

# Concentration Camp Dachau established, 1933



Dachau, located 15 kilometers from Munich in Bavaria, was the Nazis' first major concentration camp, built on the site of an abandoned World War I munitions factory. Heinrich Himmler announced its creation at a March 20, 1933, news conference. The first prisoners — Communists and Socialists — arrived on March 22. At the beginning, Dachau had a capacity for 4,000 inmates. By September 1944, the prisoner population had grown to about 100,000. Dachau was the only camp that lasted for the entire 12 years of the Third Reich; it was liberated by the United States Army on April 29, 1945.

On May 5, 1933, Josef Haff, who had been a Nazi since 1929, wrote to his family as he sipped beer during his mid-day break, his third day of duty as a concentration camp guard. He found life at the camp to be pleasant. The picture side of his post card is a view of the Amper valley from the south, with the Würm river canal flowing past the west side of the prison compound. Below is an official document attesting to Haff's satisfactory service as a Dachau guard from May 3 to September 16, 1933.



Konzentrationslager Dachau  
Wachtruppe

## Entlassungszeugnis

aus der Wachtruppe im Konzentrationslager Dachau.  
 SS. Nr. *Haff Josef* vom Sturm *4/I/29*  
 vom *3.5.33.* bis *16.9.33.* als Helfspolizist im Konzentrations-  
 lager Dachau verwendet. Seine Führung war *gut*  
 Strafen *keine* Seine Entlassung erfolgte  
*würdigen München* Dachau, den *16. Sep. 1933* 1933.  
 Der Führer der Wachtruppe:

