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OHRDRUF CAMP

As Allied soldiers entered one Nazi concentration camp after another they found the same terrible evidence of Nazi savagery strewn in front of them.



At the Ohrdruf concentration camp bodies were piled high in a shed and covered over with lime.

OHRDRUF, GERMANY—The tankmen of Combat Command A, 4th Armored Division, had taken this town two days before. Prisoners in Concentration Camp North (Stalag III)—those who were too weak or too sick to travel—had been killed the day before the doughs rolled in. The cold had preserved their bodies and deadened the stench so that you could walk around them and inspect them at fairly close range.

There were 31 bodies piled in one place and more than that tumbled together on top of each other in a nearby shack—65 in all. Some of the bodies were clothed in rags and some were completely naked. One body was that of an American soldier, and the few survivors pointed him out. Blood had caked the ground around the bodies into pancakes of red mud.

All the peoples of Europe were represented here among the survivors and the dead evidence of German efficiency. The Americans who went through the camp looked quietly at the dead and spoke softly to the living.

Col. Hayden Sears of Boston, Mass., CO of Combat Command A, said little as he looked around on the second day. The third day he assembled the leading citizens of Ohrdruf and took them to visit the camp of death.

The leading citizens were very much ashamed of what their fellow Germans had done. "This is the work of only 1 percent of the German Army," said one of them. "You should not blame the rest."

Col. Sears spoke to them through an interpreter.

"Tell them they have been brought here to see with their own eyes what is reprehensible by any human standard," he said. "Tell them we hold the whole German nation responsible because of its support and toleration of the Nazi Government.

"Tell them so long as this kind of thing goes on, we must consider the German people our enemy."

—Sgt. SAUL LEVITT
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