

**"EUTHANASIA"- Killings
under NATIONAL SOCIALISM
GRAFENECK 1940
THE "EUTHANASIA"-
CRIMES IN SOUTHWEST-
GERMANY**

The "Euthanasia"-crimes. History and Remembrance

January 1940 NS-"EUTHANASIA" - INDUSTRIAL MURDER



Grafeneck Castle

On January 18, 1940, the systematic and industrial killing of people began in Nazi Germany. Over 70,000 people were killed in six extermination centers between January 1940 and August 1941.

Grafeneck, referred to by the perpetrators as "Institution A" (Anstalt A), became a model for all subsequent extermination centers - the perpetrators' methods in southwestern Germany became a model for the entire Reich.

Castle Grafeneck, located 60 kilometers south of Stuttgart on the Swabian Alb:

Between January and December 1940, 10,654 men, women, and children were murdered here in a gas chamber.

The perpetrators referred to the murders as "EUTHANASIA" or "MERCY KILLINGS". In historical retrospect, the program is also referred to as "OPERATION T4" (Aktion T4).

People were killed because they were considered "life unworthy of life" in the eyes of the perpetrators - and not just in their eyes:

The victims were people with mental illnesses or cognitive disabilities who until they were deported to Grafeneck had been living in hospitals and care facilities.

"HOLOCAUST"

The mass murder of patients and residents of hospitals and care facilities marks the beginning of a path that leads to the murder of the European Jews and ends in the extermination camps in the East, with Auschwitz-Birkenau as its symbol.

The perpetrators of the "Euthanasia"-program - among them every fourth member of the staff at Grafeneck - can be found again in the extermination sites of the "Holocaust":

Auschwitz II - Birkenau, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. They were responsible for building these extermination camps. There too, the perpetrators systematically and industrially killed people.

The "Euthanasia"-killings served as a model for the murder in the extermination camps of the Holocaust.



- The six killing centers of the Nazi 'Euthanasia'-Program



Auschwitz II -Birkenau

**PROLOGUE:
"UNWORTHY LIFE"**

Hier trägst Du mit

Ein Erbkranker kostet bis zur Erreichung des
60. Lebensjahres im
Durchschnitt 50.000 RM.



Exhibition picture of the "Reichsnährstand":
Volk und Rasse. Illustrated monthly magazine
for German folk culture, issue 10 (1936)

"We should create a law that helps nature to its right. Nature would let this creature, incapable of caring for itself, starve to death. We can be more humane and give it a painless mercy killing..."

'Blessed are the poor in spirit',
Matthew 5 - No reasonable person
would derive earthly rights for
the idiots, which no one has
denied to others, from this Bible
verse. The kingdom of heaven may
be theirs."

THE THOUGHT: "UNWORTHY LIFE"

The declared goal of the National Socialist's health, social, and racial policies is the realization of a comprehensive program for the "purification of the body of the people" (Reinigung des Volkskörpers). Medical and economic criteria are used as a benchmark for determining the value of human life. Where no usefulness is recognized, the right to life ends.

No longer is the suffering individual at the center of ideological thinking, but rather the supra-individual social structure: the state, the nation, the people, or rather: the race.

The conceptual connection between "healing and extermination" in the time of National Socialism is clear: the "extermination of life unworthy of life" is understood in the final analysis as a measure for the strengthening and revitalization of the "body of the people" and the race. "Healing and extermination" no longer have an inseparable connection within this conceptual framework but become identical.

The "logic" of the planners in killing the "useless eaters" lies in:

- . Relief of public finances
- . Saving food
- . Availability of doctors and nursing staff for war service
- . Conversion of sanatoria and nursing facilities into military hospitals, barracks, or other war-relevant institutions.

The term for these killings: "EUTHANASIA" - good death

"In the many care facilities of the Reich, many incurably ill people of all kinds are accommodated who are of no use to mankind at all. They only take away food from other healthy people and often require two or three times the care. If preparations for the preservation of healthy people have to be made today, then it is all the more necessary to eliminate these beings first. First, this is for the better preservation of the sick but curable people housed in sanatoria and nursing facilities. The space that is freed up is furthermore needed for all kinds of war-relevant things: military hospitals, hospitals, and auxiliary hospitals. Additionally, the action relieves the municipalities considerably since the future costs of maintenance and care of these people are saved."

OPERATION T4 BERLIN - STUTTGART - GRAFENECK

For the preparation and execution of the "Euthanasia" murders in Grafeneck, the Reich authorities in Berlin relied on the cooperation of the state administrations in Baden, Württemberg, and Bavaria.

Supervision of the hospitals and care facilities was in the responsibility of the State Ministries of the interior in Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, and Munich.

In the case of Grafeneck, the Ministry of the Interior in Stuttgart and its medical department has a particularly significant role to play.

In early October 1939, when representatives of the "T4"-authorities and the Reich Ministry of the Interior were searching for a location for the first "Euthanasia"-extermination facility, representatives of the Württemberg Ministry of the Interior in Stuttgart suggested the Samaritan Foundation Grafeneck.

Since 1929, Grafeneck has been one of the care facilities of the Samaritan Foundation Stuttgart, which belongs to the State Association of Inner Mission and the Protestant State Church of Württemberg.



The Ministry of the Interior of Württemberg in Stuttgart



Dr. jur. Jonathan Schmid (1888-1945) Minister of the Interior and Justice of Württemberg.

13749

1103 7/1102 - 118 7/120

Der Württ. Innenminister

Stuttgart-S, den 23. November 1939.

Nr. X 4792.

An die
Staatlichen Heilanstalten
die
Privatheilanstalten Göppingen, Kennenburg,
und Rottenmünster
und an die

Zentraleitung für das Anstalts-
und Stiftungswesen in Stuttgart
Falkertstrasse 29.

Betreff: Verlegung von Insassen
der Heil- und Pflegeanstalten.

0 Beil.

Die gegenwärtige Lage macht die Verlegung einer größeren Anzahl von in Heil- und Pflegeanstalten untergebrachten Kranken notwendig. Im Auftrag des Reichsverteidigungskommissars werde ich die notwendigwerdenden Verlegungen von Fall zu Fall anordnen. Die Kranken werden nebst ihren Krankenakten in Sammeltransporten verlegt. Der Abgabeeanstalt entstehen aus dem Transport keine Kosten; die Krankenakten werden ihr nach Einsichtnahme durch die Aufnahmeanstalt wieder zurückgegeben. Die Benachrichtigung der Angehörigen über die Verlegung erfolgt durch die Aufnahmeanstalt. Die Kostenträger sind von der Abgabeeanstalt davon in Kenntnis zu setzen, dass weitere Zahlungen über den Tag der Verlegung hinaus ins solange einzustellen sind, bis sie von der Aufnahmeanstalt angefordert werden.

Die Zentraleitung für das Stiftungs- und Anstaltswesen wird ersucht, den Erlass den ihr unterstellten Anstalten bekanntzugeben.

Im Auftrag
h. Hähle. /Gr.

The circular of the Ministry of the Interior of Württemberg dated 23.11.1939, which informs the care facilities about the planned transfer of patients.

Grafeneck - from care facility to extermination centre

Der Landrat in Münsingen

Württemberg

Münsingen, den 14. Oktober 1939.

Herrn

Stadtpfarrer Fischer
Vorsitzender der Samariterstiftung

in Stuttgart.
Kenzleistrasse 5.

Einschreiben!
Eilt sehr!

Bezugnahme auf die mündliche Besprechung vom 11. 10. 1939.

Betreff: Krüppelheim Grafeneck, Landkreis Münsingen.

Beilagen: 0.

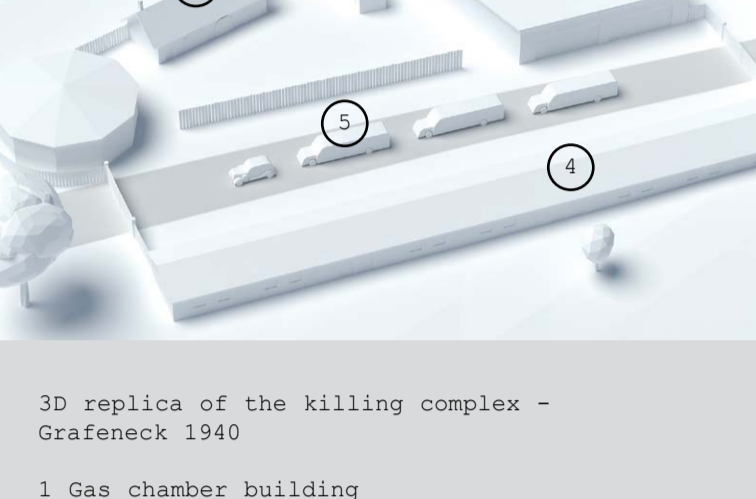
Auf Grund von § 3a in Verbindung mit § 2a Buchstabe a des Reichsleistungsgesetzes vom 1. September 1939 (Reichsgesetzblatt I S. 1645) nehme ich das Krüppelheim Grafeneck - vorläufig ohne den Gutshof - für Zwecke des Reichs in Anspruch.

Das Heim ist bis spätestens 14. Oktober 1939 abends von den Insassen und den Pflegepersonen - vorläufig ohne das landwirtschaftliche Personal - zu räumen. Die Schlüssel sind mir zu übergeben.

Die gesamte zur Anstalt gehörende Einrichtung sowie die Vorräte sind zurückzulassen. Hierüber ist ein Verzeichnis in dreifacher Fertigung anzulegen, das mir bei der Übergabe der Anstalt auszuhändigen ist. Das gesamte Eigentum der Pflöge-linge und des Personals sowie etwa vorhandene Vorräte an leicht verderblichen Lebensmitteln sollen mitgenommen werden.

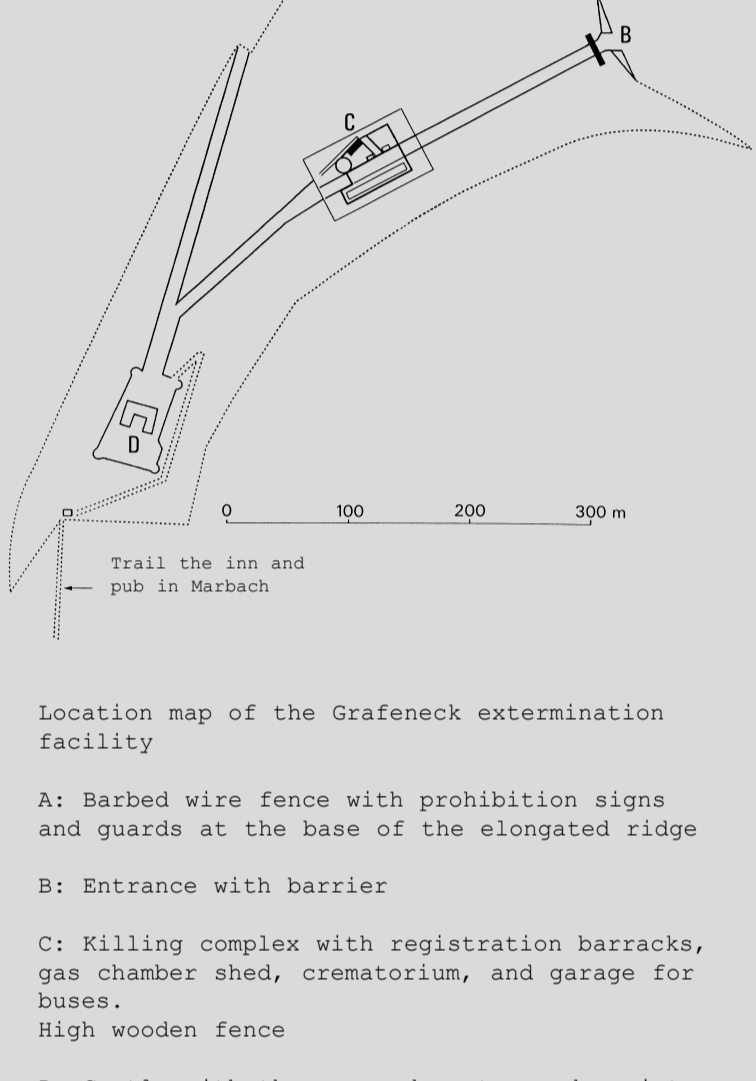
Die durch die Räumung des Heims entstehenden Aufwendungen sind über mich beim Herrn Wirt. Innenminister unter Vorlage einer Zusammenstellung in doppelter Fertigung und ordnungsmässiger Belege zum Ersatz anzufordern.

Expropriation of Grafeneck "for purposes of the Reich". An order was issued by Münsingen district administrator Richard Alber on October 14, 1939, on behalf of the Württemberg Ministry of the Interior.



3D replica of the killing complex - Grafeneck 1940

- 1 Gas chamber building
- 2 Crematorium with three incinerators
- 3 Vehicle hall
- 4 60-metre-long reception barracks
- 5 Three buses with escort vehicle



Location map of the Grafeneck extermination facility

A: Barbed wire fence with prohibition signs and guards at the base of the elongated ridge

B: Entrance with barrier

C: Killing complex with registration barracks, gas chamber shed, crematorium, and garage for buses.

High wooden fence

D: Castle with the command center and registry office.

GRAFENECK 1940

After being expropriated "for purposes of the Reich," Grafeneck was subsequently referred to as the Grafeneck State Care Facility. The entire killing complex - the gas chamber building, the crematorium, the registration barracks, and the bus garage - was surrounded by a wooden fence. Grafeneck had become a killing institution.

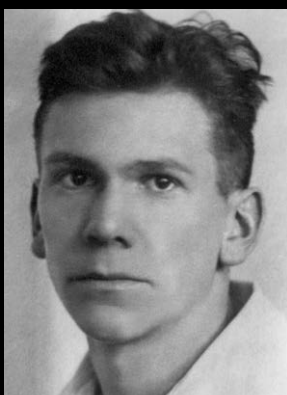
Between January and December 1940, 10,654 men, women, the elderly, youth, and children were murdered in Grafeneck. The Tübingen Assize Court determined the number of victims in a trial against a small number of perpetrators.

The list of institutions reflects the current state of knowledge and remains incomplete, especially regarding Bavaria. The number of Bavarian victims cannot be traced back to their originating institutions.

INSTITUTIONS AND VICTIMS

I. WÜRTTEMBERG	
A. State psychiatric and care facilities	
1. Weissenau	(558)
2. Schussenried	(317)
3. Zwiefalten	(352)
4. Winnenden	(356)
5. Weinsberg	(422)
B. State Welfare Institutions	
6. Markgröningen	(120)
7. Ellwangen / Rabenhof	(30)
8. Ulm / Riedhof	(55)
9. Reutlingen / Rappertshofen	(72)
C. Private sanatoriums	
10. Rottenmünster	(178)
11. Göppingen / Christophsbad	(144)
12. Kennenburg / Esslingen	(7)
D. Denominational institutions	
- Innere Mission (protestant):	
13. Stetten i.R.	(324)
14. Schwäbisch Hall / Diakonissenhaus	(87)
15. Pfingstweide / Tettwang	(24)
16. Mariaberg	(61)
17. Paulinenpflege Winnenden	(1)
- Caritas (catholic):	
18. Liebenau	(463)
19. Rosenharz / Ravensburg	(26)
20. Heggbach / Biberach	(173)
21. Ingerkingen	(72)
E. Municipal hospitals	
22. Bürgerhospital Stuttgart	(1)
II. HOHENZOLLERN	
23. Fürst Carl Hospital Sigmaringen	(71)
III. BADEN	
A. State psychiatric and care facilities	
24. Wiesloch	(675)
25. Rastatt	(448)
26. Illenau	(237)
27. Emmendingen	(700)
28. Reichenau / Konstanz	(448)
B. District nursing homes	
29. Weinheim	(66)
30. Krautheim	(2)
31. Sinsheim	(234)
32. Hub / Ottersweier	(404)
33. Fußbach / Gengenbach	(130)
34. Freiburg	(120)
35. Geisingen	(16)
36. Wiechs	(89)
37. Jestetten	(135)
C. Denominational institutions	
- Innere Mission (protestant):	
38. Mosbach	(218)
39. Kork	(113)
- Caritas (catholic):	
40. Herten / St. Josefsanstalt	(345)
III. BAYERN	
41. Eglfing-Haar / München	(164)
42. Kaufbeuren	(414)
43. Günzburg	(248)
44. Schweinspoint / Donauwörth	(83)
45. Lohr a. M.	(76)
46. Werneck	
IV. HESSEN / RHEINPROVINZ-PREUSSEN	
47. Goddelau / Kr. Darmstadt	(59)
48. Bedburg-Hau / Kr. Kleve	(455)

Theodor Kynast



Theodor Kynast
born 1904, murdered
in Grafeneck on
25 November 1940

Theodory Kynast was a patient at the private clinic Christophsbad in Göppingen. He was diagnosed with schizophrenia.

The patient registration forms of the Reich Ministry of the Interior were not filled out by the Christophsbad. The institution did not want to release the patients of state welfare (Staatspfleglinge). The Württemberg Ministry, however, of the Interior ordered the transfer of patients from the Christophsbad Göppingen to state facilities and other care facilities. On October 14, 1940, Theodor Kynast was transferred to the Winnental sanatorium and care facility (Winnenden).

Winnental was a so-called "Zwischenanstalt". Some of the people killed in Grafeneck were not directly deported from the care facility in which they lived but were transferred to state-run facilities first, where they stayed for several weeks before being deported to Grafeneck. On November 29 Theodor K. is transferred to Grafeneck with another 74 patients from Winnental. He was killed there on the same day.

The estate of Theodor K., which was passed- to his parents in Göppingen after his death, shows the fear and despair of the 36-year-old: he has carved the word "murderer" into a cookie. The death certificate issued by the Grafeneck registry office on December 3, 1940, indicates "pulmonary tuberculosis, hemorrhage" as the cause of death.

GRAFENECK AND AUSCHWITZ "EUTHANASIA" AND "FINAL SOLUTION"

The subsequent use of the "Euthanasia"-perpetrators and the killing technology of the gas chambers for the extermination of European Jews demonstrates the direct connection between the "Euthanasia" crimes and the "Final Solution of the Jewish question":

Dr. Horst Schumann, the first head and medical director of Grafeneck, became a camp doctor in Auschwitz in the autumn of 1942 and selected people for cruel and often deadly X-ray sterilization experiments at the ramp of Birkenau.

A large part of the Grafeneck staff, including Christian Wirth, was involved in the murder of European Jews. As part of "Operation Reinhard", Wirth led the establishment of the extermination camp Belzec. He later became its first commander and from August 1, 1942, the inspector of the extermination camps Belzec, Treblinka, and Sobibor, where 1.75 million people are known to have been murdered.

Also, administrative, nursing, and guard personnel working at Grafeneck were later found in other "Euthanasia" extermination centers and the extermination camps in the East after 1940. Kurt Franz, born in 1914, who worked as a "chef" at Grafeneck, became the last commander of Treblinka.

Only a small number of perpetrators were prosecuted and punished after the war. Most of them returned to the society they came from.



Christian Wirth (1885- 1944)
Criminal Investigator at the Stuttgart police headquarters, office manager in Grafeneck and Hartheim, and commander of the Belzec extermination camp.



Dr. Horst Schumann (1906-1983)
Head doctor of the killing center at Grafeneck and Sonnenstein, camp doctor at Auschwitz



- ▼ The six killing centers of the "Euthanasia"-program with gas-chambers
- Extermination camps with gas-chambers



Auschwitz II - Birkenau

GEDENKSTÄTTE GRAFENECK DOKUMENTATIONS ZENTRUM



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lpb

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