

Concrete Department



Because the National-Socialists' construction plans for Hamburg were put on hold in 1941, the eastern wing of the brickworks was not put into operation in 1943. Instead, the SS started to produce prefabricated concrete parts there in collaboration with the Hamburg City Council. Prisoners had to make concrete parts for air-raid bunkers (from autumn 1942), parts for provisional housing (from autumn 1943), and concrete parts for furnaces intended to create smoke-screens against Allied bombers (from autumn 1944). Photograph from the "Heinz Masset photo album".

Foto: SS. (ANg)

Construction of a Kiln at the Brickworks



The brickworks' annular kilns I and II were set up by prisoners in spring 1941. Joining the fireclay bricks neatly without the use of mortar required a lot of practice and care. The SS leadership was planning to use concentration camp prisoners as masons for the construction of German settlements in the occupied territories in Eastern Europe. Neuengamme was one of the concentration camps to start masonry training courses in 1941. Even Polish prisoners were allowed to register for these courses.

Foto: SS. (ANg)

Prisoners at the Brickworks



Prisoners piling bricks at the brickworks. A cart can be seen in the foreground. Work inside the brickworks offered better chances of survival than work outside, because prisoners were not exposed to rain or cold. Also, skilled workers at the brickworks were not under constant surveillance by the SS. However, most of the tasks at the brickworks, like sorting hot bricks or carrying coal, were very strenuous.

Foto: SS. (ANg)

Work at the Clay Pits



Every day, several hundred prisoners were deployed to dig and transport clay. The clay was dug up in several places on the grounds, initially between the old and the new brickworks, and later between the brickworks and the SS barracks. Prisoners had to load the clay onto tipper wagons and push these wagons to the brickworks, where the clay was emptied onto a heap.

Foto: SS., ca. 1943/44. (ANg)