

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](http://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 East German Mission, "Directory of Meeting Places" (unpublished manuscript, 1943); private collection.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.

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## RATIBOR BRANCH

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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

Due to a lack of eyewitnesses as of this writing, little is known about the Latter-day Saints in Ratibor. The mission directory shows that in late 1938, the meetings were held in the home of the Nawrath family at Gertrudenstrasse 37. Five years later, the same family hosted the branch for meetings at a different address: Gartenstrasse 14.

By 1946, virtually all ethnic Germans had vacated the territory, and any activities of the Church faded into history there.

No members of the Ratibor Branch—one of the smallest official branches of the Church in all of Germany—are known to have lost their lives in World War II. The Polish name of the town is Raciborz.

#### NOTE

1. Presiding Bishopric, “Financial, Statistical, and Historical Reports of Wards, Stakes, and Missions, 1884–1955,” CR 4 12, 257.



*Elder Ezra Taft Benson visited the Selbongen Branch on August 6, 1946, to arrange for the delivery of Church welfare supplies.*