

-TITLE-MAX HOLLWEG
-I_DATE-
-SOURCE-JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY-GOOD
-IMAGE_QUALITY-GOOD
-DURATION-
-LANGUAGES-
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Born in Ramscheid 1910

In 1918 moved from Ramscheid during the time of the great hunger.

Lived in the Cottbus Region

Mother's name: Anna HOLLWEG

Father's name Otto HOLLWEG

In 1903 in BARMEN parents became acquainted with the JW. Mr Hollweg has 18 brothers and sisters.

In 1933 he was in Czechoslovakia as a missionary as a pioneer. (A Pioneer puts his life to missionary service.) He was in Prague for 2 years.

What happened in 1933 when Hitler came to power?

Hatred for Germans increased in Czechoslovakia. He was arrested as he went from Prague to Zlin in the Tatras. The Black SS arrested him. He was accompanied by 4 of them to GLATZ. The Czechs had taken his money away. He looked for a youth hostel. He wished to go back to Prague. But Prague wrote that he should go home. His mother sent money to return home, 1,100 km away. This was in 1933.

When he returned to Germany he was put under police surveillance, his passport was taken away. He then said the only thing left to do was to go to Switzerland (illegally) to enter Pioneer service. He then rode his bicycle to the Swiss border; it took 2 days and a night. The border was closed, he had to return home.

He got a job and after three weeks the Nazis came and forced him out. He refused to say Heil Hitler! When he went to get his dole, they wouldn't give it to him because he refused to say Heil Hitler! Then he worked for 1 Mark (per hour? day?) as a gardener while working underground. His last task (June 1937) was sending an open letter to "those who believe in the Bible and love Christ."

Then he sent this to the officials in the area of KOBLENZ at night this open letter. All of Germany received them in one night. This is the only way it could have been done.

The response: He does not know. He presumed they were afraid to

talk about it with each other.

He was arrested for 14 days, but was then released due to insufficient evidence.

He was finally arrested one year later. Every 3 months the Police searched the house. There was no trial. He was taken into Protective Custody. This was 1938 in FRANKFURT\Main. Every 8 days the Gestapo interrogated him. He was interrogated by NUELLE of the Gestapo. (He did not say if this was the NUELLE who was head of the Gestapo.) NUELLE wanted to know who the couriers of the newspaper were as well as those who printed them.

They acted as if they were going to shoot him to force him to give names. He was awaiting trial in prison for three months. Then he was sent to BUCHENWALD.

After 50 years he saw BUCHENWALD again. This was a few weeks prior to the filming.

After the trial he rode non stop from Frankfurt to Buchenwald, standing in the bus the whole time. There was no toilet. He was mostly with professional criminals. He was sick.

Upon arrival, he went to the political department. They asked "Why are you here?" He said he is a Jehovah's Witness (JW) and will remain one of them. Then he was beaten unconscious, teeth missing, sprayed with water on his head.

They then marched through the gate away from the political dept. opposite the Commander's office -- KOCH, the one who made lamp shades from human skin and shrank human heads. Hollweg's hair was then shorn. Asocials and criminals were selected for lamp shades and shrunken heads.

He was with Asocials, political, homosexuals, Gypsies, Jews, and professional criminals. 420 J.W.s. The bible studiers were sent to the punishment commando. He then got the uniform with the purple patch. He was on the top of three beds. 14 days later, the Blockfuehrer SS Oberscharfuehrer took him out for all to see. He was beaten. After 4 weeks they had a new Blockfuehrer because the old one was perverse. He was arrested for beating up fellow Nazis. He was a sadist.

His hands and feet were frozen. There was no treatment, but he had to walk. This was fall of 1938. Then he got lung infection. There was no treatment because he was a JW. All others got treatment. Then he had a 40,5 degree fever. He had no thermometer. He was carried by fellow prisoners back and forth to work. The Nazis thought he would die, took him into a bathroom. 2 brothers took him to a former Reichstag delegate -- a communist -- and a hospital director who measured his fever.

He was given a shot after hiding his identity to get treatment. He

was very weak. He discovered the political prisoners were homosexual. They wanted to keep him there, but the brothers took him out.

After he got better, he worked in the heating department where the pipes were. 32 asocials and criminals worked in this department. When they threw their cigarette butts on the ground, they were punished by the SS by being made to stand for hours. He was nearly kaput.

There were no experts among the 32. An electrician came to supervise this work. On the next day the men were given a day off. But a Nazi came, saw them doing nothing, putting him on the punishment block where he was to receive 25 lashes, but it was not done.

The loudspeaker told him to go to the gate. KOCH himself came to Hollweg beating him on the head. KOCH said "only the expert and I can tell you what to do."

Names of other JW's: Most are dead.

The communists helped him. The young Nazi doctors operated on his intestines. It was only allowed if the patient was able to walk after 9 days. He was held firmly by four men, without anesthesia.

He had to split wood after 9 days, the wound opened again and he had to stand under terrible heat at attention for over 4 hours. The other prisoners were allowed to stand in the shade. The wound opened again, and his intestines hung out over 2 feet (to his knee). Other brothers with only one leg (from WW1) also had to stand as he did.

1940, in May, he was taken to NIEDERHAGEN from Buchenwald. Everything is still there (in Buchenwald) to see -- the crematoria, the shooting gallery, the effects room.

Taken to Bebelburg to work in Himmler's castle near Paderborn. He did whatever was necessary. He saw Himmler frequently, but never spoke with him. He was there for 5 years. He did many things in connection with building.

Until 1943 the prisoners were treated very poorly. It was a very bad time. 63.7% of the prisoners there died. 21 % of the brothers died. There was a Waffen SS general and a countess. The countess ran the SS study. He knew her from childhood. Through this he was able to do very much for the brothers.

He did the following to help the brothers: intercepting orders for punishment and then destroying or diverting them. The countess also destroyed such complaints. Hollweg would go to the writing room to tell the countess to throw away.

He remained at Himmler's castle after the Bebelburg camp was

eliminated. Then they had to build a small camp. They put up the barbed wire electric fence. The fence was lethal. He and the electrician - a young Berliner -- worked together. He was a Brother. Hollweg said "Please don't turn the fence on."

A brother had an accident. (No mention was made as to what happened.) It appears that they came up with a system that turned power off to the fence when the main gate was opened.

The brothers managed to produce Watch Towers. They were able to come and go because they knew when the fence was turned off.

In 1943 he went to the small camp in Bebelburg.

He was freed by gum-chewing black American troops, who said "SS swine out!"

The Americans protected them because his commando was supposed to be eliminated -- four times. These prisoners were to be killed because they knew where a great deal of paintings, money, and objects d'art was. It was hidden behind a wall.

His future mother-in-law (who was in the refugee camp) heard that the prisoners were to be killed in the forest. The Americans would be blamed for this. At 3:00 AM they were suppose to be liquidated as the Americans were approaching. This did not happen. The Waffen SS general needed 10 prisoners, however, to load a truck. Hollweg volunteered for this. The countess met him again and then the Americans were shooting at the castle.

The sirens rang and they were told to go to the cellar for protection, but they went to the castle where the walls were three meters thick. They stayed there until it started to get dark. There were no Nazis there. All the brothers were still there.

An officer with Rider's Cross was told to destroy the castle with bazookas (Panzerfaeste), but the Americans were quicker. An Oberscharfuehrer was told to shoot the JWs but was afraid of doing so, but the Americans shot him. The general was seriously wounded. He could not leave. The leader of the Nazi guard (adjutant to the general) was seriously injured. He couldn't flee with the others.

After the war most went back to their relatives, but Hollweg was too sick. He worked with the department of health of the city of Buerren, to treat sick people.

Hollweg conducted operations because there were no doctors.

The allied troops wanted him to write a book, but he declined. He is willing to talk for 24 hours as a witness.