

Interviewee: JURIST, Wilbur
Interviewer: Philip G. Solomon
No. of Audiotapes: 1 English
Transcript: 1 v. (unpaged)

Date: January 14, 1988

No Restrictions

SUMMARY

Wilbur Jurist served as First Lieutenant in the United States 82nd Airborne Division in Europe during World War II. Near the end of the war, his unit liberated a small concentration camp near the town of Ludwigslust, Germany. Lt. Jurist witnessed an open trench and several barracks filled with dead and near dead prisoners, all of whom were males. He mentions attempts to feed emaciated survivors and refers to a few men who went into town, seized a German tank and used it to try to kill German civilians. He believes his unit helped save about half of the approximately 600 prisoners of war and German political prisoners.

He describes a reburial of bodies, ordered by his commander, General Gavin. German civilians were forced to carry bodies to mass graves they dug in a park in Ludwigslust, which were viewed by the townspeople who were marched past the open graves. Mr. Jurist claims no one admitted knowledge of the camp, which was located nearby on a major highway. Lt. Jurist was given command of a camp for displaced German civilians none of whom would admit that they had ever been Nazis.

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SUBJECT HEADINGS

World War, 1939 - 1945 -- Personal narratives - American
World War, 1939- 1945 -- Concentration camp (Germany) liberation
Reprisals
Atrocities