

1938; m. 10 Sep 1919, Friedrich Jüttner; d. poisoning 17 Oct 1939 (CHL, CR 375 8, no. 38)

**Liselotte Weigand** b. Stettin, Pommern 4 Jan 1916; dau. of Philipp Weigand and Meta Katilius; bp. 31 May 1924; conf. 1 Jul 1924; m. 27 Jun 1936, Erich Gustar Prust; missing (CHL, CR 375 8, no. 58)

### NOTES

1. Gerhard Ertel, interview by Jennifer Heckmann, Langen, Germany, August 14, 2006; summarized in English by Judith Sartowski, and audio version or transcript of the interview in the author's collection.
2. Presiding Bishopric, "Financial, Statistical, and Historical Reports of Wards, Stakes, and Missions, 1884–1955," CR 4 12, 257.
3. East German Mission, "Directory of Meeting Places" (unpublished manuscript, 1943); private collection.
4. David Irving, *The Destruction of Dresden* (London: William Kimber, 1963), 81.

---



---

## HINDENBURG BRANCH

---



---

The city of Hindenburg, Germany, was located just east of Gleiwitz in the state of Silesia. The city had approximately fifteen thousand inhabitants in 1939, of whom only thirty-four were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Just before World War II began on September 1, 1939, the branch members met in rented rooms at Dorotheenstrasse 9 on the second floor. By early 1943, the meetings had moved to Dorotheenstrasse 94 in the home of a person or family named Czock.<sup>1</sup>

As of this writing, no surviving eyewitnesses from the Hindenburg Branch have been identified, nor have historical writings of deceased eyewitnesses come to light. However, it is fortunate that the records of the East German Mission in Berlin include several entries regarding the Hindenburg Branch:

Hindenburg Branch <sup>2</sup>	1939
Elders	2
Priests	2
Teachers	0
Deacons	2
Other Adult Males	6
Adult Females	17
Male Children	3
Female Children	2
<i>Total</i>	34

Saturday, January 1 [1938]: The Primary Association of the Hindenburg Branch held a program evening, which was attended by one-hundred and thirty-six persons.<sup>3</sup>

Sunday, February 20. A conference of the Hindenburg Branch Sunday School organization was held, attended by seventeen members and eleven friends.<sup>4</sup>

Thursday, February 24. The Hindenburg Branch Primary Association held a program evening, with ninety-three persons attending.<sup>5</sup>

Tuesday, March 8. Following the Breslau Conference, a special meeting was held in Hindenburg, with Miss. Pres. and Sister Alfred C. Rees as honorary guests. In attendance also were sixty-nine persons, forty-three of them friends [nonmembers].<sup>6</sup> The secret police in Hindenburg questioned the branch president about their Primary work and demanded a list of the branch members.<sup>7</sup>

Thursday, 25 August 1938: The Primary Association of the Hindenburg Branch held a very successful "Homecoming." When members and former members met, there were one-hundred and fifty persons present.<sup>8</sup>

Sun 8 Jan 1939: Gerhard Herud is appointed branch president and Karl Czerwinski first counselor.<sup>9</sup>

Tue 28 Feb 1939: After receiving notice that the rent on their hall was ended, and unable to find another branch hall for the time being, the members of the Hindenburg Branch attended religious services in Gleiwitz.<sup>10</sup>

Remarkably, for such a small branch—thirty-four members at the end of 1939—it seems that all of the Church programs in Hindenburg were functional before the war broke out. On several occasions mentioned above, there were far more friends than members in attendance.

There is no additional information regarding the inquiry made by the Gestapo in March 1938. One can only speculate about the reasons for an investigation into the activities of the Primary organization. All over Germany in those days, it was common for Latter-day Saint children to invite friends to go with them to Primary on Wednesday afternoons (Wednesday was the short schoolday in Germany). It may be that this was happening in Hindenburg as well and that neighbors wondered about what was being done in Primary meetings or who was in charge.

One has to wonder whether the loss of the Church meeting rooms in Hindenburg spelled the demise of the branch. Traveling even ten miles to Gleiwitz to attend meetings would likely have proved disadvantageous, given the increasing rarity of trains available for civilian travel during the war.

The Red Army invaded the Hindenburg District territory in January 1945; armored units rolled into Hindenburg against little resistance on January 20.<sup>11</sup> By the end of 1946, the new Polish government had forcibly evicted all German citizens, which can only mean that the Latter-day Saints in that city were gone by then and that the branch had ceased to exist. The name of the town was changed to Zabrze.

#### IN MEMORIAM

Only one member of the Hindenburg Branch did not survive World War II:

**Willy Emanuel Hadzik** b. Kattowitz, Schlesien, Preußen 24 Mar 1920; son of Johann Hadzik and Anna Nowak; bp. 10 Feb 1935; conf. 10 Feb 1935;

d. POW camp Argos, Greece 16 or 17 May 1941; bur. Dionyssos-Rapendoza, Greece (CHL CR 275 8, no. 105; IGI; www.volksbund.de)

#### NOTES

1. East German Mission, "Directory of Meeting Places" (unpublished manuscript, 1943); private collection.
2. Presiding Bishopric, "Financial, Statistical, and Historical Reports of Wards, Stakes, and Missions, 1884–1955," CR 4 12, 257.
3. East German Mission Quarterly Reports, 1938, no. 9, East German Mission History.
4. *Ibid.*, no. 12.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, no. 26.
8. *Ibid.*, no. 35.
9. *Ibid.*, no. 51.
10. *Ibid.*, no. 56–57.
11. David Irving, *The Destruction of Dresden* (London: William Kimber, 1963), 81.

---

## RATIBOR BRANCH

---

Located twenty-four miles from the seat of the Hindenburg District of the East German Mission, the city of Ratibor was just twenty miles north of the German-Czech border and thirty-five miles west of the German-Polish border. The branch of Latter-day Saints in this city was as isolated from the Church as it was from the rest of Hitler's Germany.

Ratibor Branch <sup>1</sup>	1939
Elders	1
Priests	0
Teachers	1
Deacons	0
Other Adult Males	0
Adult Females	13
Male Children	1
Female Children	0
<i>Total</i>	16