherlaubnis wird nicht gestattet.

Der Lagerkommandant

²² Hoyer's writing is difficult to decipher. "*Friseus*" (a surname) may actually be "*Friseur*" (barber).

²³ Hoyer's writing is difficult to decipher. It is possible that the word is *Friseus* (a surname) rather than *Friseur* (a barber). If that is the case, then the translation of the sentence is "Friseus' pals are here."

²⁴ Kevin Ostoyich thanks Raphaella Loosen for solving the riddle of Hoyer's mention of playing cards [*Karten*] and specifically a 32-card deck [32 *Blatt*].



English Translation:

Concentration Camp Dachau

Excerpt from the Camp Regulations:

Protective Custody Inmates are allowed to receive per month 1 package with clothing up to 10 pounds. (Foodstuffs, tobacco, etc. excluded), likewise a letter and a card. Noncompliance will result in refusal of acceptance. Oral communication is not allowed.

The Commandant

Given the card was sent for Eva's 50th birthday (August 31, 1933) and has a cancelation of the 3rd or 8th of September, Fritz Hoyer most likely wrote the post card towards end of August and then it was sent in early September after going through the camp censor.

Friedrich Hoyer addressed Eva as "Mama". This is because they had at least one child together (their son, Nikolaus).²⁵

At the time that Hoyer sent the card, the commandant of the camp was SS-Gruppenführer Theodor Eicke. Eicke served in that capacity from June 1933 to July 1934.²⁶

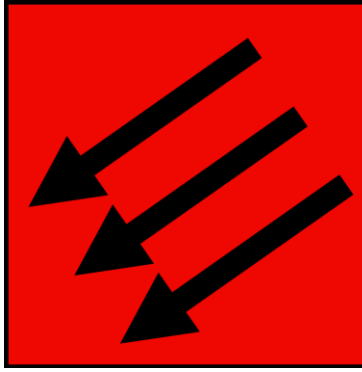
Pitting Socialists and Communists against each other:

Although the men from the KPD and SPD [Social Democratic Party] entered Dachau together as enemies of the National Socialists, they were separated by distinct and oppositional political affiliations and pasts. In January 1919, the Communists and the Socialists had conducted outright civil war against each other in what was known as the Spartacist Uprising, and the governing SPD of the Republic had used the army and right-wing paramilitary groups to put down the Communists. Two major Communist leaders, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were murdered in mid-January and their corpses were dumped into the Spree River in Berlin. Thus, a deep fault line between the Communists and Socialists had been formed at the very beginning of the Weimer Republic. A graphic manifestation of the antagonism between the two major factions on the Left was the three arrows symbol of the Iron Front (*Eiserne Front*), the paramilitary group associated with the Socialists. The three arrows represented the enemies the Socialists faced: monarchists, National Socialists, and Communists.

²⁵ Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe; Title: Naturalisationsgesuch: Friedrich Hoyer, geb. 28.12.1880 in Erlangen, wohnhaft in Mannheim, seine Ehefrau Eva Hoyer, geb. Förtsch, geb. 31.08.1883 in Oberlohma (Böhmen), und sein Kind Nikolaus Hoyer, geb. 17.11.1904 in Oberlohma (Böhmen); Bestellsignatur: Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe 318 Nr. 509. <http://www.landesarchiv-bw.de/plink/?f=4-456782> (Accessed November 27, 2024).

²⁶ Distel, 442. During the purge of the SA known as the Night of the Long Knives, Eicke was ordered by Hitler to kill the leader of the SA, Ernst Röhm. Eicke murdered Röhm on July 1, 1934, and, as a reward, he was promoted in rank and made the Inspector of the Concentration Camps and Leader of the SS Guard Units. "Theodor Eicke (17.10.1892 Hampont / Frankreich – 26.2.1943 bei Michailowka / Ukraine)," Online-Lexikon, NS-Dokumentationszentrum München, <https://www.nsdoku.de/lexikon/artikel/eicke-theodor-179> (Accessed January 31, 2025).





The three-arrows symbol of the Iron Front.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron_Front#/media/File:Eiserne_Front_Symbol.svg
(Accessed November 12, 2024).

The division between the Socialists and Communists was exploited by the SS guards in the Dachau camp. For example, the SPD Josef Simon was forced to wear a sign that stated, “I am a class-conscious S.P.D.-bigwig.” [“Ich bin ein klassenbewusster S.P.D.-Bonze.”]. As noted in the text of an exhibition of the Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte, the Nazis intentionally used the term “Bonze”, given it was a pejorative label used by Communists to connote Social Democrats, as a means to pit the Communist prisoners against Social Democrats and trade unionists.²⁷ The term “Bonze” was used in the subtitle of the *Augsburger Lokalanzeiger* article that announced the transport of the fourteen men from Augsburg to Dachau. In the subtitle the term is linked to the two prominent S.P.D. members in the group, Johann Edelmann and Karl Wernthaler: “Dachau erhält Zuwachs aus Augsburg: Darunter zwei bekannte SPD-Bonzen” [“Dachau gets an increase from Augsburg: Including to prominent SPD-bigwigs”].

Release:

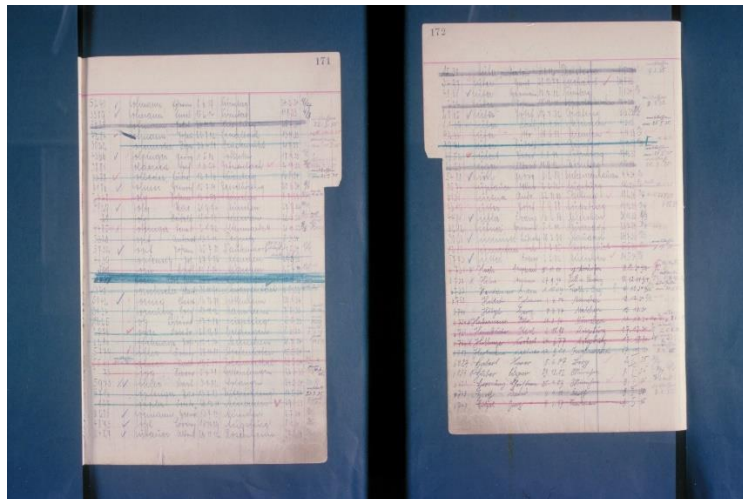
Friedrich Hoyer was released from Dachau on March 5, 1935. Perhaps future research will reveal what he did after his release.

The release certificate for Hoyer is signed by Heinrich Deubel, who was the commandant of the Dachau concentration camp at the time. Deubel was later transferred from Dachau to be the commandant of Columbia House (a prison in the Tempelhof area of Berlin that was used as a concentration camp until 1936). According to the Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte website, Deubel “was interned from 1945 to 1948. The criminal proceedings against him for his involvement in National Socialist violent crimes were eventually dropped.” He died in 1962.²⁸

²⁷ “Ausstellung KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau” exhibition of the Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte, “3.3 Die ersten Häftlinge The First Prisoners,” https://www.hdbg.de/dachau/pdfs/03/03_03/03_01.pdf (Accessed November 27, 2024).

²⁸ “Ausstellung KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau” exhibition of the Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte, “5.10 Commandants of the Dachau Concentration Camp, 1934–1939,” https://www.hdbg.de/dachau/pdfs/05/05_10/05_10_01.pdf (Accessed January 31, 2025).

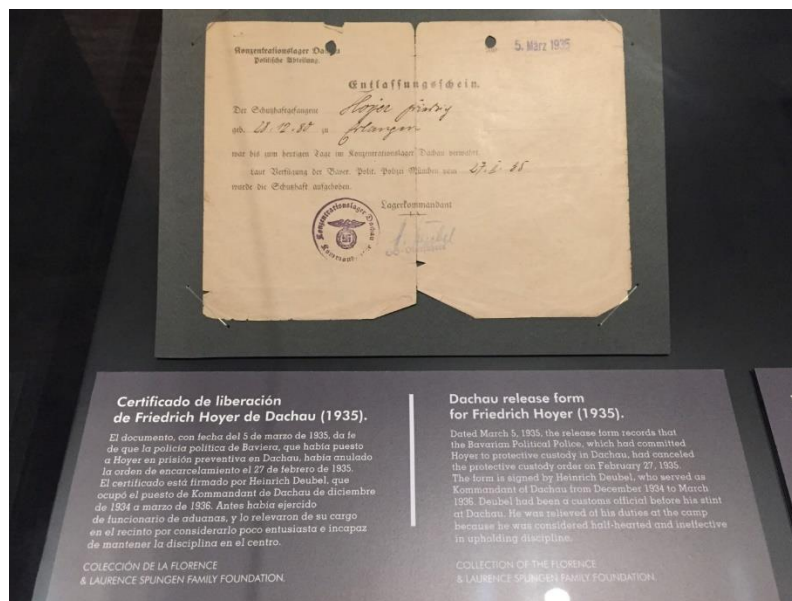




Friedrich Hoyer's name appears on a list from Dachau. His prisoner number is listed as 2076.

It is noted that he was released on March 5, 1935.

Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/130429084> (Accessed July 17, 2024)



The Dachau release form for Friedrich Hoyer. The release form is dated March 5, 1933.

The date of authorization from the Bavaria Political Police is listed as February 27, 1935.

The form was signed by SS-Oberführer Heinrich Deubel.

Friedrich Hoyer was incarcerated in Dachau from June 8, 1933 to March 5, 1933. The total number of “protective custody prisoners” in German concentration camps fluctuated greatly during this period:²⁹

April 1933: Approximately 50,000

Juli 1933: 26,789

²⁹ The statistics come from the “Ausstellung KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau” exhibition of the Haus der Bayerischen Geschichte, “3.7 Information Die Konzentrationlager 1933-1935 The Concentration Camps 1933-1935,” https://www.hdbg.de/dachau/pdfs/03/03_07/03_07_01.pdf (Accessed November 27, 2024).



Oktober 1933: Approximately, 22,000
April 1934: Approximately 9,000
End of 1934: Approximately 3,000
Mid-1935: Approximately, 4,700.

The statistics show that Hoyer entered at a time of a massive influx into the recently introduced concentration camp system of the new regime. Most the inmates at the time were, like the fourteen men sent to Dachau from Augsburg on June 8, 1933, either Socialists or Communists. The initial roundups were done to settle scores from the political brawls of the past and literally beat down political opposition to the Third Reich. After receiving the brutal lessons regarding the new power dynamic in Germany, most inmates, like Hoyer, were released. Later, during the Second World War, this would change. As the war progressed, “release” from Dachau came either in the form of a transfer to another camp or death.

Police report information and Dachau documents pertaining to the thirteen men from Augsburg who entered Dachau with Friedrich Hoyer on June 8, 1933:

Edelmann, Johann:

Police information supplied when he was transferred to Dachau:

Married. Trade Union Secretary, born June 24, 1873, in Holheim. He was chairman of the Trade Union Association (*Gewerkschaftsverein*) Augsburg, to which all the social democratic trade unions were affiliated. As leader of the Iron Front, he was one the fiercest agitators against the national movement [the National Socialist movement].” He was the city commander in Augsburg from the time of the coup of 1918 until Easter 1919. The workers demand he be sent to the concentration camp because of his agitation against the National Movement [National Socialist Movement].³⁰

Reference to the Iron Front: The Iron Front was the paramilitary group associated with the Social Democratic Party. It was formed in December 1931 and was banned on March 11, 1933.³¹

Reference to the Trade Union Association (Gewerkschaftsverein): This umbrella association for social democratic unions was founded in Augsburg in 1869. It was banned in May 1933.³²

Johann Edelmann’s name appears on the entry register for the Dachau concentration camp: Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/130428997> (Accessed November 19, 2024).

³⁰ Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908752> (Accessed July 15, 2024). Translation by Kevin Ostoyich.

³¹ Günther Gerstenberg, *Eiserne Front, 1931-1933*, published on July 13, 2006, in: *Historisches Lexikon Bayerns*, URL: http://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/Lexikon/Eiserne_Front,_1931-1933 (Accessed November 15, 2024).

³² Heinz Münzenrieder and Josef Mančal, “Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund, Region Augsburg,” <https://www.wissner.com/stadtlexikon-augsburg/artikel/stadtlexikon/deutscher-gewerkschaftsbund-region-augsburg/3553> (Accessed November 19, 2024).



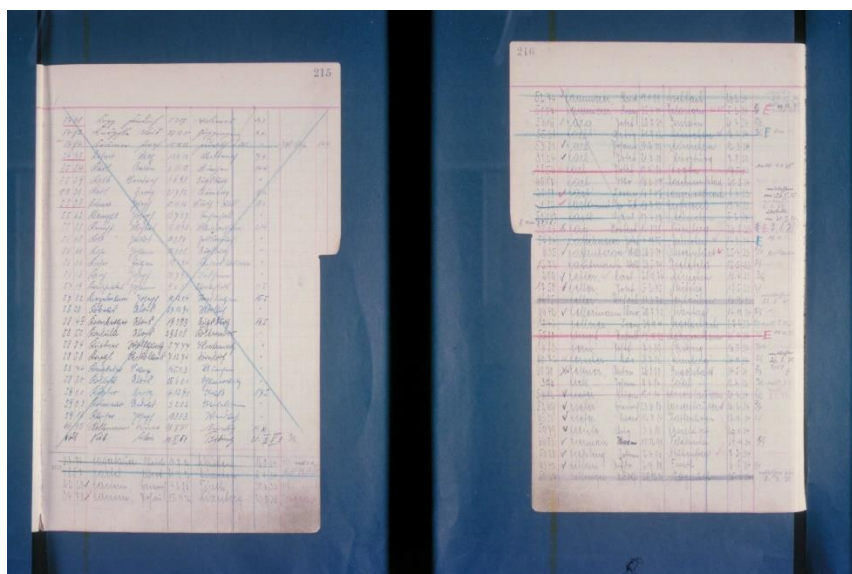
Kast, Lorenz:

Police information supplied when he was transferred to Dachau:

Single. Mechanic, born August 16, 1906 in Langenneufnach, District Office: Schwabmünchen. Member of the KPD since July 7, 1931, extremely active functionary, member and functionary of the RGO [Revolutionary Union Opposition (Die Revolutionäre Gewerkschafts-Opposition)], 1932 served as a delegate at a general assembly of functionaries of the RGO in Munich. During the elections of 1932, speaker in Communist election meetings in the countryside, whereby he agitated against the national government in the sharpest way. He was a fugitive since the beginning of April 1933 and during this time he still worked for the communist movement. He was taken into protective custody on May 10, 1933.³³

Reference to the Revolutionary Union Opposition (Die Revolutionäre Gewerkschafts-Opposition = RGO):

The trade union of the Communists.



Dachau Registry Book with Entry for Lorenz Kast. It is noted that his prisoner number was 2088 and that he was released on February 26, 1935. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/130429091> (Accessed November 22, 2024)

Additional Information about Lorenz Kast:

Information about Lorenz Kast at the following link: <https://cotelanguages.com/de/augsburger-frauen-widerstand/> (Accessed November 12, 2024).

³³ Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908752> (Accessed July 15, 2024). Translation by Kevin Ostoyich.



Police information supplied when he was transferred to Dachau:

Important note: The text of the police information for Ferdinand Knarr is the same as what is printed in the newspaper article. Thus, the information was supplied to the newspaper.

Note: There are no files in the Arolsen Archives for Ferdinand Knarr.

Police information supplied when he was transferred to Dachau:

Single, unskilled worker, born November 3, 1908 in Augsburg; member of the KPD. Still worked recently in secret for the Communist movement, [he] took into protective custody on behalf of a Communist functionary a military weapon, a military revolver and ammunition, weapons, as well as a typewriter belonging to the KPD and hid them with another Communist.³⁵

[illegible]

Dachau Registry Book with Entry for Dionys Remmele. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/130429034> (Accessed November 22, 2024).

³⁴ Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908752> (Accessed July 15, 2024). Translation by Kevin Ostovich.

³⁵ Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908752> (July 15, 2024). Translation by Kevin Ostoyich.





Pfuhler, Josef:

Police information supplied when he was transferred to Dachau:

Married, former, born November 12, 1895 in Lauingen, secretly worked for the Communist Movement until only recently. He is a longtime and active member of the KPD. Pfuhler agitates against the National Movement in the nastiest way, recently he repeated threats against supporters of the NSDAP as well as the Reich Chancellor Adolf Hitler in a derisive manner. Pfuhler is an extremely raw and violent person.⁴⁰

The image shows two pages from a handwritten registry book. The left page is numbered 121 and the right page is numbered 122. Both pages contain columns of handwritten text, likely names, dates, and other identifying information of prisoners. The handwriting is in cursive and somewhat faded. The pages are held open by dark blue clips.

Dachau Registry Book with Entry for Josef Pfuhler. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/130429029> (Accessed November 23, 2024).

Rauschert, Friedrich:

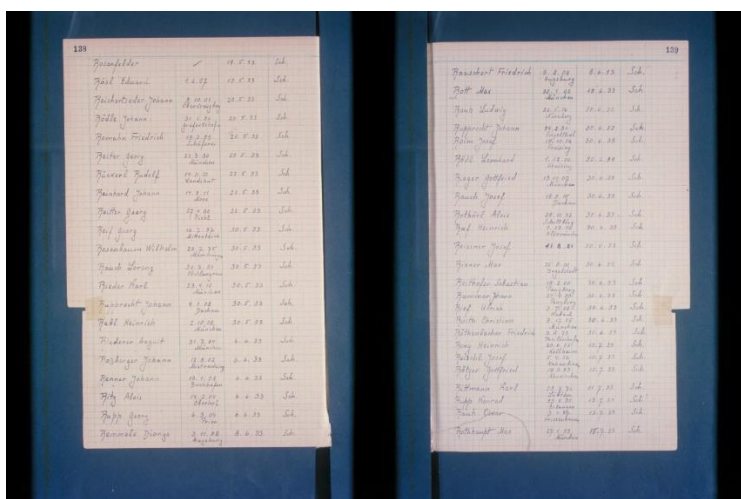
Police information supplied when he was transferred to Dachau:

Married. Unskilled worker, born August 3, 1908 in Augsburg. Was already in protective custody from March 24, 1933 to May 1, 1933. According to reliable information, he immediately resumed the agitation for the Communist Movement and the contact with Communist supporters. He had stated that the "RFB" (Red Front Fighters' League) still exists. R[auschert] is an extremely active Communist and belongs to a Communist terrorist group.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908753> (Accessed July 15, 2024) and Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908753> (Accessed July 15, 2024).

⁴¹ Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908753> (Accessed July 15, 2024). Translation by Kevin Ostoyich.





Dachau Registry Book with Entry for Friedrich Rauschert. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/130429034> (Accessed November 23, 2024).

Note: There is an International Tracing Service file for Friedrich Rauschert.

https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/archive/6-3-3-2_06030302-0-706-340 (Accessed November 23, 2024).

Sieber, Erich:

Police information supplied when he was transferred to Dachau:

Single, sales clerk, born September 11, 1914 in Frankfurt, member of the Fighting League Against Fascism. Until recently, worked secretly for the Communist Movement and participated in meetings. He recently stated that the police have no idea about all we Communists do in secret and how widely our underground work has progressed.⁴²

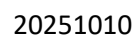
⁴² Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908753> (Accessed July 15, 2024).

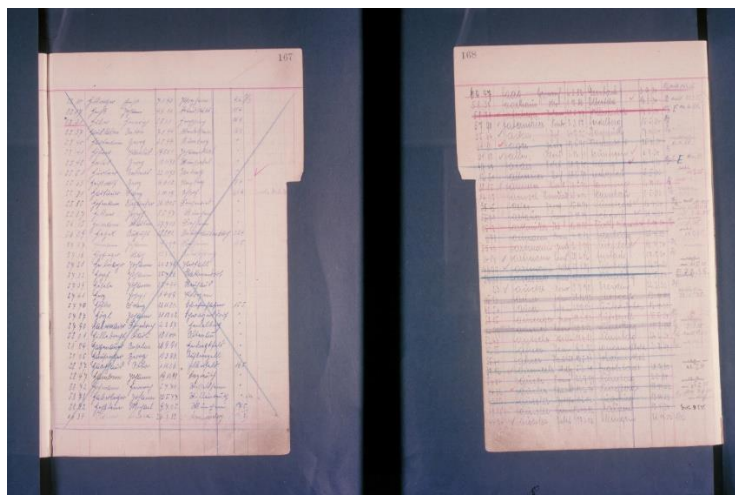


⁴³ Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/9908753> (Accessed July 15, 2024).



Friedrich Hoyer – A Red Rose for Eva

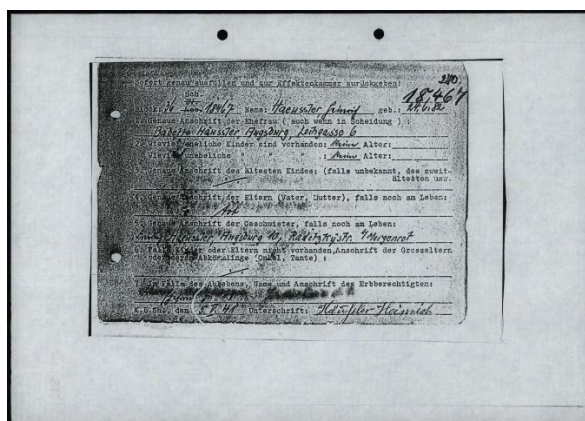




Dachau registry entry for Heinrich Häussler's second stint in Dachau. He is listed as having prisoner number 4888. It is noted that he entered on January 10, 1934—this differs by a day from the above registry entry—and was released on January 9, 1935. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/130429082> (Accessed November 23, 2024).



Index Card from Dachau concentration camp showing that Heinrich Häußler entered Dachau a third time on May 25, 1935. He was released on May 3, 1938. His Dachau prisoner number during his third stint in the concentration camp was 7496. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/10659059> (Accessed November 23, 2024).



Information card for Heinrich Häussler from Sachsenhausen concentration camp. He was issued Sachsenhausen prisoner number 18467. The card is signed by Häussler and is dated May 5, 1941. Arolsen Archives: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/4098574> (Accessed November 23, 2024).



Remembering Red:



The history of the persecution of the Socialists and Communists by the Nazi regime tends to be underestimated, overlooked, and overshadowed. The assumption among the public, especially in the United States, is that all concentration camp inmates were Jewish. The fact is that the demographics of the concentration camp population evolved over time. In the early years of the regime, Socialists and Communists (regardless of religion or “race”) were the primary targets. As such, Jews constituted a minority of the concentration camp population. This began to change after the largescale roundups of Jews during and after the Kristallnacht pogrom of November 1938. With the huge influx of Jews at that time, the spatial dimensions of the camps changed. For example, at Sachsenhausen, the triangular shape of the camp had to be altered at the bottom-right base of the triangle with the creation of barracks specifically for Jews. In Dachau, as well, special preparations needed to be taken before the influx of Jews. The time of transition in camp demographics, dimensions, and dynamics is captured in the account written by the former Dachau inmate from Linz, Austria, Victor Gans:

[Our room elder] was a real fine and decent person. Accused of having been active in the Social Democratic Party, he had been in Dachau for 3 years. Though he had witnessed every day murder, killings and the most inhumane treatment of prisoners, and had gone through these tortures in person, he remained a “Mensch” (a human being). Always friendly and polite and never would he raise a hand against anybody. Evening we often talked, and he told us about his hometown, the longing for his family and everything he had endured and may still have to go through. But he also mentioned that we Jews were not merely brought there on account of what had happened in Paris. Fact is that three weeks prior to this incident, they were working overtime in Dachau to get uniforms and everything ready – three weeks before Greenspan [sic, Herschel Grynszpan] fired the fatal shot – the Germans had made up their minds to put the Jews into concentration camps and the Paris affair was just a welcome cincher. [Note: Gans refers to the assassination of the German diplomat, Ernst vom Rath by Grynszpan. The event was used by the Nazis as a pretext to carry out the country-wide pogrom known as Kristallnacht (“Night of Broken Glass” on November 9/10, 1938.)]⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Victor Gans untitled, unpublished memoir, 72-73. USHMM, Accession Number: 1994.A.0064 | RG Number: RG-02.092. Information about the memoir supplied by the USHMM: “The untitled memoir was written by Victor Gans in Feb. 1939 in Shanghai, and then translated into English in 1976 by an unknown translator (the signature of the translator at the end of the memoir is unclear). Victor Gans gave a copy of the translated manuscript to USHMM in Apr. 1993.” Light edits of spelling and grammar have been applied by Kevin Ostoyich.



With the massive influx of Jews into the camps in 1938 and with the onset of the Second World War, the dynamics of the camps such as Dachau changed dramatically. Although the popular memory of the camps tends to focus on the time in which the camps became factories of murder with Jews—wearing yellow triangles—as prime targets, one should not forget the early history of the camps, when the majority of the inmates were associated with a different color: red.⁴⁶

The Lutheran pastor Martin Niemöller was incarcerated by the Nazis from 1937 until his liberation in 1945. He had spent some of the period of his incarceration in Dachau. After the War, Niemöller acknowledged the early prisoners of the camps and the consequences of not speaking out against the persecution of groups to which one does not belong:

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out-
Because I was not a Socialist.
Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out-
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out-
Because I was not a Jew.
Then they came for me-and there was no one left to speak for me.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ According to the USHMM website, the complex system of colored badges began in 1937-1938; thus, Hoyer and his fellow inmates would not have worn such badges during the time of Hoyer's incarceration. "Classification System in Nazi Concentration Camps," *Holocaust Encyclopedia*, online, USHMM website: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/classification-system-in-nazi-concentration-camps#:~:text=The%20Nazis%20used%20color-coded%20badges%20sewn%20onto%20uniforms,identify%20the%20alleged%20reason%20for%20an%20individual%E2%80%99s%20incarceration>. (Accessed January 31, 2025).

⁴⁷ There are numerous variations of the quotation. As noted on the USHMM website: "This is because Niemöller often presented his lectures impromptu and changed the list of victims from lecture to lecture." The version that is on display in the Permanent Exhibition of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has been chosen here. Kevin Ostoyich has performed light edits of capitalization. USHMM Website: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/martin-niemoeller-first-they-came-for-the-socialists> (Accessed November 27, 2024).



About the Author



Kevin Ostoyich is a professor of history at Valparaiso University. Kevin and his students at Valparaiso began partnering with the Florence and Laurence Spungen Foundation in 2013. The Foundation provided artifacts (mostly documents & postal history) to the students from Holocaust survivors who were in the Shanghai ghetto, “Shanghailanders,” for archival studies and the curation of temporary exhibitions at the university. In 2021, he collaborated with the Foundation to author the preface and two additional chapters in the Foundation’s book, *Forging Secrets: Faces and Facts Inside the Nazi Operation Bernhard Scheme*, published in 2022. In July 2023, he joined the Foundation staff as a researcher, writer, and interviewer, focusing on artifacts from the Spungen Foundation collection. He has interviewed and written stories about Shanghailanders on the Foundation’s behalf.

At Valparaiso, he served as chair of the Department of History from 2015 to 2019, was the recipient of the Dixon W. and Herta E. Benz Fund for Faculty Support (an endowed position) from 2020 – 2022, and was bestowed the Excellence in Teaching Award for 2017-2018. He holds his B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania and his A.M. and Ph.D. from Harvard University. He was recently a fellow at the Käte Hamburger Kolleg (global dis:connect) at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München and is currently a fellow at the Centrum für angewandte Politikforschung / Center for Applied Policy Research (CAP) at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München.

He is a board member of the Sino-Judaic Institute and the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum and a non-resident fellow of the American-German Institute of Johns Hopkins University. Kevin has served as a fellow and guest professor at multiple institutions and universities; has written many articles and book chapters; has co-edited *The History of the Shanghai Jews: New Pathways of Research* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022) and authored *The German Society of Pennsylvania: A Guide to Its Book and Manuscript Collections* (German Historical Institute, 2006); interviews Holocaust survivors; gives lectures about the Holocaust worldwide; and creates historical theatrical plays about Shanghai Jewish refugees with students.

The Spungen Foundation can devote many pages honoring Kevin’s work, so let’s just say he keeps very, very busy teaching, writing, conducting interviews, and working on documentaries.



About the Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation

The Spungen Foundation was established in 2006 by Florence Spungen and reflects the individual and collective philanthropy of the founders, their children, and their grandchildren. The Foundation focuses its grantmaking typically in Santa Barbara, CA and Lake County, IL. One of the Foundation's strategic areas concentrates on the Holocaust and genocide education. The Spungen Family Foundation has one of the largest collections of Holocaust artifacts in private hands, mainly consisting of postal history, such as letters, post cards, stamps, along with money, children's artwork, and more. The collection has been used for Holocaust education all around the world.

The mission of the Foundation is to improve the quality of life of individuals and families facing health challenges, and to address issues that particularly affect the Jewish community.

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