

# Dachau

Editor of the Daily News:

This, I suppose, could be called an addendum to Rabbi Arnold Task's book review of *Deliverance Day: The Last Hours at Dachau*, which appeared in the Dec. 14 Greensboro Daily News.

I, an American soldier, was in Dachau the day after it was captured. It wasn't abandoned as the book may seem to suggest; there was a bit of a skirmish. There were bodies of several German guards still lying around on the grounds. Some were mutilated, and understandably so, by those prisoners still able to wield a stick or a rock. There were also dead Boxer type guard dogs lying around. Nothing had been cleaned up; the crematoria was still going full blast.

Before going to Dachau it had been difficult for me to believe the atrocity stories, that a nation that had made such a large contribution to the arts and sciences would allow itself to revert to barbarism.

Here is my remembrance of Dachau across the span of thirty-three years.

Dachau most certainly looked like a prison, even from the out-



Photos taken at Dachau by Carlton Raper

The larger part of the grounds were given over to barracks, rows of them and close together. Inside the barracks the bunks were three tiers high and close together. I was told the camp was originally designed for six thousand, but when I was there there were, living and dead, about thirty thousand.

Inside the barracks most of the prisoners were too weak or too deranged to show any elation at

recall there were three furnaces going and he used a meat hook type staff to pull bodies off the stacks of bodies and onto a low bed steel trundle with steel wheels. He would then open a furnace door and push the body, trundle and all, into the flames. He worked slowly but methodically, alternating from one furnace to the other.

The prisoners were from perhaps every nation in Europe; there were even some Turks. I remember the most, aside from Jews, seemed to be Greeks, Poles, Slavs, Romanians and Hungarians.

While I was there a camp artist likeness of Truman, Churchill and Stalin was hoisted onto one of the concrete walls, the likeness of Stalin being about four times larger than Truman or Churchill and occupying the middle position. Someone had organized the more able bodied inmates into a parade. The leader waved a makeshift red banner with hammer and sickle and urged the participants on. I remember one pitiful soul, an old woman with a single crutch, dragging her crippled foot along as best she could. They were singing something that I assumed was the Internationale but it could have been something else.

So this was my experience at Dachau, and for weeks afterward I felt unclean, permeated with the stench and filth of the place. And no matter how many showers I took it would not go away. Perhaps it was a moral stench I was trying to wash away, and I confess, it has not entirely left me yet.

I am enclosing a few snapshots taken while I was there.  
CARLTON RAPER  
Pleasant Garden.



A dead Nazi soldier

side. It was surrounded on two sides by high concrete walls, the other two sides were high with barb wire fences with guard towers. The whole enclosure was perhaps no more than ten or twelve acres. A small clear water stream ran through the compound. Against the concrete walls on the inside were the storage rooms, the kitchen, the offices, the crematoria and only God knows what else. Over the main gate were the words in German that meant "Freedom through work!"

being liberated. They seemed to want to hold onto their bunks as children hold onto security blankets. Some few were inspecting their clothing and each other for body lice.

The store rooms were piled high with used shoes and used clothing, some had been graded and separated but most had yet to be sorted.

A zombie-like creature in prison garb, perhaps a trusty, fed bodies into the crematoria. As I