

Ferdinand Flach and Lee Huffman

34 year old Hermann Noack was born at Duisburg on 4 June, 1912 and was married with three children. He had been an athletic instructor before the War. By 1940 he was a first lieutenant in the paratroopers. During September 1944 he was operating a Hitler Youth Camp near Harbach in Rhineland-Palatine.

His co-defendant was Karl Georg Böss (given as Boess in the trial records), a 42 year old butcher and inn keeper at Grünberg, Oberhessen. Böss was a member of the Grünberg Fire Brigade. He thus wore a uniform and was permitted to carry a pistol. He too was married and had a daughter.

Liberator bomber B-24H № 41-28922 "Texas Rose" of 445 Bomber Group, 701 Bombardment Squadron, piloted by 2LT Palmer M. Bruland, was shot down on 27 September, 1944 near the village of Hattenrod in Germany. Among the crew were Staff Sergeants Ferdinand E. Flach (army serial no. 37540396) and Lee R. J. Huffman (army serial no. 34203002). Flach was the nose gunner and Huffman the right mid-ships gunner. Both men were able to parachute out and both were captured and taken to the Bürgermeister's office (mayor's office). Noack and Böss took each man in turn out to Noack's car and together with two other men with spades, drove off to a nearby shooting range where each man was shot and then ordered to be buried by the men with the spades. Noack is reported to have said "Revenge for the first sergeant." It is not clear what he might have meant by this remark.

The commanding officer of the Harbach Airfield had issued an order that all captured Allied airmen were to be shot on the spot.

Noack was arrested and released but then re-arrested and sent to an internment camp at Karlsruhe, where he remained until 18 July, 1946.

Noack and Böss were tried before a US Military Court at Dachau on 29-31 July and 2-5 August, 1946 in case no. 12-472. At the time of the trial, the victim's names were unknown. Both men were found guilty of their parts in the murders. Noack was condemned to death and Böss sentenced to eight years in prison.

At Landsberg, Noack fasted and lost sufficient weight to enable him to squeeze through the bars of his cell and escape in the nude. He was caught by Russian soldiers and shot in the leg. They returned him to Landsberg where he had the injured leg amputated. Noack was hanged at Landsberg on 21 March, 1947, probably the only one legged man to be executed here. A surviving photograph of the preparations for the execution indicates that he may have been strapped to a collapse board.

LT Joseph H. Williams who had been posted to Landsberg to improve security there, recorded in his book that Noack tried to stun himself prior to the execution and took ten minutes to die after the drop, death being confirmed at 9.36 a.m.

Ferdinand E. Flach is buried in the American Cemetery at Margraten in the Netherlands, Plot A Row 15 Grave 14, and Lee R. J. Huffman is buried in the same cemetery in Plot H Row 3 Grave 8.



Hermann Noack being carried to the gallows at Landsberg. The collapse board may be the light object visible behind Noack's right ear. Also his chest seems to be strapped to something with a leather strap.