

Images from Karl Höcker's Auschwitz Album (1944)

Abstract

In January 2007, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum received an album containing 116 photographs with captions. The album, donated by an anonymous American military officer who had found it while stationed in Frankfurt am Main at the end of World War II, belonged to Karl Höcker, the adjutant to Richard Baer, SS-Sturmbannführer and Commander of Auschwitz I. These now notorious photos depicted life in Auschwitz from the perspective of the secretaries, administrators and SS leaders. They represent a chilling contrast to the mass murder of European Jews carried out in the death camp at the same time.

The two images shown here are taken directly from Höcker's personal collection. They depict a group of female SS auxiliaries (young women who worked for the SS as communications specialists, including in concentration camps) with some SS officers during a day trip to Solahütte, an SS retreat eighteen miles from Auschwitz, on July 22, 1944. Trips to Solahütte were usually granted to camp guards as a reward for "exemplary work." These photos show how the daily engineers of the death factory at Auschwitz could compartmentalize the horrors in which they partook by engaging in what appears to be harmless fun and recreation.

Source





Source: Karl Höcker's photograph album, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/auschwitz-through-the-lens-of-the-ss-the-album>

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