

# Victorious Allies Liberate Camps, 1945

*“We entered the gates [of a sub-camp of Buchenwald] where an unbelievable smell of death. . . permeated everything. I entered a long warehouse where bodies were stacked row upon row. . .”*

George Chassey, Columbia, SC resident  
Crew Chief, 354th Fighter Group  
U.S. Army Air Force, Spring 1945

As American forces entered Germany in the spring of 1945, they had little idea of what they would soon encounter. The dozens of concentration camps created by the Nazis in the 1930s and early 40s were abandoned by their guards in the wake of the Allied advances. The horrors the Americans discovered in April and May of 1945, were beyond almost anyone’s imagination.

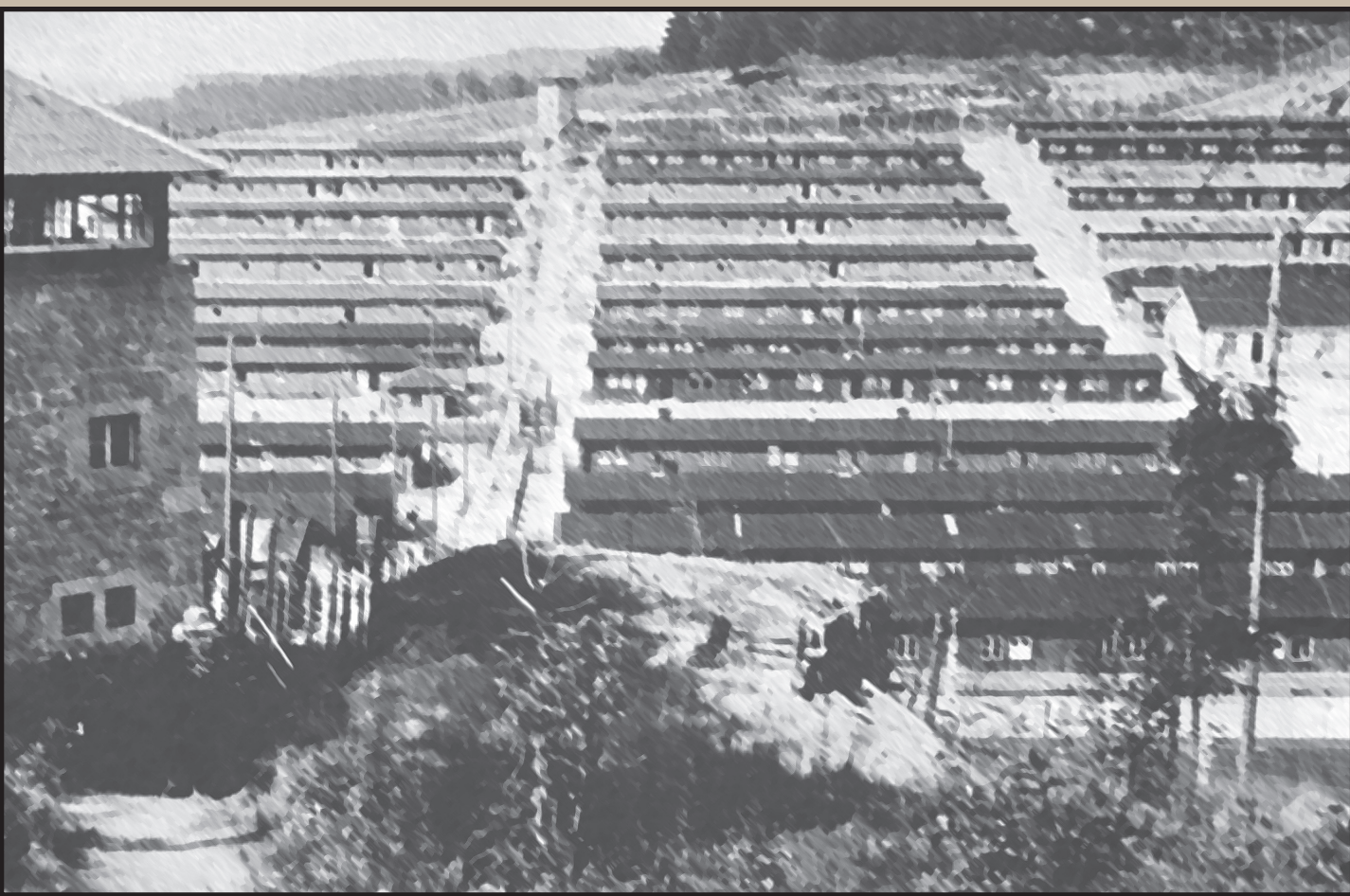
Illustration of a Soviet soldier walking through piles of prisoners’ shoes at Maidanek.



Sketch of flag at half-mast honoring the many Jewish prisoners who died at Buchenwald.



Illustration of the camp at Flossenbug, Germany.



Some of the camps liberated by American forces included Flossenbug, located in Germany near the Czech border. Erected originally in May 1938, troops from the 90th Division entered this camp 23 April. On 29 April, the Dachau camp near Munich, the first camp built by the Nazis in 1933, was liberated by troops of the 4th Division. Landsberg camp, also near Munich, was liberated by the 10th Armored Division two days before Dachau.

Sketch of two of Dachau’s crematory ovens.



Perhaps the most notorious Nazi camp, Auschwitz, located in Poland, was liberated by the advancing Russian armies in January 1945. This, like all the other camps, had thousands of dead prisoners and a few hundred survivors when their liberators entered the gates.

Sketch of Auschwitz Concentration Camp’s victims on the way to be buried, sometime after that camp’s liberation.



Auschwitz children survivors illustration.

