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THAT WAS
DACHAU

1933-1945

Comité International de Dachau

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THAT WAS DACHAU

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At last, a complete, scholarly presentation of the history of the Dachau concentration camp, which opened on March 22, 1933, two months after Adolf Hitler took power. This instrument of terror became the model of the Nazi extermination regime. We follow the evolution of the camp during its three major periods: from 1933 to the start of the war with the consolidation of the Nazi regime and the internment of political opponents, then the increase in the number of prisoners from occupied territories and their internationalisation following Nazi Germany's military successes and, lastly, with the military watershed of the war in 1941/42, the systematic physical exploitation of the prisoners in the German war economy.

Through the author's restrained, precise style, combining personal memories and the researcher's scholarly detachment, the reader discovers the many facets of the camp: the hierarchical structure of the camp established and controlled by the SS, the categories of prisoners, their daily life, the arbitrary and escalating violence, the selections, the medical experiments and role of the SS physicians, the intentional and programmed extermination, the camp's evacuation, the typhus epidemic, and liberation.

Stanislav Zámečník compares and cross-references many sources and eyewitness accounts and refutes the legends, analyses the solidarity among the prisoners and the resistance in the camp, tackles the question of the Dachau gas chamber, and provides new data on the number of deaths. That was Dachau is a reference book in which the reader will discover, become familiar with, and understand the tragic odyssey of the prisoner through the world of the Nazi concentration camp.

Translated from the Czech
by Derek Paton with David Short and Robert Russell