

GERMANS ARE LIKE THIS

The German people—audacious, servile, well-fed—have forgotten that they are Nazis, that we are their enemies. Notes on Germany now...

By Lee Miller

GERMANY is a beautiful landscape dotted with jewel-like villages, blotched with ruined cities, inhabited by schizophrenics. There are blossoms and vistas, tiny pastel plaster towns, like a modern water colour of mediaeval memory. There are little girls in white dresses and garlands, children with stilts and marbles and tops and hoops; mothers sew and sweep and bake and farmers plough and harrow; all just like real people. But they aren't. They are the enemy.

The land war was not fought enough on German soil; the punishment for aggression has not yet been sufficiently severe. We thought they'd fight fiendishly, once their own land was invaded, but each house had a white flag on the Nazi banner pole and our armour thrust on, ignoring and by-passing thousands of towns which hadn't seen a soldier and will remain unimpressed by our might and our men. They are going to find the end and the loss of the war mysterious and inexplicable. The only thing they will understand of it: the casualty lists and the monumental destruction of their cities from the air.

My first few days in Cologne were full of disgusting and horrifying encounters. (Cologne edges up and sprawls across the Rhine. The Cathedral looks sourly on a dirty sea of ruin. The great bridge across the river has a broken back.) Reputedly, there were a hundred thousand people living in the vaulted basements of this shell of a city. Very few appeared; those who did were palely clean and well-nourished on the stolen and stored fats of Normandy and Belgium. They were repugnant in their servility, amiability, hypocrisy. I was constantly insulted by slimy German invitations to dine, in German underground houses, and amazed by the audacity of Germans who begged rides in military vehicles and tried to cadge cigarettes, chewing gum, soap. How dared they? Whom did they think we'd been braving flesh and eyesight against all these years? Who did they think were my friends and compatriots but the blitzed citizens

of London and the ill-treated French prisoners of war? Who did they think were my flesh and blood but the American pilots and infantrymen? What kind of idiocy and stupidity blinds them to my feelings? From what kind of escape zones in the unventilated alleys of their brains are they able to conjure up the idea that they are a liberated, not a conquered people?

I'm told that it's all our fault. We claimed to be waging war on the Nazis, only. Our patience with the Germans has been so exaggeratedly correct that they think they can get away with anything. Well, perhaps they can. In the towns we have occupied, the people grin from the windows in friendly fashion. They are astonished that we don't wave, or return their smiles. Even before the surrender, the G.I.'s passed cocky young men in the streets, dressed as civilians. They were the former soldiers. And there was nothing to do about it.

I don't know why the Cologne prison is more haunting than others I've seen and smelled. In France the execution chambers, one of which was a target range for would-be sportsmen in peace time, had heaps of shot-through, worn-out posts in the back alley. So many bullets had sped through so many Frenchmen that the posts had worn out. Another had ill-concealed mass graves for men who had been used as game targets, rather like a live pigeon shoot. One had heated walls and the bloody, clawed handmarks of the roasting victims were baked like the designs on pottery. There were scraped messages of courage, defiance, and advice to the newcomer on the cell walls, and the German prisoners of war who were detailed to dig up the mutilated bodies vomited so much that they were incapable of their task.

The impressive thing about the Cologne jail is that it was in the heart of Germany. These things had been done inside the Fatherland, not by people misbehaving like tourists; nor were they the exaggerations of the licentious energy of a select few who couldn't be traced. These were not the feared SS men or the godly Elite; they were rear echelon Nazi and public government officials, quite normal. This went on in a great German city where the inhabitants must have known and acquiesced or at least suspected and ignored the activities of their lovers and spouses and sons.

There need be no committee to investigate atrocities after this war...no one can be quite fatuous enough to start secret clubs to whitewash German guilt, as they did after the last war. There are millions of witnesses and no isolated freak cases. (Continued on page 192)



German children, well-fed, healthy...burned bones of starved prisoners

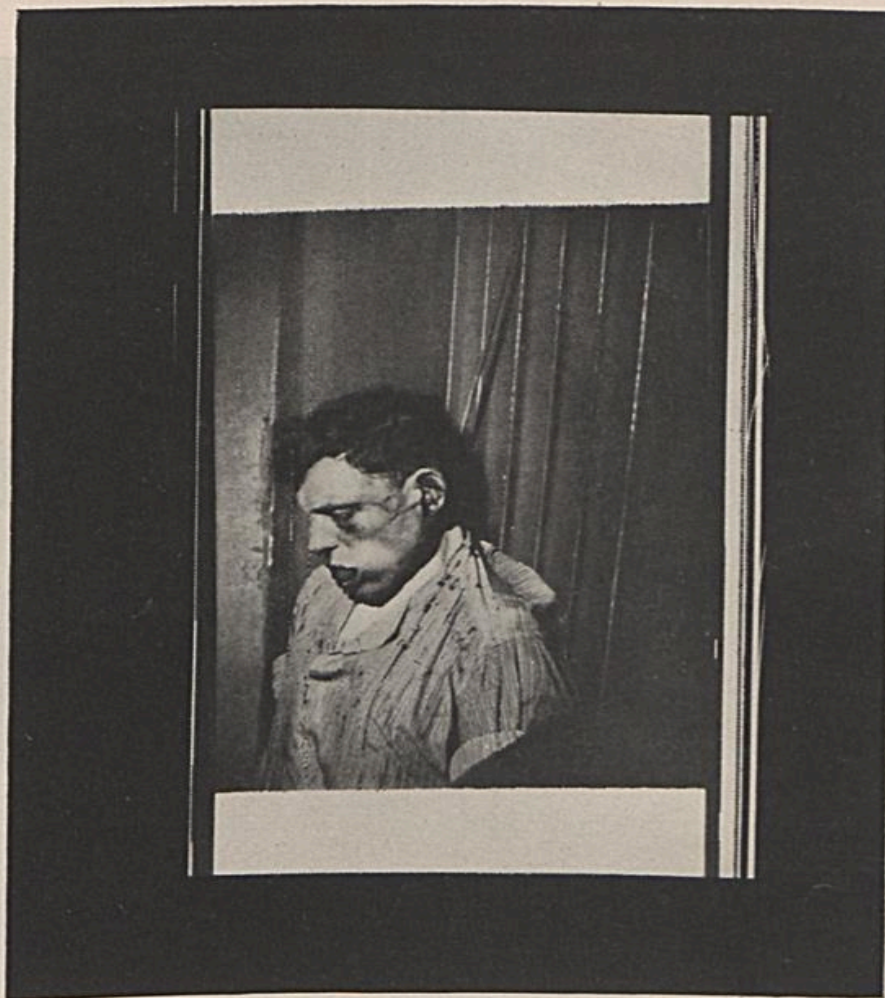


Orderly villages, patterned, quiet...orderly furnaces to burn bodies



"BELIEVE IT"

Lee Miller cables from Germany



LEE MILLER

"THIS is Buchenwald Concentration Camp at Weimar." The photograph on the left shows a pile of starved bodies, the one above, a prisoner hanged on an iron hook, his face clubbed.

Lee Miller has been with American Armies almost since D-Day last June: she has seen the freeing of France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and Alsace, crossed the Rhine into Cologne, Frankfurt to Munich. Saw the Dachau prison camp. She cabled: "No question that German civilians knew what went on. Railway siding into Dachau camp runs past villas, with trains of dead and semi-dead deportees. I usually don't take pictures of horrors. But don't think that every town and every area isn't rich with them. I hope Vogue will feel that it can publish these pictures...."

Here they are.



Justice amid the ruins

NAZI HARVEST



Homeless: Like the women of German-invaded countries, German women now cook in the ruins



Suicide: Leipzig Burgomaster's pretty daughter, a victim of Nazi philosophy, kills self



Punishment: S.S. Guards who tortured prisoners, beg mercy on their knees, are beaten by ex-prisoners



Humiliation: While Allied soldiers use bridge, German officers, boots pulled off, wade river



Retribution overtakes the Germans:
the people shamed, humiliated;
the country destroyed, and honour lost

LEE MILLER



Destruction: The Nazi shrine city,
Nuremberg, smashed, like Rotterdam



Shame (right): Pilloried
Nazi labelled as food-thief ➡



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