

Explanatory Notes on the Database

List of Personal Effects [“Effektenliste”]

“Personal effects” are all the personal belongings that were taken from prisoners when they arrived at the camp. This list was composed based on the labels and contents of bags containing personal effects from the Neuengamme concentration camp. At the end of the war, instead of being returned to the prisoners, these effects were stolen by the SS and later found by British soldiers in a small town in northern Germany near Husum. The belongings were returned to their original owners or to the next of kin whenever possible. The unclaimed items were given to the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen for safekeeping. Today it is known as the Arolsen Archives. A catalogue of the belongings whose owners or next of kin have not yet been found is available on the Arolsen Archives website at: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/search/>

Hans Schwarz Archive [„Hans-Schwarz-Nachlass“]

Hans Schwarz was a political prisoner from Austria. He compiled a chronicle of the Neuengamme concentration camp after his release and kept many notes about the camp. These documents are now collected in the Hans Schwarz Archive.

Register of the Registry Office [“Standesamtsregister”]

This register is from Special Registry Office A (Sonderstandesamt A), which was a special office created by the SS at the Neuengamme concentration camp. It served to cover up the massive number of deaths at the camp and their cause. According to former prisoners, the causes of death listed in the document were usually taken at random from a list of illnesses in order to mask the real cause of death, like hunger, abuse, or exhaustion from strenuousness forced labour.

A copy of this death register was given to the Neuengamme Concentration Camp Memorial by the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen, today called Arolsen Archives. The original document is held in the Staatsarchiv Hamburg. If you would like to print an image reproduction in a publication, please contact the archive in Hamburg for permission by sending an email to: poststelle@staatsarchiv.hamburg.de.

Death Register from the Camp Infirmary [“Reviertotenbücher”]

The infirmary’s death register is one of the few original documents left from the Neuengamme concentration camp. A single prisoner was able to save the register, which filled several notebooks, from being burned with the rest of the camp documents. The causes of death given in this death register correspond with those listed in the Registry Office’s register and should also not be trusted. Nevertheless, this document provides important information, such as the date of death and prisoner

number. Based on these figures, the date of the prisoner's admittance to the camp can often be determined. The prisoner number prefix sometimes indicates the reason for their persecution.

Card Catalogue of the SS Main Economic and Administrative Department ["WVHA Karteikarten"]

The SS Main Economic and Administrative Department (SS-Wirtschafts-Verwaltungshauptamt) in Oranienburg used its card catalogue system to more effectively organise the employment of prisoners as forced labourers. There are no names on the cards, only the date of birth and prisoner number. The cards also contain information about the relocation of prisoners to other concentration camps and the type of forced labour they performed. The most common type of work was indicated with the number "790", which stood for "unskilled labourer" (*Hilfsarbeiter*).

The original documents can be found in the German Federal Archives (Bundesarchiv) under the call number NS 3/1577, in the archives of Polish Red Cross, or the archives of the concentration camps in Auschwitz and Stutthof. The digital copies of the images have names with initials that indicate which archive they are from. If you would like to publish a reproduction, please contact the archive responsible for permission.

Commemorative Books ["Gedenkbücher"]

The entries here are mostly from the commemorative book published by Oorlogsgravenstichting called *In Memoriam Nederlandse Oorlogsslachtoffers 34*, or the book *LIVRE-MÉMORIAL des déportés de France arrêtés par mesure de répression et dans certains cas par mesure de persécution 1940-1945* published by the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Déportation.