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CONCENTRATION CAMP DACHAU ENTRY REGISTERS (*ZUGANGSBUECHER*),  
1933–1945

Introduction

On the seven rolls of this color microfilm publication, M1938, are reproduced 22 ledger books from the Concentration Camp Dachau Entry Registers (*Zugangsbuecher*), 1933–1945. These volumes are not death books but consist of arrival or entry registers organized by prisoner number. American forces captured the books when they liberated and occupied the camp on April 29, 1945. These records are part of the National Archives Collection of World War II War Crimes Records, Record Group (RG) 238.

Background

The concentration camp at Dachau was established north of Munich in March 1933 and remained in use until its liberation by American forces in April 1945. Originally intended as a camp for German political prisoners, by 1941 Dachau Concentration Camp accommodated an increasing influx of Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, political prisoners, and some prisoners of war from Eastern Europe, the Balkans, France, and the Soviet Union. In addition to the main camp located southeast of the town of Dachau, the camp system grew to include a network of approximately 100 subcamps scattered throughout southern Germany and Austria. Most of these were “Arbeits Kommandos,” or work camps. The camp was operated and staffed by members of the SS (Schutzstaffel), the political police of the National Socialist movement.

The size of the camp population fluctuated continually throughout the war as large groups of prisoners were moved in and out to satisfy changing labor demands of the German war industry. In all, an estimated 200,000 prisoners from over 30 countries passed through Dachau and its outcamps from 1933 to 1945. The main camp was continually expanded to accommodate the ever-increasing number of inmates, which by August 1944 numbered approximately 22,000. By the spring of 1945, this figure rose to more than 60,000 with the arrival of prisoners from evacuated death camps in Poland. In April 1945, Allied authorities established the total camp population of Dachau and its subcamps at 65,613 prisoners, representing virtually every European nation, of whom the largest groups were Polish (14,053 prisoners) and Russian (12,363 prisoners). Political prisoners included religious leaders, members of political and intellectual elites, and military officers from Nazi-occupied Europe. Jews were largely confined to the 11 subcamps of the Landsberg-Kaufering area, which were considered the worst from the standpoint of overcrowding, malnutrition, disease, and brutality.

Because records maintained at Dachau were incomplete or destroyed prior to the camp’s liberation, the exact number of deaths at the concentration camp is impossible to determine. Partial documentation cited 32,979 deaths between 1933 and 1945, but this figure omits thousands who died in the camp’s final months, as well as many others who died in transit to or from the camp. The largest number of deaths occurred in the last 6 months of the camp’s history, when extreme over-crowding from the arrival of prisoners from evacuated camps in Poland contributed to deaths from disease, malnutrition, and exposure. Prior to this period, inmate deaths resulted principally from overwork, illness, deliberate executions, suicides, and the effects of beatings and torture. Several thousand Soviet prisoners of war in 1941–42 were shot on arrival. Other inmates died as a result of medical experiments conducted at the camp.

## Records Description

The inmate entry registers (*Zugangsbücher*) for Dachau Concentration Camp comprise 22 volumes for the period 1933–1945, organized into three chronological arrangements. The first two volumes, designated **IA/1 1–2**, provide alphabetically arranged name registers for 1933 and 1933–36, respectively, and both are reproduced on Roll 1. In the second volume, inmate entry numbers are also provided, although keyed to individual names and therefore not sequential. The next four volumes, designated **IA/2 1** through **IA/2 4**, list inmate entries nos. 12405 through 37575 for the period July 10, 1937–March 30, 1940 (the missing entry nos. 1–12404 presumably reflect the initial numbering system evident in the alphabetical register for 1933–36, as well as those incarcerated from January 1 to July 9, 1937). Volumes **IA/2 1** through **IA/2 3** are reproduced on Roll 1, Volume **IA/2 4** on Roll 2.

The remaining 16 volumes, designated **IA/4 1** through **IA/4 16**, list inmate arrivals under a new numbering system that continued for the remainder of the camp's history, April 4, 1940–April 2, 1945, with entry numbers 1 through 147536. In this last chronological segment, entry nos. 1–2829 and some subsequent numbers indicate long-term inmates already in the camp prior to April 1940, and these entry numbers have been cross-referenced to corresponding entry numbers for the same inmates from the earlier period. These cross-references also include entry numbers that refer to missing portions in the initial numbering system. In rare cases, cross-references are also provided for inmates who were subsequently released or transferred to other camps, and who were later rearrested or returned to Dachau. These 16 volumes are reproduced on Rolls 2 through 7.

The nature and extent of information provided vary according to period. The name lists in the volumes for 1933–36, for example, include each inmate's registry number, name, date and place of birth, date of incarceration, and detention category (in nearly all cases, noted simply as "Schutzhaft" or "Sch," protective custody). Where applicable, entries have been annotated to indicate the date of release. Entry registers for the 1937–40 period furnish such additional information as marital status, number of children, religion, nationality, occupation, and home address; the data contained in the detention category is more varied but abbreviated in format (e.g., "A.Z." for "Asoziales," asocial element; "J" for "Jude," Jewish; or "Sch Bifo" for "Schutzhaft Bibelforscher," protective custody – Jehovah's Witness). This expanded entry format continued until November 1942. Thereafter the information entered for each new inmate was shortened to provide only the entry number, date of arrival, name of inmate, nationality and/or detention category, date of birth, and home town or city. The date of arrival column here often includes a notation of major transports to Dachau from other camps or specific cities. Deaths of inmates are indicated by a cross and date of death, but these annotations generally appear only for inmates registered prior to November 1942. All entries are handwritten in ink. Some (especially for the 1933–36 period) are faint and difficult to read. Red, blue, and green colored pencil lines as well as regular pencil lines were drawn over particular inmate names while colored stars and check marks were entered next to others.

In contrast to the inmate entry registers for Buchenwald Concentration Camp, where names of deceased or transferred inmates were often erased and their entry numbers reused for new inmates, the *Zugangsbücher* for Dachau represent unique entry numbers for each individual registered on arrival at the camp. It is possible, however, that some prisoners sent to Dachau were not routinely registered, or arrived too close to the camp's liberation for accurate recording, and are therefore omitted from the registers. The final inmate entry on April 2, 1945, records only the registry number (147536) and name, although blank spaces for registry numbers 147537–148739 suggest that more inmate arrivals were expected. No name indexes to the entries are available.

## Related Records

NATIONAL ARCHIVES MICROFILM PUBLICATIONS

U.S. military investigations and trial records document various aspects of internment at Concentration Camp Dachau including prisoner population, labor and work, food, clothing, housing, medical treatment, and Nazi atrocities. These documents are located in the following record groups:

Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Army) (Record Group 153) and the Records of United States Army, Europe (Record Group 549)

M1093, *United States of America v. Franz Auer et al.*, November 1943–July 1958 [Mühldorf case]

M1139, *United States of America v. Johann Haider et al.*, September 3–12, 1947 [Haider case]

M1173, *United States of America v. Michael Vogel et al.*, July 8–15, 1947 [Mühldorf Ring (Vogel) Case]

M1174, *United States of America v. Martin Gottfried Weiss et al.*, November 15–December 13, 1945

M1210, *United States of America v. Ernst Angerer et al.*, November 26–December 3, 1946

National Archives Collection of Foreign Records Seized (Record Group 242)

A3355, *Miscellaneous Lists and Registers of German Concentration Camp Inmates, Originated or Collected by the International Tracing Service, Arolsen, Germany* [note: listed by camp name]

T175, *Records of the Reich Leader of the SS and Chief of the German Police* [Rolls 218–219]

#### TEXTUAL RECORDS IN THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Proceedings of the Dachau trials held in Dachau by an American Military Tribunal in 1946-47 are located in the following:

File no. 12-226. Case Files, 1944–1949. War Crimes Branch. Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Army), Record Group (RG) 153.

File nos. 000-50-2 to 000-50-2-121. War Crimes Case Files (“Cases Tried”), 1945–1949. Dachau. Records of the Headquarters, U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR). War Crimes Branch. Records of United States Army, Europe, RG 549 (formerly part of RG 338).

*Guides to German Records Microfilmed at Alexandria, VA, No. 33, Records of the Reich Leader of the SS and the Chief of the German Police (Part II)* provides a description on pages 85, 87–88 of the information found on T175 as referenced above.

## CONTENTS

<u>Roll</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	IA/1 1 (1933) Names in alphabetical order; 1933 IA/1 2 (1934) Names in alphabetical order; 1933–36
	IA/2 1 entry nos. 12405–17846; July 1937–June 1938 IA/2 2 entry nos. 17847–23756; June 1938–Nov. 12, 1938 IA/2 3 entry nos. 23757–29565; Nov. 12–17, 1938
2	IA/2 4 entry nos. 29566–37575; Nov. 17, 1938–Mar. 1940 IA/4 1 entry nos. 1–8250; prior to Apr. 4–May 1940 IA/4 2 entry nos. 8251–15211; May–Aug. 1940
3	IA/4 3 entry nos. 15212–22432; Aug.–Dec. 1940 IA/4 4 entry nos. 22433–28435; Dec. 1940–Oct. 1941 IA/4 5 entry nos. 28436–33901; Oct. 1941–Aug. 1942 IA/4 6 entry nos. 33902–39330; Aug.–Nov. 1942
4	IA/4 7 entry nos. 39331–48440; Nov. 1942–June 1943 IA/4 8 entry nos. 48441–58232; June–Nov. 1943 IA/4 9 entry nos. 58233–69137; Nov. 1943–May 1944
5	IA/4 10 entry nos. 69138–78217; May–July 1944 IA/4 11 entry nos. 78218–81604; July 7–17, 1944 IA/4 12 entry nos. 84700–100199; July–Sept. 1944
6	IA/4 13 entry nos. 100200–115839; Sept.–Oct. 1944 IA/4 14 entry nos. 115840–131599; Oct.–Nov. 1944
7	IA/4 15 entry nos. 131600–143479; Nov. 1944–Mar. 1945 IA/4 16 entry nos. 143480–147536; Mar.–Apr. 1945