

DIARY OF E.K.

One of the most interesting documents unearthed by this section of the CIC Detachment was a water-logged diary kept from November 1942 until recent days. This diary was written by E.K., internee since 1940. In secret and under the greatest difficulties, E.K. was able to record the events of the days. Discovery meant certain death. The incidents and situations described were personal experiences of E.K. and of his closest friends. The diary, written in German, is much too long to be incorporated in whole in this report. Excerpts are submitted as an illustration of the tone of the whole and as attestation to the acts of barbarism committed in the Dachau Concentration Camp. Both the author and his work may be in danger of German reprisals.

* * *

20 November 1942.

These pages that I now begin to write would lead to certain death if ever they were found. But what is death? How few of those I knew here are still alive today, how close to death we all stand! I can die here any moment, even if I take the greatest care.

Why should I not endeavor, even in the midst of these conditions, of this cruelty, to tell this gruesome story that no longer gives us goose flesh?

I feel, I know not why, the urge to write.

Purpose I really thought I would record all this for you, so that when we will meet again some time later, I would have nothing more to say; I would give you the pages and be silent--for I am tired of speaking.

And now I hasten to begin, without regarding the danger it involves. My friends think I am secretly writing a poem, most likely a love poem, or one about flowers and stars. If they knew what I was doing, they would burn these pages out of fear. In fact, they would be right, because I endanger their lives as well as my own; only they don't know it. And if these lines were found, I should have to prove that they had no knowledge of my secret writing, for I only showed them harmless little verses.

21 November 1942.

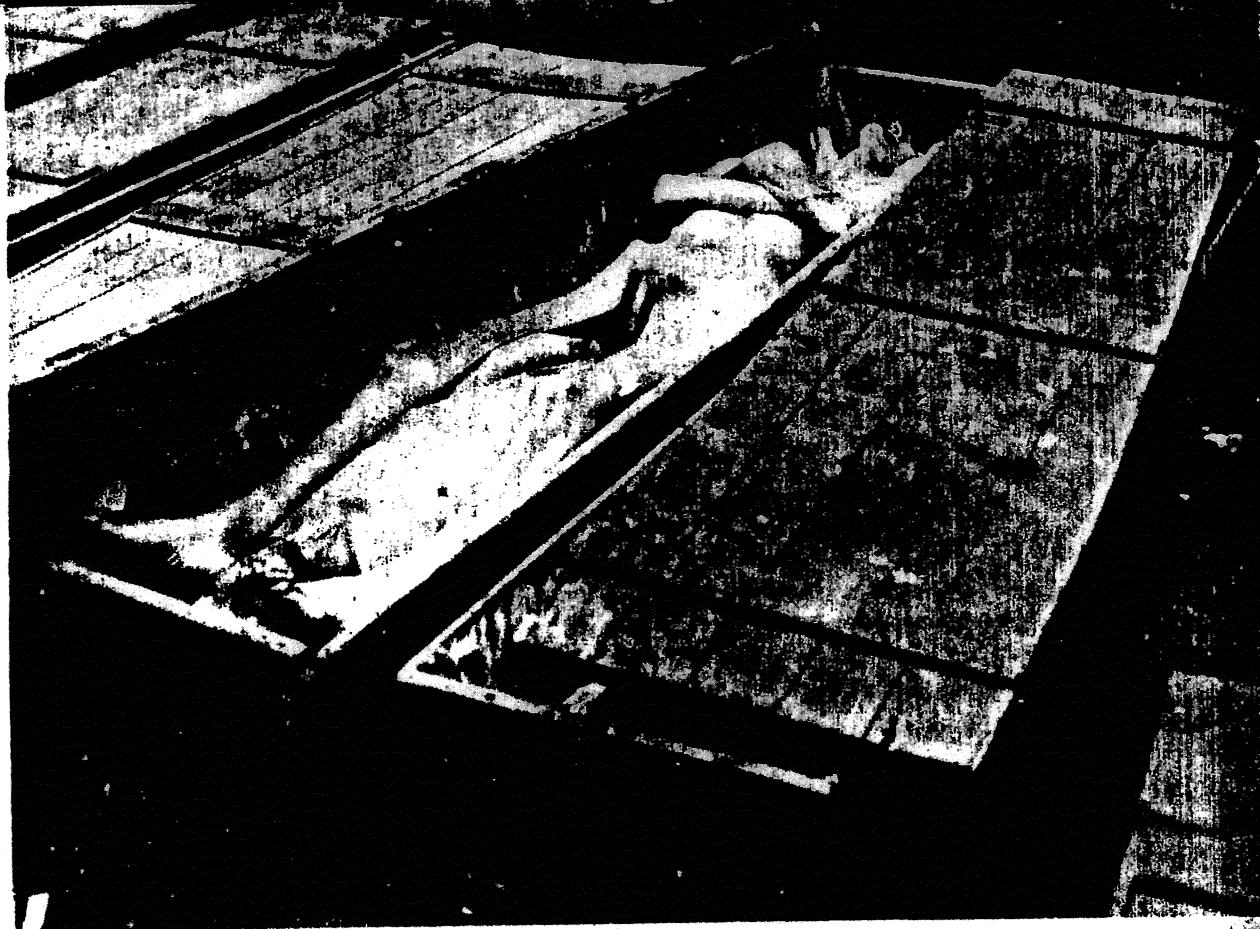
Something happened yesterday that excited even the most hardened of us, and that means something, for we have lost all feeling, nothing more can astonish us in any way. And so it was yesterday. Very few of us were moved, just those who were directly concerned.

500 invalids came yesterday from a camp near Danzig. To be an invalid among us prisoners means to be at death's door. Later, when we are together, I will tell you more about that.

51 of these "invalids" came in dead, but their bodies had already been partly eaten by the others, the remains and bones were thrown out of the chink in the cattle-truck door during

This Was a Common Sight.





the journey. Only a few unrecognizable parts of the body remained. The whole side was missing from one body, from others the nose, or cheek, or genital organs.

It must have been a terrible sight; I am so thankful I did not see it.

All the corpses were photographed. Most likely the camp authorities did this to send evidence to Berlin. The prisoners, during the six days that their journey lasted, received only one piece of bread, six hundred grams, I believe. Hunger delirium broke out among them, as they had suffered for a long time from under feeding. The officers of our guard, who otherwise make fun and joke about all these horrible things, except those concerning them were moved. This time they had seen something new: cannibalism, and that they were not used to. The last remains of civilization surged against these facts and deeds.

49 of the survivors died yesterday, the day of their arrival. Soon there will be more and every day the number will increase. That they brought them here can only be explained by the fact that manpower is needed; so they move up all they can. Of those that can't be revived...of those, I will speak to you later. Will you ever read these pages? Each page is a source of danger and who knows how many pages I will write, but even if I can put down all I

experience...it is so hard to hide these pages. May a good power protect them and keep them in safety, so that one day I can give them to you, together with a heart of stone that was wrought for you secretly during days and days and that I wore for a long time. Perhaps these pages will survive me, and some stranger will bring them to you.

The most beautiful flowers on my tomb, the tomb of my remembrance, for who dies here has no material grave.

I have grown older. My temples are turning grey and age is changing my features. I sometimes notice it when I look at myself in the small mirror of the washroom. I am only 36 years old, but, as most of us, my hair turning grey..."silver threads among the gold", as in the song.

22 November 1942.

I must tell you something that shocked me so much today; I don't know myself why.

It is Sunday. We are standing on the roll call court and are waiting for the order to march out. Beside us a few hundred Russians, or rather Ukrainians are led up. The two first lines are...children of 11 to 15. Their small bodies clad in garments far too large for them; their pale faces with childish, half joyful eyes, their voices sound like the lark's song in a church yard.

Last Sunday someone led past me a dying, whimpering infant. I had to turn my face away...help here is quite impossible.

These children, these young fellows worked in Wurtenburg, near Ulm. Food there was so scarce that they starved. They escaped in groups...they wanted to return home. Instead of that they were sent here. Many of them are already dead. They are quite happy about here...they say that food here is better. They are quite happy about that, and that tells its own tale. Hearts must grow hard here, otherwise one would cry from morn till evening.

8 December 1942.

Today is already December the 8th. Nothing happens, only small, trivial things. A...

At night, in bed I drew the blankets over my head, but I heard what somebody was saying behind us. His friend is a litter bearer...the job doesn't move him any longer. Yesterday as he was piling up the corpses, his attention was accidently drawn



A waiting Cremation.

to one face...it was his brother.

How he must have been shocked although he was used to handling corpses. His brother had come from another camp without his knowing it.

Someone came and pulled the blankets from my head. It was a Polish friend of mine. He told me about a priest, a schoolmate of his. Here in Dachau they met again. The priest was suddenly taken into the Revier--that is the name they give to the hospital here, to be experimented on. Research is being made here on boils.

26 priests of Polish and Czech origin died from these experiments. In spite of this, the work went on just as the one on malaria.

The priest secretly sent a short note to his friend. The last sentence was not legible, for, as he himself said, he had 40° temperature. He did not ask for help because he knew all was lost. He only prayed that a way be found to prepare his family for the worst. He will be operated on Friday.

The prisoners are inoculated with these boils and then when the illness is at its highest point, they apply the counter-measure. They are experimenting.

Many hundreds will still die in this way and we must look on, helpless and unable to do anything. Each one must see how he can escape death, today, this very hour.

Tomorrow, tomorrow cannot be known.

And day before yesterday another 300 invalids came in. It was Sunday, and, as I was at work, I did not see them. People told me they were merely living corpses, and those who saw them thought that within two days more than half would be dead.

Another friend made me very sad today. His wife, whom he loves and who loved him, left his parents and her child and went to another country. He doesn't know why. Would it be to work?

He is weak and sensitive. I am surprised that he is still alive and now this happens to him.

It is like an illness. The wives outside get tired of waiting and claim divorce. Now the men don't receive their wives and children are lost to them, and with that, all ideals, all hold on life.

Just now a friend who works beside me told me that his father died. He was buried with full military honors. Now the mother doesn't want to receive any more news from her son as he bears a part of the responsibility for his father's death. What do these outside think we are...we here inside the camp? In fact, I know it has been spread about that only the most dangerous subjects, traitors and the like, among those the most severe cases, remain locked up here and in other camps. If only they saw us here, if only they knew! They think that a few hundred people are still interned.

But only here there are always between 8,000 and 12,000 men. In spite of the deaths, the number always remains about the same, as the Gestapo is working day and night. There are camps we have heard about that contain between 20,000 and 100,000 prisoners, men and women.

It is a real shame. In other camps so many more die. Proportionately, few die here, on an average of 10 a day. That is being very cautious, but it gives a frightening total: one man out of every three has to die within the year.

10 December 1942.

Yesterday, I saw again thin men creeping out of the front room of our barracks. They had stolen potato peelings out of the dust bin and filled their pockets with them. They were old and young men. Hunger hurts and the majority haven't the will-power to master the gnawing of the stomach.

But, as compared to other camps, this is heaven. One of our prisoners coming from Mauthausen told me today that there they had daily from 40 to 50 casualties out of a total of 4,000 to 6,000 men. On a certain winter day, the number went up to 180.

Only those who have lived and seen all that can believe that.

17 December 1942.

Actually, instead of many guards, we often only have 2 SS men, each with his Alsatian bloodhound when we march back to camp after work. Howtimes change! Before, when we were 80 men, we had 18 guards, now we are 150. Man becomes scarce.

19 December 1942.

They say that there are 3 cases of typhus in the camp. If that is true, we can still expect to witness all sorts of things.

20 December 1942.

Two men died today in the camp from typhus. It is said 4 others caught the illness, Russians and Italians.

Those nationals are cooped up in large numbers in the barracks and therefore have lice, the greatest agents of propagation of the illness, so that many more cases can be expected.

They are disinfecting. Can that be of any use?

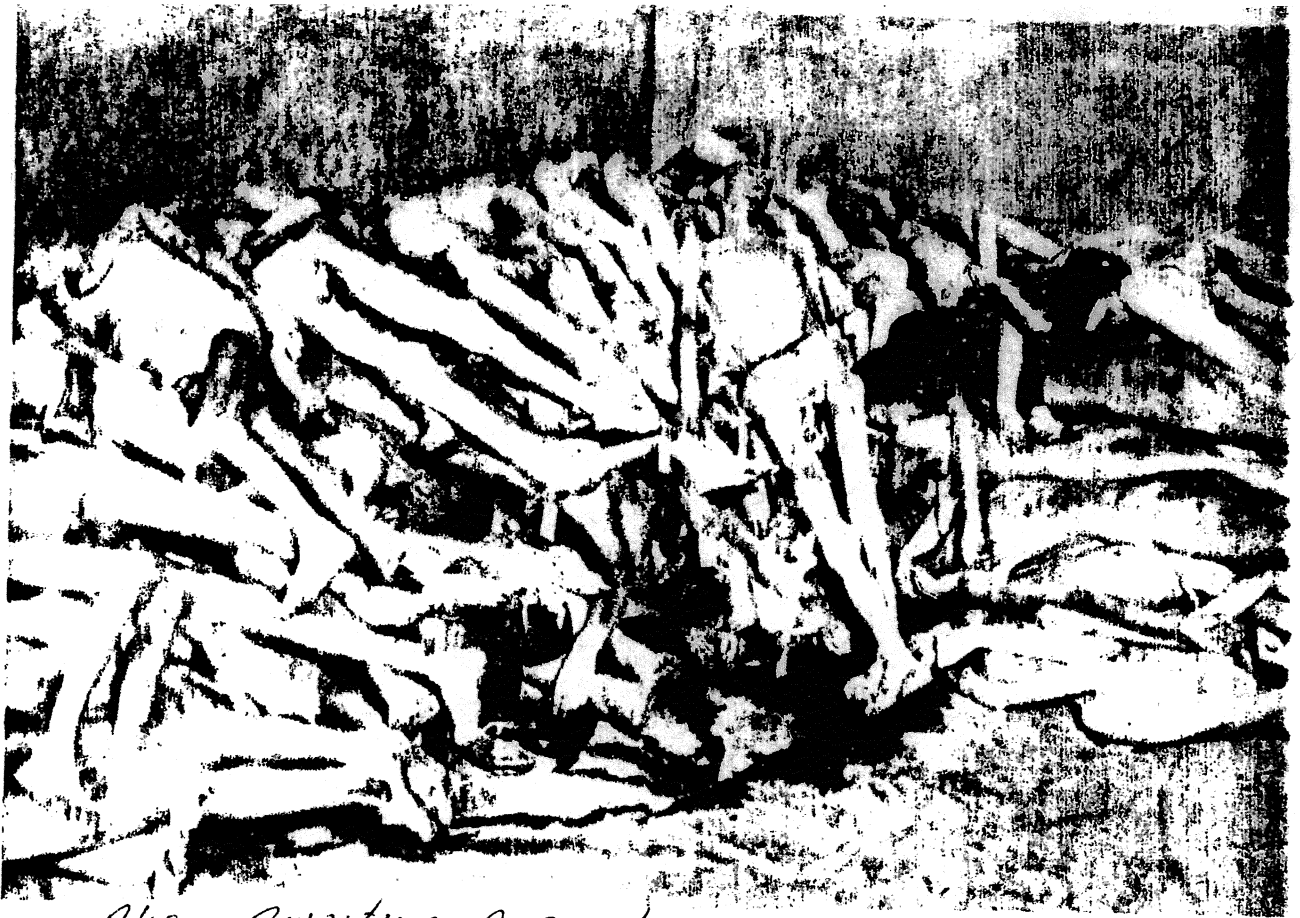
Yesterday, or the day before, Sister Pia was in camp. They said she was moved by the condition of the Polish priests. In one year, 800 of about 2,000 men died. That is counting too little; 1,200 could have died. They all look like skeletons. One of the bishops also died.

Oh pity! When and how will I at last be able to tell all to you! But how can I find words to do it!

21 December 1942.

The inmates had to run nude to the baths and had to return naked. (This is in the end of December). Sanitary measures, they call it!





Also Awaiting Cremation.

In addition, the camp was controlled for lice. 500 men were infected by lice. All their personal belongings were disinfected: shirts, coats, blankets, everything. Does it help? Perhaps...

During the winter of 1941, in January, I stood naked among 500 men for one hour on the roll call court to be checked like animals whether we were transportable to the camp of Nenegamme, whose climate and work and conditions of this camp destroyed man so fast that time and again they had to get new slaves from Dachau and other camps.

22 December 1942.

One of the former block leaders is said to be hospitalized in the Revier. It isn't such a long time since he left for the front. We called him the "Hamburger", a giant, brutal face, only 20 years old, paws like those of a rhinoceros. Only a year ago or maybe it was this year, he beat a man to death, because this man had eaten potato peelings, but he did not kill him slowly, as is customary; no, he killed him with one blow of his fist. He was too weak, the other too strong. He was also one of those who took pleasure in horse-whippings. Many have already been killed by him or have been hastened to death at the whipping place.

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Fate had caught up with him if it is true. Now he cannot either beat or kick anymore. I wonder if his heart has changed too.

23 December 1942.

Our hospital, the Revier, has been put under quarantine. The sick ward is now in the bath room. Typhus now seems to be getting serious. We went to the baths to bathe. A transport of invalids had arrived. On many of the invalids, the shoulder blades stuck out like wings. They did not walk...those who could keep themselves erect dragged their feet absent-mindedly.

I thought of the time when I myself returned to this camp. What a wonder that I am still alive.

I was talking to a friend today. Some years ago he left with a transport to Mauthausen. There were 1600 of them. Now

The Crematory was overworked.



after nine months, he too returned, as in another world. More dead than alive, he was...he and the remaining nineteen men. That means that 20 men remained out of 1600. Yes, Dachau is, in spite of everything, the golden camp.

25 December 1942.

Our first holiday. We had to rise naked at 7 o'clock. Naked, we had to run 250 yards to the baths, holding our eating equipment in our hands. We stayed for 7 hours in the baths, naked, but the place was heated. We were disinfected. After 7 hours we returned to our blocks. The irritating gas here hurt our eyes so that we had to go outside again. The barracks had been gassed for delousing.

The entire night we were forced to sleep with windows open, but our eyes were watery, our heads ached. A curious holiday, our first Christmas day.

Today they told me about Russia. One of my friends was an eye-witness. In this town lived about 350,000 Russians, of whom 90,000 Jews. They were driven out of the city, dressed only in shirts, in winter, in unbearable cold. There they had to dig graves, women, men and children. They were forced to stand in front of them. Then they were mowed down by machine guns. They were pushed into graves, living or dead, it didn't matter and were covered with earth. He said that in another village, they brought the people to a Jewish cemetery, and then when they were herded together, the cemetery was blown up. This is the news from outside world. It isn't pretty, but credible, for we know their methods.

* * *



Finally. Decided to ⁴⁵ Bury them.