

0. FINAL MONSTROUS ACTS - Story Preface

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As Bonhoeffer hanged from the gallows, American troops nearby already threatened the fatal blow to the Third Reich. As bodies burned in the camp's oven, Bonhoeffer's killers saw the coming end of their unchecked brutality.

They had one last monstrous act to supervise: They ordered Flossenburg prisoners to march south to Dachau. Sick, emaciated and barely able to move, many people dropped dead on the journey.

Within days, Flossenburg was liberated. Hitler was dead by his own hand in his heavily fortified bunker in Berlin. (Follow this link to the current whereabouts of his remains.)

Within weeks the war in Europe was over. American soldiers from the 97th Division of the U.S. 3rd Army (who discovered the camp and took pictures documenting what they found - like the wall where prisoners were shot) made the Germans who lived near Flossenburg see firsthand what their government had done. General Patton issued orders that required Germans to exhume and bury bodies of victims who had died during the Flossenburg death march.

Since the troops also found bodies at the camp itself, remaining prisoners gathered wood for the crematory furnace to be used for the last time.

Records which the liberators found at the camp indicated the following facts:

- Eight hundred German SS troops supervised Flossenburg which was opened in 1939. Since that time 54,890 men and over 10,000 women were held prisoner.
- In the fourteen months period preceding the death march (20 April, 1945) approximately 14,000 inmates died from exhaustion, malnourishment, mistreatment and various diseases.
- The prisoners worked in stone quarries and a nearby Messerschmidt Airplane Factory.
- On 20 April 1945, 15,000 inmates (including children and elderly people) were marched away. Those who could not keep up with the march were killed by the wayside.
- About 2,000 were left when U.S. troops arrived at the camp. Among those reported to have been in the camp were Kurt Von Schuschnig (former Chancellor of Austria), Leopold (King of the Belgians), Prince Albrecht of Austria and Hjalmar Schacht (Reich Minister of Finances).

Bonhoeffer's family (this link takes you to their home in Berlin) did not know he was dead. Not until they heard radio reports about a memorial service in London did they learn what had happened to him three months earlier.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/FINAL-MONSTROUS-ACTS-Dietrich-Bonhoeffer>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/FINAL-MONSTROUS-ACTS-Dietrich-Bonhoeffer>



Flossenburg Ovens

Image online, courtesy flossenburg.org website. 45676.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Flossenburg-Ovens>



Photo: Oven at Flossenburg

Image online, courtesy the flossenburg.org website. 45677

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Photo-Oven-at-Flossenburg>



Dachau Concentration Camp - Map Locator

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Dachau-Concentration-Camp-Map-Locator>



Death Wall at Flossenburg

Image online, courtesy the flossenburg.org website. 45585

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Death-Wall-at-Flossenburg>



Camp Living Quarters

Image online, courtesy the flossenburg.org website. 45591

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View of the Flossenburg Camp

Image online, courtesy the flossenburg.org website. 34964.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/View-of-the-Flossenburg-Camp>



Burying the Victim's Bodies

Image online, courtesy the flossenburg.org website. 46861

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Liberated Prisoners at Flossenburg

Image online, courtesy the flossenburg.org website.

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Bonhoeffer Family Home

Image online, courtesy the [Bonhoeffer-Haus](http://bonhoeffer-haus.org) website.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Bonhoeffer-Family-Home>



Execution of Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Clip from *Agent of Grace*, a film about the life and death of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

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