

C7 Discharged



Bernhard Steinbach was a soldier in the German Wehrmacht, but when he was found to be from a Sinti family he was discharged from the army and imprisoned in Wiesbaden. Many other Sinti and Roma also served in the Wehrmacht and fought for Germany on various fronts - while members of their families were being deported and murdered in concentration camps. In 1943, Bernhard Steinbach and his family were deported to Auschwitz. "From the beginning I was the clerk in the camp. Every morning I had to note the ID numbers of those who had died. At first at least forty or fifty people died every day. Later, when the camp became overcrowded, their numbers increased continually. Disease became rampant, including malaria and various forms of typhus and typhoid, and claimed more and more lives. Every morning a count was made of those still able to work, who were used for forced labour on building and road construction sites outside the camp." That is how Bernhard Steinbach later described his role in the camp. He was one of the few members of the big Steinbach family to survive the various concentration camps in which 45 members of his family were murdered by the National Socialists.

1910

1951

1941

💡 Did you know

... that soldiers found to be of Roma or Sinti origin were usually given leave so that they could be arrested at home and not in front of their comrades?

✎ For you to do

Find out about the life of Bernhard Steinbach after 1945.

📷 The photo

Military ID photograph in the possession of the family. Documentation Centre of German Sinti and Roma, Heidelberg, Germany.



<https://www.romasintigenocide.eu/en/c>