

The Treatment of Weakened Prisoners

The living and working conditions severely weakened a large number of the prisoners. Sick prisoners who did not recover were singled out and transferred to other camps or were killed with lethal injections. The majority of the "*Muselmänner*" – the camp term for prisoners who were so emaciated they could no longer work – died of hunger, exhaustion and untreated diseases. From autumn 1944, Neuengamme main camp gradually became more of a reception camp for the rising number of dying prisoners who were transferred back there from the satellite camps because they were no longer able to work. Prisoners who were seriously ill, dying or already dead were left lying crammed together in so-called "convalescence blocks" without any treatment, often three or more to one bunk.