



W. FRENTZ

Führerhauptquartier 'Wehrwolf', located just north of the town of Vinnitsa in the Ukraine, was the easternmost of all the Führer's headquarters. Built by the Organisation Todt from November 1941, primarily to give Hitler a command post closer to the Eastern Front, it was used by Hitler three times during the war. His first stay — from July 16 to November 1, 1942 — coincided with what would prove to be the decisive campaign of the war in the East: Heeresgruppe Süd's offensive towards

Stalingrad and the Caucasus oilfields in the summer and autumn of 1942. This picture was taken at 'Wehrwolf' on August 20, 1942: (L-R) Reichsleiter Martin Bormann, Nazi Party secretary (in the uniform of an SS-Obergruppenführer); Hitler; Gauleiter and Reichskommissar of the Ukraine Erich Koch (in whose fief 'Wehrwolf' lay), and SS-Gruppenführer Julius Schaub, Hitler's main personal adjutant. They are standing outside House No. 11 which was Hitler's private quarters.

FÜHRERHAUPTQUARTIER 'WEHRWOLF'

By Martin Bogaert and Andrew Shvachko

Of the 19 headquarters planned for Hitler all over Europe during the Second World War, FHQu 'Wehrwolf' (or 'Eichenhain') at Vinnitsa, 270 kilometres south-west of Kiev in the Ukraine is one of the lesser known. This is in spite of the fact that it is one of just seven of the field headquarters that was actually occupied and used by Hitler as an operational command post and that it is the one where, apart from the 'Wolfsschanze' at Rastenburg in Eastern Prussia where he stayed 845 days in total, he stayed the longest time: 123 days. He spent much shorter periods at the other five: 37 days at 'Adlerhorst' near Ziegenberg, just west of Bad Nauheim; 27 days at 'Felsenest' at Rodert, just east of Bad Münstereifel; 11 days at 'Tannenberg' at Kniebis in the Black Forest — all in Germany; 20 days at 'Wolfsschlucht' at Brülly-de-Pesche in Belgium, and

just one day at 'Wolfsschlucht 2' at Margival in northern France. Of the remaining 12 installations, nine were completed but never

used and three were still under construction by war's end (see *After the Battle* No. 19 and No. 149, pages 38-39).

Right: Our authors, Martin Bogaert from Belgium and Andrew Shvachko from Ukraine, are the first to have systematically surveyed the site of 'Wehrwolf', making accurate measurements of all surviving foundations and pinpointing constructions with the help of GPS. This, together with thorough archive research, has enabled them to demolish many of the myths surrounding 'Wehrwolf', which were especially prolific in the Ukraine, and to produce a first reliable guidebook to the site.



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FHQ 'Wehrwolf' was part of a much wider top-secret headquarters zone stretching over 100 kilometres from Vinnitsa to Shitomir, and known under the combined code-name of 'Eichenhain'. Within the 'Eichenhain' area were four headquarters installations: Anlage 'Wald' for the Führerhauptquartier proper in Strishavka (operational code-name 'Wehrwolf'); Anlage 'Winniza-Stadt' for the OKH in Vinnitsa town ('Winfried'); Anlage 'Steinbruch' for Göring and the Luftwaffe High Command near Kalinowka ('Robinson'), and Anlage 'Hegewald' for Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler; Reich Chancellery chief Dr Hans Lammers, and Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop.

SELECTION OF THE SITE

In November 1941, with the German invasion of the Soviet Union having bogged down due to the advent of mud and the onset of winter, the decision was taken to construct two new field headquarters for the Führer on the Eastern Front, to shorten the distance between the High Command and the army group headquarters then deployed against the Red Army.

Hitler had delegated responsibility for the construction and choice of location of his field headquarters to an informal committee consisting of his senior Wehrmacht adjutant, Generalmajor Rudolf Schmundt, his three military adjutants and Oberst Kurt Thomas, the Kommandant des Führerhauptquartiers (Commandant of the Führer Headquarters). Construction itself was entrusted to the Organisation Todt, the Nazi civil engineering

body, with architect Siegfried Schmelcher, the Chefbaumeister der Führerhauptquartier-Anlagen (Senior Construction Engineer of the Führerhauptquartier Projects), in charge of overall planning and building of all the new FHQs ordered by Hitler.

The command post of Heeresgruppe Süd was then located in the city of Poltava, in the Ukraine, and, after a reconnaissance trip by Oberst Thomas on November 9, the



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Above: After its capture by the Germans in July 1941, Vinnitsa — a town of 100,00 inhabitants on the Bug river — became part of the Reichskommissariat Ukraine, a territory governed by Gauleiter and Reichskommissar Erich Koch. Vinnitsa itself was administered by a Stadtkommissar, who installed himself in this grand building on the town's main street. Most of the German agencies, including the Sicherheitspolizei and Sicherheitsdienst, set up office here too. Below: The building still stands virtually unaltered on what is today the corner of Sobornaya and Teatralnaya Streets.

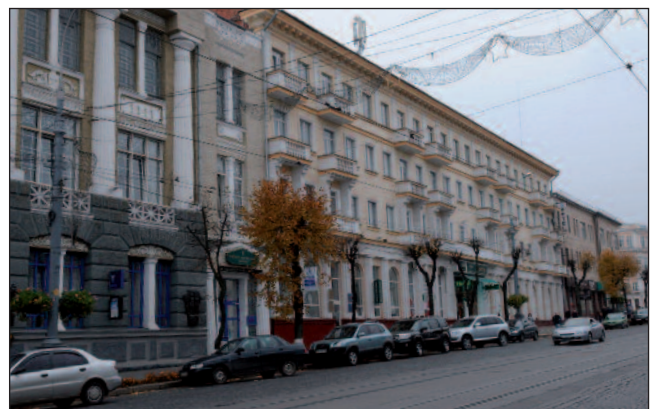


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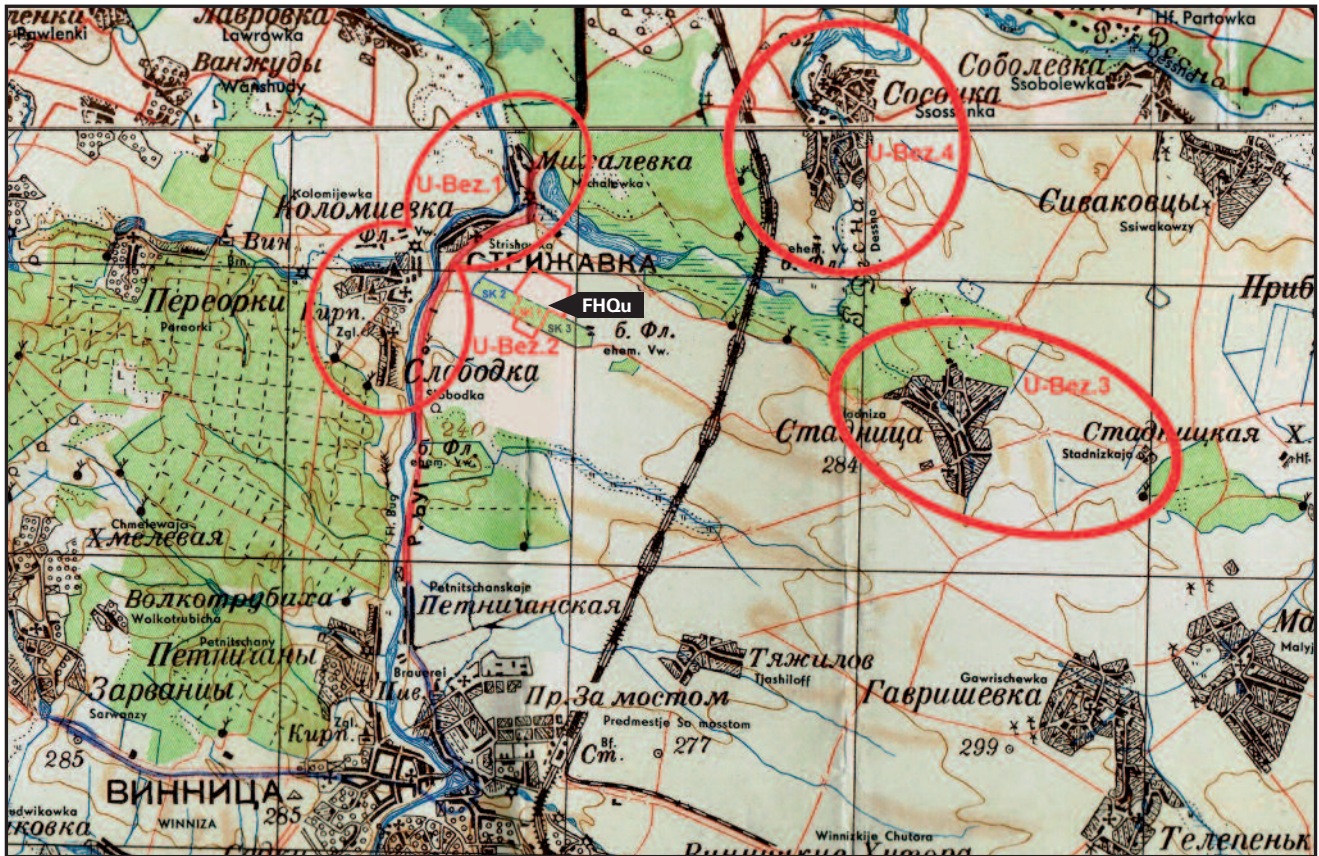
USNA

Left: Further down on the same street stood a hotel that was requisitioned by the Germans. Renamed the Gästeheim Jägerhöhe, it was used extensively by the OKH when they set up their headquarters in town in July 1942. One of those who stayed there was Generaloberst Heinz Guderian on February 19, 1943,



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when he was summoned to a meeting with Hitler at 'Wehrwolf' for his appointment to Inspector-General of Armoured Troops. This picture was taken on October 17, 1942. Right: Today, still a hotel located at No. 69 Sobornaya Street, it has changed its name to Hotel Savoy-Vinnitsa.



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Führerhauptquartier 'Wehrwolf' lay in a long rectangular 'man-made' forest just east of the Vinnitsa to Shitomir road near the village of Strishavka, eight kilometres north of Vinnitsa. Its GFP-RSD security detachment had drawn a wide Sicherungskreis (security perimeter) around the installation, sub-divided

into four Unterbezirke (sub-sectors) based on the villages of Kolomijevka-Michailovka, Strishavka-Slobodka, Stadnitsa and Sosenka. The headquarters itself was sub-divided in three Sperrkreise (internal security zones), marked SK-1, SK-2 and SK-3 on the map.

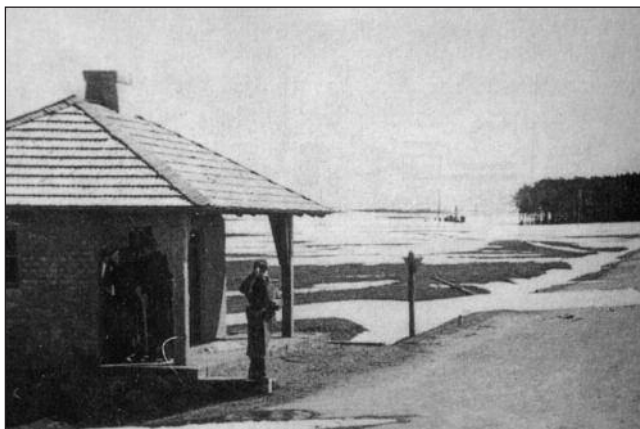
town of Lubny, 120 kilometres west of there, was chosen as site for one of the new FHQu. A construction detachment from the Organisation Todt, named OT-Einsatz Classen and led by Regierungs-Bau-Assessor architect Friedrich Classen, arrived at Lubny to start preparations on November 12. (The command post of Heeresgruppe Mitte was then at Gniezdovo (itself only a few kilometres from Katyn Forest — see *After the Battle* No. 92) near Smolensk in Russia, and a second OT construction group went to build a field headquarters just west of there. Code-named 'Bärenhöhle', it was finished in September 1942 but never actually used by Hitler.)

Classen had already been involved in the construction of earlier Führerhauptquartiere — notably 'Felsenest', 'Wolfsschlucht' and 'Wolfsschanze'. He designed the new headquarters on lines very similar to 'Wolfsschlucht' but on a larger scale.

However, within two days it was clear that Lubny would create logistic and rail transport problems, so on November 14 Schmundt decided to halt preparations there and look for an alternative location. After a look at the map, and a quick on-site reconnaissance carried out by Classen and Hauptmann Heinz-Joachim Schwerdt, Oberst Thomas's adjutant, Schmundt decided on the 17th to relocate the planned headquarters to

the village of Strishavka, eight kilometres north-east of the town of Vinnitsa, the chosen site lying just east of the Vinnitsa-Shitomir road. The selection was based on purely military considerations: the presence of good road and rail communications; a secluded forest location; and, above all, near a town with military barracks and buildings able to lodge all branches of the Oberkommando des Heeres (OKH). Oberst Thomas inspected and approved the site on December 8.

The OT construction detachment moved from Lubny to Strishavka on December 15. At the same time they changed their name: from now on the building project was called



NKVD

Left: The first checkpoint on the approach to the Führerhauptquartier was the Wache (guardhouse) at the turn-off on the main road, just south of Strishavka. The artificial forest hiding the headquarters can be seen in the background. This is one of the pictures taken by the NKVD intelligence team that came to



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investigate the installation after the Soviet capture of Vinnitsa in late March 1944. Right: The concrete foundations of the guardhouse have survived, as has an electrical junction box. The open field towards the wood is now filled with new houses.



On driving up from the guardhouse, one first entered Sperrkreis II, an inner perimeter housing a collection of wooden barrack huts and one concrete bomb shelter. The latter was a Regelbau 102, a standard design from the Westwall series of bunkers, with two entrances. This picture, although quite well known, is always captioned wrongly, being invariably labelled as showing the Type 102 bunker in Sperrkreis I whereas it is in fact the one in Sperrkreis II. Note the white concrete markers lining the Lagerstrasse, the headquarters' asphalt main road.

OT-Sondereinsatz Eichenhain (OT Special Project Eichenhain). Administratively, it fell under OT-Einsatz XII (also known as Abschnitts-Bauleitung Winniza), a main OT command centre, part of the Ober-Bauleitung Ukraine. The code-name 'Eichenhain' referred to an entire region between Shitomir and Vinnitsa, and comprised four installations:

Anlage 'Wald' (the Führerhauptquartier in Strishavka proper) for Hitler and the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht (OKW, Armed Forces High Command).

Anlage 'Winniza-Stadt' for the Oberkommando des Heeres (OKH, Army High Command).

Anlage 'Steinbruch' for the Oberkommando der Luftwaffe (OKL, Air Forces High Command).

Anlage 'Hegewald' for the SS, Reich Chancellery and Foreign Ministry.

ANLAGE 'WALD'

Construction of Anlage 'Wald' was carried out in two phases. The first and main phase lasted from December 1941 to July 1942, with a peak in building in April. During this period, a series of wooden houses and barrack huts were erected, three concrete air raid shelters were built and six kilometres of dust-free road and two kilometres of gravel walkway were laid down. The three air raid bunkers were each of a different design. They were relatively small, the combined floor space of all three together being just 81.5 square metres. However, the amount of concrete used for them — 9,900 cubic metres — was unusually large, the largest per square metre in any of the Führer's headquarters.

The site was originally divided into two Sperrkreise (security zones). Sperrkreis I, where Hitler, his adjutants and the OKW staff were lodged, comprised 19 wooden houses and two of the three air raid bunkers. One of the bunkers was built directly against Hitler's house (No. 11) with its entrance inside his office at the rear. In addition to the concrete air raid shelters there was a large dugout with an overhead cover of soil.

Right: Andrew Shvachko and Martin Bogaert standing in for Schmundt and Streve on the exact spot. The concrete block behind them is one of those from the demolished bunker in Sperrkreis II. Part of the roof, the blast of the explosion hurled it a distance of nearly 100 metres!



The bunker was blown up by the Germans when they evacuated the site in 1944, leaving only its foundation in place, with several huge blocks of concrete lying strewn about all around it. This is an exact comparison, Martin Bogaert standing where the staff car stood and the trace of the former camp road being recognisable in the trees on the right. The trenches seen around the bunker foundations were not German but dug by the NKVD explorers in 1944 in search of hidden entrances.



There exist very few pictures taken inside Sperrkreis II. Practically the only ones known are a series taken in early August 1942 during the installation ceremony of Oberstleutnant Gustav Streve as Kommandant Führerhauptquartier and commander of the Führer-Begleit-Bataillon, succeeding Oberst Kurt Thomas. Here Generalmajor Rudolf Schmundt, Hitler's chief Wehrmacht adjutant, congratulates Streve. Fourth from left is Major Nicolaus von Below, Hitler's Luftwaffe adjutant. The ceremony took place in front of one of the standard wooden barrack huts that formed the majority of the buildings in Sperrkreis II. The view is south, towards the open field that served as the headquarters' landing strip for light aircraft.



Most of the buildings erected in 'Wehrwolf', being standard wooden barrack huts, have left no traces whatsoever, having either been removed or burned down by the Germans in 1944. The only structures of which sizable remains are visible today are the bunkers and the log-houses, their foundations and other concrete parts having survived, and some of the infrastructure built for the headquarters facility (asphalt camp road, water reservoir, a few brick water shafts, etc). This table lists the main buildings of Sperrkreis I and II of 'Wehrwolf' and also the few surviving structures of Anlagen 'Steinbruch' and 'Hegewald'. Measurements are based on the surveys carried out by our authors in 2012. All log-houses in Sperrkreis I carried house numbers: when known these are given in square brackets behind the consecutive numbering.

The houses were of the simple log-cabin type, Hitler having specified that the logs should be kept raw and not be dyed — this being better for health reasons. Hitler detested luxury and, like at all his military headquarters, the log-houses were furnished in a very common and even Spartan way. All furniture was provided directly by the OT through the standard Wehrmacht supply channels. The houses had a total floor surface of 4,298 square metres, i.e. some 226 square metres per house. They were not very comfortable, the rooms being tight, damp and quite cold at night.

Sperrkreis II, larger but less-important, provided lodging for basic OKW personnel and other services. It comprised a series of wooden huts and one air raid bunker. The huts were of two standard types — either Luftwaffe or Reichsarbeitsdienst (Reich Labour Service) — and produced a total floor surface of 12,705 square metres. This zone also comprised the garages, food and equipment stocks and medical services. The air raid bunker was mostly used to keep meat, vegetables and beverages cool during the hot Ukrainian summer.

Building material such as stones, sand and gravel came from an open-cast quarry, located two kilometres from the building site, which was run by the OT. Explosives were used to break the rock. (Most of the quarry's produce went into the construction of Durchgangsstrasse IV, a main supply thoroughfare to the Eastern Front that passed south of Vinnitsa.)

FÜHRERHAUPTQUARTIER 'EICHENHAIN'

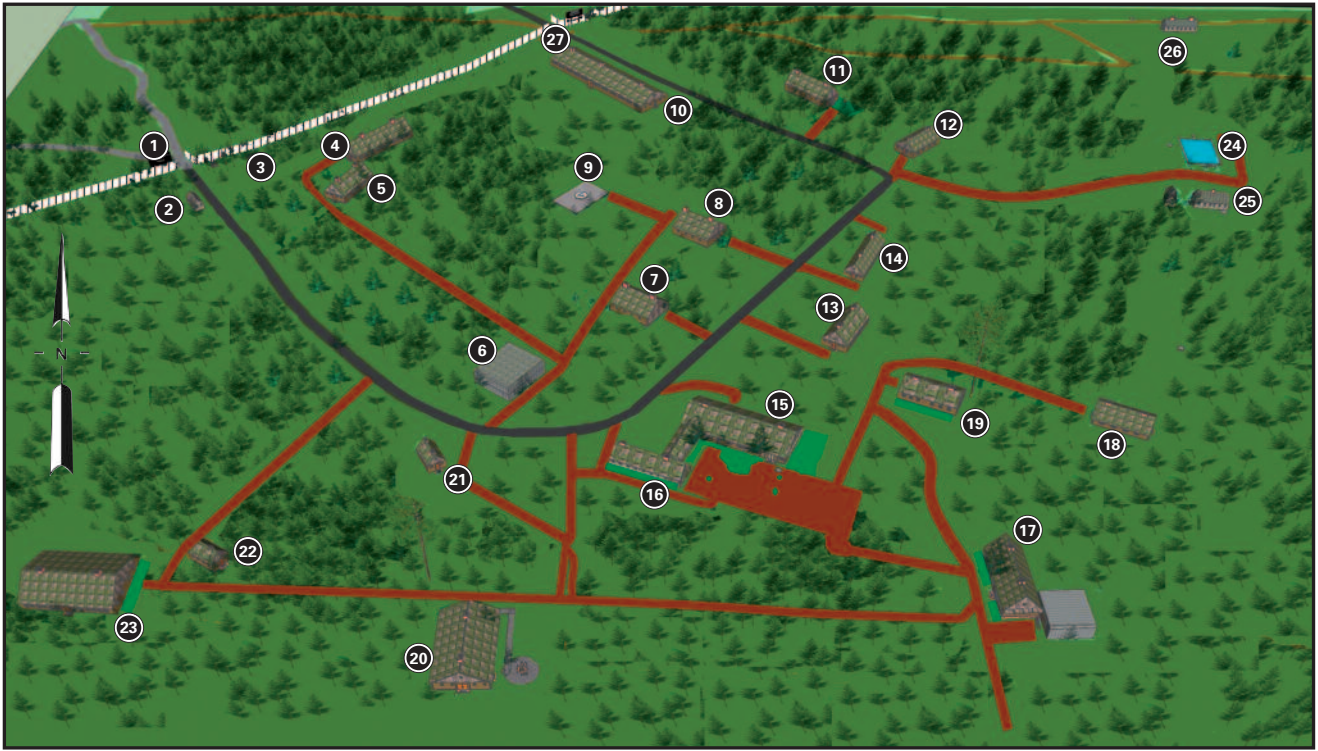
Indexing	Description	Measurements	Function (when known)
'Wehrwolf' Sperrkreis I			
1	sentry box	1,5 x 1,5	Gate sentry
2	log-house	2 x 6,5	Guardhouse
3	covered dugout	5 x 10,5	Luftschutzgraben (air raid shelter)
4	log-house	?	Secretaries and Kasino orderlies
5	log-house	?	SS-Begleit-Kommando
6	bomb shelter	12 x 14,5	Type 101 Gruppenunterstand
7	log-house	?	Sauna (bathhouse)
8	log-house	10 x 13	Nachrichten-Zentrale (comm. centre)
9	platform	12 x 17	antennae, generators (?)
10	log-house	12,5 x 47,5	Kommandantur, Postdienst, Hotel
11 [6]	log-house	7,5 x 17,5	Presse-Haus (Dietrich, Hoffmann)
12 [15]	log-house	7,5 x 13,75	Gästehaus (guesthouse), female secretaries
13 [8]	log-house	7,5 x 15	Personal adjutants (Schaub, Albert Bormann)
14 [9]	log-house	7,5 x 23,75	Gästehaus der Generalität (Generals quarters) (Warlimont, Buhle, Scherff)
15 [10]	log-house	12,5 x 28,75	Kasino (officer's mess)
16 [19]		7,5 x 16,25	Teehaus
17 [11]	log-house	8,5 x 19,5	Hitler's house
	bomb shelter	10 x 10,6	Hitler's private bunker
18	log-house	?	Stenographers
19 [12]	log-house	9,5 x 19,5	Bormann's house (Bormann, Heim)
20 [13]	log-house	15 x 20	OKW Wehrmachtsführungsstab
21	log-house	7,5 x 11,25	Wehrmacht-Adjutantur
22	log-house	10 x 20	GFP-RSD office
23	log-house	15 x 26,25	OKH-Arbeitsbaracke
24	water reservoir	10 x 15	Fire-fighting water
25	log-house	?	Fire-fighting equipment shed
26	log-house	5 x 12,5	Kino (cinema) (?)
27	sentry box	1,5 x 1,5	Gate sentry
'Wehrwolf' Sperrkreis II			
A	bomb shelter	11,5 x 14	Type 102 Doppelgruppenunterstand
B	log-house	6 x 8	Kommandant FHQu
C	log-house	5,5 x 6	?
'Steinbruch'			
1	bomb shelter	10,4 x 13,6	Type 102V Doppelgruppenunterstand
'Hegewald'			
1	bomb shelter	7,5 x 8,5	Type 101 Gruppenunterstand
2	bomb shelter	7,5 x 8,5	Type 101 Gruppenunterstand



From Sperrkreis II there were two gates giving access to Sperrkreis I, guarded by sentries from the Führer-Begleit-Bataillon. This is the southern one ([1] on the plan opposite).



Martin standing at the position of the gate and sentry box. The tiles that formed the box's foundation are still in place, albeit overgrown.



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A birds-eye view of Sperrkreis I, as seen from the south. The numbers also refer to those in the table on the facing page.



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Inside Sperrkreis I, immediately to the left of the gate, was an air raid dugout [3]. The two log-houses in the background are the one for the orderlies and secretaries, left [4], and the one for the SS-Begleit-Kommando, right [5].



H. P. FRENTZ

Johanna Wolf, one of Hitler's private secretaries, and SS-Obersturmbannführer Dr Karl Brandt, Reich Commissioner for Health and Sanitation and one of Hitler's personal physicians, at work outside the orderlies and secretaries house. Brandt's shirt-sleeves are indicative of the high temperature which was prevalent at 'Wehrwolf' in the summer of 1942. The white concrete markers lining the asphalt road can be seen in the distance at top right.

To ease the job of pouring the concrete, the OT installed a temporary narrow-gauge railway which transported the building materials and heavy equipment from the lorry park to the various building sites. On completion of the work, the tracks were removed.

The headquarters was erected on an open piece of land next to a forest. As building work proceeded, this woodland was completely cleared away, the timber being used to build the log-cabins. When, in the spring of 1942, all buildings, roads and paths were ready, a specialised horticultural company, Seidenspinner (which had also worked at

Right: The same spot today, with an information panel now standing beside the old camp road. There is no trace of the fire hydrant seen between the trees in the photo of the air raid dugout.



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Left: Generalfeldmarschall Georg von Kuehler, the commander of Heeresgruppe Nord, being greeted by Major Gerhard Engel, Hitler's Army adjutant, on his arrival at the Fuehrerhauptquartier during his visit on August 23, 1942. They are at the Adjutants House [21], which is just off the picture to the left.

the 'Wolfsschanze' in Rastenburg), was brought in from Germany to plant 800 fully-grown trees and several thousand shrubs. They also sowed 12,000 square metres of grass between the trees, thus creating a completely new 'forest' setting, long and rectangular in shape, to disguise and camouflage the whole site.

The headquarters was connected to the electric power station at Vinnitsa by means of overhead cabling. They ran to a transformer sub-station that linked in to a four-kilometre underground ring main that fed all individual buildings and installations. One building housed three diesel generators that were sufficient to provide electricity to keep lighting, vital electrical equipment and water pumps running in case of a complete power loss. The high-voltage supply continued from 'Wehrwolf' to the Luftwaffe airfield at Kalinovka, but where the cable crossed the Dessna river it sagged close to the ground which caused a fatality on June 27, 1943 when one of the villagers touched the line. In total the OT and contracted companies laid 2,580 metres of power cables on pylons and 1,330 metres underground.

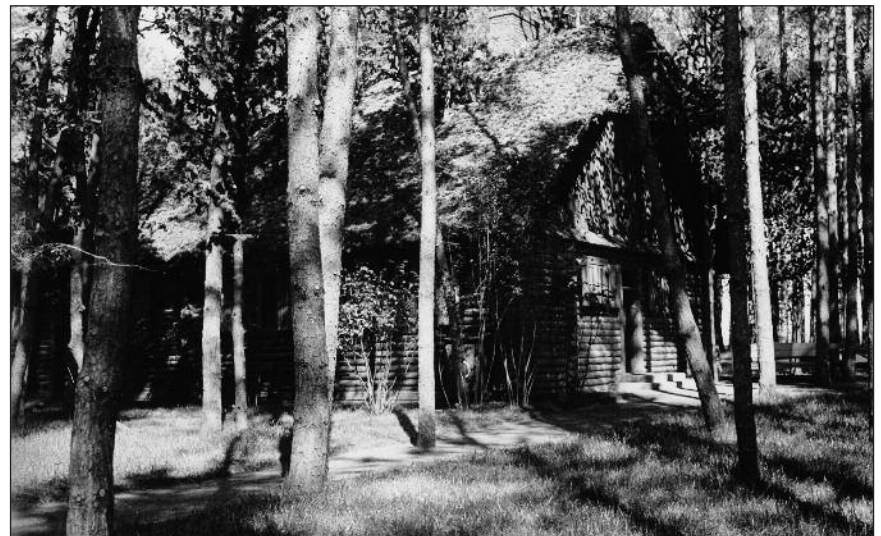
Water supply was organised in two systems, one to provide drinking and domestic water and one for fighting fires. For drinking water, two wells were sunk to a depth of 120 metres, but for fire-fighting water was pumped from the Bug river via pipework feeding the hydrants. A concrete water basin in Sperrkreis I was also part of this system. (These precautions were not superfluous. On three occasions during the war the special fire-fighting platoon, subordinated to the

Kommandant FHQu and billeted in Sperrkreis II, had to turn out.) To dispose of waste water, a sewer led to a sewage plant from where the effluent was pumped back into the Bug. For this the OT laid eight kilometres of sewers with inspection manholes.

Like all the Fuehrer headquarters, 'Wehrwolf' featured an inner and an outer perimeter. The outer fence, beyond the edge of the forest, comprised six kilometres of two-metre-high wire-netting and 12 kilometres of double-apron barbed wire.



On the right, completely hidden in the trees, stands the air raid bunker in Sperrkreis I, the so-called Allgemeine Bunker (common shelter), another Regelbau 102 [6]. Note the armed guard in the background. Right: Martin and Andrew standing on the same spot today. The bend in the road is still evident.



House No. 6 [11] was the Presse-Haus (Press House). This was the office and quarters of SS-Obergruppenfuhrer Otto Dietrich, the Press Chief of the NSDAP. Heinrich Hoffmann, Hitler's personal photographer, probably also used this building. Note the camouflage netting covering the roof. All buildings in 'Wehrwolf' had this, with more of it hung between the trees to cover open spots.



Three NCOs of the GFP-RSD, the headquarters' security detachment, posing in front of the Presse-Haus. The artificially implanted trees are quite evident, especially behind the men.



Most of the trees today are new but large parts of the house's foundations still remain, although mostly covered by autumn leaves in our comparison.



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Left: The Lagerstrasse in Sperrkreis I. Taken looking south from just in front of House No. 15, the Gästehaus [12], the building on the left is House No. 9, the Generals' Quarters [14]. The paths on the right, with the parked cars, lead to the headquarters' Nachrichten-Zentrale (communications centre) and the



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Sauna (bathhouse) respectively. Right: Whereas most of the original asphalt road survives elsewhere on the site, here at this point it has weathered away. This comparison was taken in 2011 but since then the open area on the left has changed its appearance radically — see below.

Several German and Polish building companies were contracted to carry out specialised jobs at the headquarters. Some of these firms had already worked on the 'Wolfsschanze' and were moved to the new site in Strishavka. OT-Sondereinsatz Eichen-hain made use of up to 10,000 German and foreign workers. These included around 900 Jewish slave labourers and up to 1,200 Soviet prisoners of war. The POWs were given basic jobs such as breaking rocks in the quarry and felling trees. The OT personnel, civil labourers and Jewish workers for Anlage 'Wald' were lodged mainly in nearby Strishavka. The POWs came from Stalag 329 in Vinnitsa and were shuttled daily between the camp and the building site. The OT also made use of local labour from the surrounding villages, both forced and voluntary. Most of these

Right: House No. 8 [13], which stood right next to No. 9, was the lodging for Hitler's personal adjutants, SS-Gruppenführer Julius Schaub and NSKK-Gruppenführer Albert Bormann (Martin Bormann's brother). The lamppost was of a design typical for 'Wehrwolf' (and therefore an easy means to differentiate pictures taken there from those made at other Führerhauptquartiere). The path in the foreground leads to the Nachrichten-Zentrale.



BOGAERT COLLECTION



BOGAERT/SHVACHKO

were women, and many of them worked for the Seidenspinner company, creating the man-made forest and carrying out camouflage jobs. In all, the combined workforce expended 179,500 working days on Phase 1.

Security at the building site was tight. Right from the start, the Reichssicherheitsdienst (Reich Security Service), headed by SS-Gruppenführer Johann Rattenhuber, based a security detachment in Vinnitsa. (It had already accompanied OT-Einsatz Classen to the initial site at Lubny and had transferred to Vinnitsa with them.) Combining personnel from the Geheime Feldpolizei and Reichssicherheitsdienst (hence its designation GFP-RSD), the detachment had both police and intelligence authority. Commanded by SS-Sturmbannführer and Kriminalrat Friedrich Schmidt, it consisted of 47 agents and four interpreters. They kept a tight control over the construction firms and their workforce. They set up a security perimeter with a five-kilometre radius around the building site and stationed sub-

Left: The area where House No. 8 stood, in the centre of Sperrkreis I, was covered over with asphalt in 2012, obliterating all traces of No. 8 and also part of No. 9, the Generals' Quarters. Here Martin stands on the spot of the former.



USNA

Standing in the centre of Sperrkreis I was House No. 10 — the Kasino (officer's mess). A large construction, it really consisted of two houses — one the long dining hall [15], the other a tea-house [16] — linked by a lateral connecting compartment. This is the entrance of the dining hall part.



USNA

The main dining room. Hitler had his meals here with the OKW generals and his adjutants . . . that is until September 7, 1942, when, after a row with General der Artillerie Alfred Jodl, the chief of the OKW Operational Staff, he refused to do so any longer and took to eating alone in his private quarters.



SHVACHKO

The interior of the tea house.

detachments in the four villages inside this area — Städtitsa, Michalevka, Strishavka and Slobodka. All local inhabitants, and their visitors, were kept under close scrutiny.

The large number of outside workers made it difficult to keep the locations secret. The GFP-RSD especially singled out the Jews as a security risk. The majority of the 20,000 Jews living in the Vinnitsa area had already been murdered by the henchmen of Einsatzgruppe C, the special SS mobile killing squads following in the wake of the front-line troops of Heeresgruppe Süd, in July-August 1941. However, numerous Jews were still living in the area, and on January 12, 1942, SS-Sturmbannführer Schmidt reported to Rattenhuber that, since they formed a danger to the Anlage 'Wald' building site, the Jews of Strishavka had been disposed of by Sonderkommando 4b, 227 being shot on the 10th, and another 12 on the 12th, making the site's wider security perimeter — as Schmidt put it — 'free of Jews'. Still, on the 14th, citing the presence of nearly 5,000 Jews in Vinnitsa and the 'risk of espionage and sabotage' that they posed to the FHQu building site and to the OKH in town, Schmitt wrote Rattenhuber requesting that the 700 Jewish specialist workers still employed on the other three 'Eichenhain' building sites be 'put down' as soon as they could be replaced by other workers. So when Fritz Todt, the Minister for Armaments and Ammunition and chief of the OT, announced on January 28 that he would assign several hundred Jews to 'Eichenhain', the RSD immediately voiced strong objection. It appears that the remaining Jewish workers were not shot but gradually assigned to other construction projects in Vinnitsa, notably the building of Durchgangsstrasse IV, which in effect meant condemnation to 'death by labour'. The Russian POWs, on completing their work on 'Eichenhain' in July, were also transferred to work on this road.



USNA

Hitler exiting the Teehaus (House No. 19) with Generalfeldmarschall Georg von Küchler, commander of Heeresgruppe Nord, during the latter's visit on August 23, 1942. Standing on the left, in the door, is Generaloberst Franz Halder and on the right, with his back to the camera, Generalmajor Schmudt. This end of the tea house had no windows and its walls were constructed with a different kind of timber.



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Nowadays the site of the Kasino and Teehaus is just a clearing in the wood. Only the foundations at the corners of the Kasino can be found under the shrubs, notably the reinforced brick bases of the kitchen at the western end.

The first construction phase ended in mid-July 1942, when Hitler arrived and the headquarters was in use for three and a half months. For the rest of the year, further building was kept to an absolute minimum and only allowed inside Sperrkreis II.

Building work was resumed in January 1943 and continued until July, again with a peak in April. Siegfried Classen had meanwhile been assigned to build FHQu 'Wolfschlucht 2' in France (see *After the Battle* No. 149) so the project was led and supervised by a new construction team, OT-Bauzug Höhne under the command of Bau-Oberinspektor Höhne, who again contracted several paramilitary and civil companies to do the actual work, up to 1,250 labourers being employed. Jews and Russian POWs were no longer used. This second building phase partly coincided with Hitler's second stay at 'Wehrwolf' — from February 19 to March 13 — so the OT engineers had to carefully plan their work so as not to interfere with the headquarters' daily business.

The main work carried out during this phase was the construction of additional accommodation to the east of Sperrkreis I, mainly to house the SS-Begleitkommando and their vehicles. In all, eight new wooden houses totalling 2,452 square metres of floor space, seven more wooden barracks comprising 1,565 square metres, and a brick garage for the Mercedes vehicles were constructed. The expansion formed a new inner security zone which became designated as Sperrkreis III. It necessitated an additional 2,400 metres of roadways and 1,670 metres of paths and the erection of 1,580 metres of wire fence. However, as it was not completed until August 16, 1943, Sperrkreis III was never actually used. In addition to all this work, the existing log-houses in the other two Sperrkreise were upgraded and better prepared for winter conditions.



USNA

The teahouse had an open veranda at its eastern end, a favourite spot for social gatherings at the headquarters. This is the view from it towards the entrance of the Kasino, with Martin Bormann's house just visible beyond. This open space formed the central meeting square of Sperrkreis I. Note the camouflage netting attached to roofs and trees. This picture also well illustrates the non-natural pattern of the trees planted to hide the headquarters.

In July, near the end of the second phase, the Seidenspinner company excavated a series of machine-gun positions on the outer perimeter of Sperrkreis I to the north and south of the forest to protect the installation against partisan attacks. Most of these were located around Hitler's private House No. 11.

Phase 2 was officially concluded with an inspection visit by Oberstleutnant Gustav Streve, the then Kommandant of the Führerhauptquartier, and a small staff on July 17-19, 1943. After signing off the necessary paperwork, the OT building party moved back to the 'Wolfschanze'.



USNA

Left: Heinrich Hoffmann and Jodl taking a break on the teahouse veranda on August 24, 1942. Listening in is Dr Theo



BOGAERT/SHVACHKO

Morell, Hitler's private doctor. Right: Amazingly, the veranda's floor tiles are still in place.



Diagonally across the meeting square from the Kasino/Teehaus, close by the southern edge of Sperrkreis I, stood House No. 11, Hitler's private lodge [17]. Measuring 19,5 by 8,5 metres, it had only one entrance and comprised eight rooms. Hitler lived here accompanied by his personal valet SS-Obersturmführer Heinz Linge. Hitler's office was at the far end. Note the camouflage netting on the roof and the seating area to the left of the house.

SECURITY AND DEFENCE

Security and defence of 'Wehrwolf' was the responsibility of several different units. As with all the Führer headquarters, it operated on two security levels depending on whether it was being used or not. When operational, it was guarded and defended by the same three units that protected the other headquarters: a GFP-RSD security detachment, the SS-Begleitkommando, and the Führer-Begleit-Bataillon.

The 50-man GFP-RSD detachment under SS-Sturmbannführer Schmidt had already been on the site since November 1941. With the HQ becoming operational, its alert status was increased and its watch on the local villagers tightened. The four villages inside the wider security zone were placed under curfew: 9 p.m. to 4 a.m. for Ukrainians, and 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. for OT and Wehrmacht personnel. In addition, GFP-RSD opened a duty office at the entrance of Sperrkreis I, which checked and registered all visitors, and began patrolling its internal perimeter.

The SS-Begleitkommando des Führers was Hitler's personal escort and bodyguard detachment. Commanded by SS-Sturmbannführer Bruno Gesche, it originally consisted of eight men, increased to 53 by 1941, including Hitler's driver, SS-Sturmbannführer Erich Kempka, and his valet, SS-Obersturmführer Heinz Linge. The members wore the uniform and insignia of the SS-Leibstandarte 'Adolf Hitler' and were known as the 'Graue Kolonne' (grey column). Their triple-axle Mercedes G4s were parked inside the headquarters. As their main mission was guarding the Führer during his travels and public appearances, they had little to do during his time spent within the Führerhauptquartiere, and this was also the case at 'Wehrwolf'. The unit's commander, Gesche, developed a drink problem which led to him having to be temporarily replaced by SS-Hauptsturmführer Franz Schädle from April 13 to December 28, 1942. In 1943, Reichsleiter Martin Bormann, the Nazi Party secretary, filed several complaints about their behaviour.

The Führer-Begleit-Bataillon (FBB) was Hitler's personal military escort and protection unit. The battalion commander was at the same time Kommandant of the Führerhauptquartier. Commanded by Oberst Kurt Thomas (succeeded in August 1942 by Oberst-

leutnant Gustav Streve), it comprised a signal platoon, five companies and a Flak battery. The 5. Panzer-Kompanie fielded a platoon equipped with captured Czech Skoda 38t tanks. Although not operationally subordinated to it, the members of the battalion wore the uniform and insignia of the elite 'Grossdeutschland' division.

The battalion's duties at 'Wehrwolf' were to guard the entrance at the junction with the main road; to guard all approach roads to the forest where the headquarters was located, and to patrol its outside perimeter.

Air defence was provided by the I. Abteilung of Flak-Regiment 604, which had four batteries of 2cm and 8.8cm guns inside the wider security perimeter. In December 1942, the unit was increased to eight batteries and renamed the Führer-Flak-Abteilung.

When 'Wehrwolf' was not in use, the site was guarded by Landeschützen-Bataillon 318, a second-line unit subordinated to the Kommandant OKH-Hauptquartier.



Built against the rear of the house was Hitler's personal air raid shelter, seen here on the left. Accessed through a door direct from his office, it had roof and walls two metres thick and an internal space of six by six metres.

TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

In order to move the staff and personnel from 'Wolfsschanze' to 'Wehrwolf', a complete transportation plan was organised as about 15,000 people had to be moved over a distance of 800 kilometres. The various headquarters and their subordinate units travelled by aircraft, trains or by road. The journey by aircraft took three hours, by train some 20 hours, by road five days.

Once the Führer Headquarters was installed at Vinnitsa, a daily transport schedule became operational. A special train shuttled between Vinnitsa and Berlin, the one-way, 1,000-kilometre journey taking 35 hours. One train would leave Berlin-Charlottenburg at 7.15 p.m. and arrive in Vinnitsa at 6.45 a.m. two days later. Another train would depart from Vinnitsa at 10.38 p.m. and arrive at Berlin's Schlesische Bahnhof at 9.57 two days hence.

Air transport was provided by the Fliegerstaffel des Führers (FdF), a special squadron administered by the Reichssicherheitsdienst and headed by Hitler's private pilot, SS-Obergruppenführer Hans Baur. Based at the old airfield of Vinnitsa, and also making use of the Luftwaffe airfield in Kalinovka, its 16 aircraft maintained daily shuttle flights to the Eastern Front, flying in generals and commanders for briefings and reports. (Baur received permission from Hitler to bring wounded Wehrmacht troops to Vinnitsa on his return flights, even when using the huge Focke-Wulf FW 200 Kondor.) It also ran a daily shuttle flight to Berlin, a Heinkel He 111 taking off at 2 p.m. for the four-hour flight to Berlin-Staaken. The squadron's pilots and technicians were quartered in private houses near the Vinnitsa airfield.

Other air transport was provided by the Kurier-Staffel, a flying courier detachment that was part of the Führer-Begleit-Bataillon. Headed by Hauptmann Rudolf Bretschneider and based at Kalinovka airfield, it operated Fi-156 Fieseler Storch light aircraft to carry visitors and documents from a makeshift airstrip south of the headquarters to the Vinnitsa airfield. It also ran a daily courier service between Vinnitsa and Berlin and a daily mail delivery to 'Hegewald', the headquarters of the SS, Reich Chancellery and Foreign Office at Shtomir.

There was also a daily motor transport service between 'Wehrwolf' and the OKH headquarters in Vinnitsa town, and between 'Wehrwolf' and the airfields at Vinnitsa and Kalinovka.

Right: A three-dimensional reconstruction of Hitler's house, made by Martin Bogaert on the basis of all the available photography.

**HITLER'S FIRST STAY
(July 16 to November 1, 1942)**

Hitler's first stay at 'Wehrwolf' was preceded by the transfer of the security units from the 'Wolfsschanze'. On June 20, the 1. Kompanie of the Führer-Begleit-Bataillon arrived, followed by the 4. (schwere) Kompanie on the 25th and the 5. Panzer-Kompanie on July 11. The batteries of Flak-Regiment 604 reported ready on June 23.

Early on July 16, Hitler, his adjutants and the OKW operational staff departed from Wilhelmshof airfield near Rastenburg in 16 aircraft for the airfield at Vinnitsa from where an FBB convoy brought them to the new headquarters. It was on his arrival that Hitler personally named the new HQ 'Wehrwolf'.

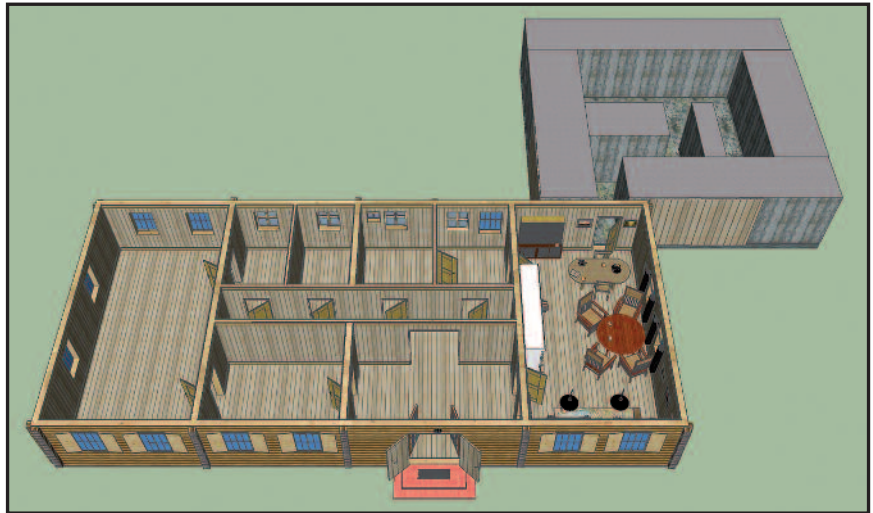
Shortly after the party's arrival, there was a scare when a loud explosion was heard in the vicinity, but investigation by the GFP-RSD detachment soon discovered that it had come from the nearby quarry, the OT having failed to inform the headquarters of its twice-daily blasts! Although a false alarm, Rattenhuber, the Sicherheitsdienst chief, felt obliged to send Hitler a letter of apology via Martin Bormann.

This, the first of Hitler's three stays at 'Wehrwolf', was by far the most important and the only period during which the site fully functioned as Führerhauptquartier. All four of the main headquarters were operational and at full strength: 'Wehrwolf' (FHQu) was occupied by 3,642 persons; 'Winniza-Stadt' (OKH) by 9,211; 'Steinbruch' (OKL) by 397 and 'Hegewald' (SS, Reich Chancellery and Foreign Ministry) by 600. Throughout this period, there was a constant coming and going of visitors, both military and civil, arriving to confer with or report to Hitler, an endless procession of generals, political leaders, ministers, diplomats, ambassadors, captains of industry and other VIPs.

In general, 'Wehrwolf' looked quite attractive and pleasant, certainly much friendlier than 'Wolfsschanze'. Its outer appearance was more that of a summer camp than a military command centre. Hitler never left his HQ, secluding himself in Sperrkreis I, but many of the FHQu staff and personnel went out for shopping in the nearby villages, for excursions in the area, or to visit the cinema or theatre in Vinnitsa. Swimming and fishing in the Bug were also very popular.

However, living and working in the new location was not without its problems. The austere living conditions in the damp log-cabins were not made any easier by the local climate. The summer of 1942 was stiflingly hot in the Ukraine, with temperatures rising to 40 degrees Centigrade (104°F) during the day. Also the forest was infested with flies and mosquitoes. Sticky fly-paper was hung in every room and, to combat the risk of malaria, everyone had to take a bitter-tasting medicine called Atibrin. Dr Theo Morell, Hitler's personal physician, strongly advocated taking this drug daily to guard against the malaria spread by the Anopheles family of mosquitoes. The insect plague even led to an incident when a local farmer reported the death of some of his cows by arsenic intoxication. The GFP-RSD investigated the matter and it turned out that one of the HQ's doctors had ordered to spread arsenic powder around the outer perimeter to fight the insects!

One of those who coped badly with the sweltering climate was Hitler. On July 22, six days after his arrival, he fell ill. Dr Morell was urgently summoned and he diagnosed that he had 'brain fever', a flu-type affliction not unlike meningitis but less dangerous. A lot of cases occurred at the headquarters, where it became known as 'Russian headache', but



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H. P. FRENITZ

Hitler's office was fitted with a large fireplace that featured a peculiar checkerboard-shaped ventilation panel above it. This appears readily recognisable in numerous pictures of Hitler receiving his guests or handing out awards to decorated soldiers, and forms an easy way to distinguish pictures taken at 'Wehrwolf' from similar-looking photos taken in the 'Wolfsschanze'. Here he awards SS-Obersturmbannführer Kurt Meyer, the commander of SS-Aufklärungs-Abteilung 1 of the SS-Division 'Leibstandarte-SS Adolf Hitler', with the Oak Leaves to the Knight's Cross on February 23, 1943. Meyer won the decoration for his role in the recent second battle of Charkov.

with most sufferers it was over within a week. Hitler was ill for eight days. However, the stifling climate continued to markedly affect his temperament and mood, contributing to the

many arguments and outbursts of rage that would reach unprecedented heights in the weeks to come.

Hitler had come to Vinnitsa principally to lead and oversee what he considered the decisive campaign on the Eastern Front. This was the summer offensive by Heeresgruppe Süd towards Stalingrad and the Caucasus oilfields, which had begun on June 28 (see *After the Battle* No. 166). For most of his stay he was immersed in the daily conferences and decisions concerning this campaign. Every day the OKH Chief-of-Staff, Generaloberst Franz Halder, and several members of his staff drove to 'Wehrwolf' by car for the daily conference with Hitler and the OKW.



Left: Hitler talking with Konstantin Hierl, the leader of the Reichsarbeitsdienst (Reich Labour Service), outside his house during the latter's visit to 'Wehrwolf' on July 24, 1942. Note the thermometer fixed to the camouflaged tree to the left of the door — an important instrument for Hitler who suffered badly under the high temperatures of the hot Ukrainian summer. It appears in numerous pictures and thus helps to identify Hitler's house and differentiate it from the other log-cabins in 'Wehrwolf' and also from pictures taken in other Führerhauptquartiere.



Left: A long straight pathway connected Hitler's house with the OKW-Baracke (House No. 13), where the daily conferences were held. The path ran parallel with the forest's southern boundary, a few dozen metres inside the trees. Here Hitler walks down it

On July 18, Hitler received Generalfeldmarschall Albert Kesselring, the Oberbefehlshaber Süd, to award him the Swords to the Oak Leaves of the Knight's Cross for his leadership in the war in the Mediterranean. On the 23rd — although still ill — he met with Obergruppenführer Viktor Lutze, the SA Chief-of-Staff, and his deputy, SA-Obergruppenführer Max Jüttner, to receive their report on that organisation, followed the next day by Reichsarbeitsführer Konstantin Hierl, the leader of the Reichsarbeitsdienst. Lutze returned on August 2 for another meeting, followed on the 4th by the Italian Ambassador Dino Alfieri.

On the 7th, Hitler received Generalfeldmarschall Günther von Kluge, the commander of Heeresgruppe Mitte, who had come to request release of the 9. and 11. Panzer-Divisions to clear up a Soviet penetration at Rshév. To this, Hitler refused.

Military conferences were interspersed with political and diplomatic meetings. On August 11, Albert Speer, the Minister of Armaments and War Production, arrived together with Hermann Röchling, steel magnate and leader of the Reichsvereinigung Eisen (Reich Association for Steel Industry), to report on the war economy. On the 15th, Hitler received first the Turkish Ambassador, Saffet Arikan, and then the Bulgarian one, Parvan Draganoff, both for short audiences. On the 19th, Joseph Goebbels, the Propaganda Minister, came to confer. It was also on that day that Hitler received the news of the failed Allied raid on Dieppe (see *After the Battle* No. 5). On the 20th, he met with Minister of Justice Franz Schlegelberger and Otto Thierack, the President of the People's Court, to officially appoint the latter as successor of Schlegelberger, who was retiring.

On the 22nd, von Kluge arrived for a second visit, this time to request permission to shorten the lines of the 9. Armee at Rshév, but again Hitler refused. The following day, August 23, Generalfeldmarschall Georg von Küchler, arrived to discuss Heeresgruppe Nord's operations to capture Leningrad and — with Finnish assistance — cut the Soviet railway line to the supply port of Murmansk.

On the 24th, Hitler received Generalfeldmarschall Erich von Manstein, whose 11. Armee was being transferred from the Crimea to the Leningrad front, to instruct him on his new mission. It was during this conference that Hitler had one of his angry fall-outs with Generaloberst Halder, the

OKH Chief-of-Staff, that ultimately was to lead to the General's relief a month later. When Halder requested that a unit be permitted to withdraw to a shorter line, Hitler shouted at him that he always came with the same proposal — withdrawal. Halder, usually able to restrain himself, retorted that thousands of brave Germans were falling simply because their commanders were not allowed to make reasonable decisions. Hitler stared fixedly, then said: 'Generaloberst Halder, how dare you use language like that in front of me. Do you think you can teach me what the man at the front is thinking? What do you know about what goes on at the front? Where were you in the First World War? And you try to pretend to me that I don't understand what it's like at the front. I won't stand that! It's outrageous!'

On August 26, Grossadmiral Erich Raeder, the C-in-C of the Kriegsmarine, flew



with Göring on August 20, 1942, pictured by Walter Frentz, the Propaganda-Kompanie photographer officially attached to the Führerhauptquartier. Right: The path is now overgrown but its trace is still clearly discernable by the alignment of the trees.

in to brief Hitler on the war in the Atlantic. On the 31st, Generalfeldmarschall Wilhelm List, the commander of Heeresgruppe A, arrived to give a situation report on the Caucasus front. He returned to his HQ at Stalino with a plethora of new orders but without having secured any additional troops to carry them out.

On September 7, there was the ultimate crisis, this time involving General der Artillerie Alfred Jodl, the OKH's Operations Chief. Hitler had ordered Jodl to visit the headquarters of Heeresgruppe A to urge List to accelerate his advance to the Caucasus but, on his return, Jodl reported many difficulties, whereupon Hitler accused him of siding with List. The discussion deteriorated into a forceful exchange of words, with Hitler exploding and Jodl uncharacteristically losing his temper too. Hitler stalked out of the room, casting angry glares at everyone.



The OKW-Baracke [20] is recognisable by the small round clearing beside it, with a wooden table and chairs. Here Generalfeldmarschall Wilhelm Keitel, chief of the OKW (left), and General der Artillerie Alfred Jodl, chief of its Operational Staff (right), confer with General Axel Erik Heinrichs, Chief-of-Staff of the Finnish Army, and Lieutenant-General Paavo Juho Talvela, the Finnish representative at the OKW, during Heinrichs's visit to the FHQu on August 25, 1942. Note the wooden telephone box on the left. In the background, a staff car can be seen parked on the camp road.



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Left: Another view of the circular working area outside the OKW building, this time looking south-west towards the open



BOGAERT/SHVACHKO

field that served as the headquarters' landing strip. Right: The foundations of the OKW house are today fully overgrown.

The incident led to a permanent change of atmosphere at the headquarters. From now on Hitler avoided formal meetings. He withdrew to his private accommodation, staying indoors throughout the day and only coming out after dark and then only to walk outlying pathways. Daily conferences were no longer held in the conference room but in the large study of his private blockhouse. He pointedly refused to shake hands with any staff officers. No longer trusting his generals, he now ordered the presence of a pair of shorthand writers at each meeting to record verbatim all his conferences and oral commands. (The stenographers, rushed in from Berlin, were housed in a special hut, hastily built near Hitler's quarters by a force of 67 OT workers from September 10.) He also refused to take his meals with his generals and adjutants any longer, his place at the communal table in the Kasino (officer's mess) being taken over by Bormann. From now on he ate alone, attended only by Blondi, the German Shepherd that Bormann had recently given him. The atmosphere at the headquarters had definitely turned glacial.

On September 9 Hitler summarily removed List and took personal command of Heeresgruppe A. Two days later, he received Generaloberst Maximilian von Weichs, the commander of Heeresgruppe B, who told him he was confident that the capture of Stalingrad could be completed within ten days. Generaloberst Friedrich Paulus, the commander of the 6. Armee fighting in Stalingrad, who flew in to report to Hitler on the 12th, gave him the same estimate.

Hitler's long frustration with Halder ended on September 24, when he finally relieved the Army Chief-of-Staff. 'You and I have been suffering of nerves', he said. 'Half of my exhaustion is due to you. It is not worthwhile going on. We need National Socialist ardour now, not professional ability. I cannot expect this of an officer of the old school such as you.' Halder, tears in his eyes, said nothing to defend himself. After Hitler's tirade was finished, he rose, simply said 'I am leaving' and walked out of the room with dignity. As his successor Hitler appointed Generalmajor Kurt Zeitzler, until then Chief-of-Staff at OB West. He had to be quickly flown in from Paris, with Hitler promoting him two ranks to General der Infanterie on arrival. Hitler had chosen Zeitzler at the strong advice of Schmudt, his chief Wehrmacht adjutant, who was a close friend of Zeitzler.

There were again important foreign visitors in September, two leaders of Germany's allies coming to confer with Hitler, the Rumanian dictator Ion Antonescu on the 23rd and the Croatian leader Ante Pavelic on the 24th.

On September 27, Hitler left 'Wehrwolf' for a week's visit to Berlin. On the 28th, he addressed a gathering of 12,000 officer cadets at the Sportpalast; on the 29th he had a long talk with Generalfeldmarschall Gerd von Rundstedt, recently appointed C-in-C West, and spoke to a small group of generals, along with Göring and Speer, about the dangers of an invasion in the West. The following day, August 30, he received General Erwin Rommel at the Reich Chancellery to formally award him his field-marshal's baton, and he had a long discussion about the situation in North Africa. That same evening he spoke at the opening of the Winterhilfe (Winter Relief Work), again at the Sportpalast. On October 1 he addressed the Gauleiters. Over the next few days he had various talks about armaments before flying back to Vinnitsa on the 4th.

For next four weeks news from the front was good, the German offensive towards the Caucasus and Stalingrad making good progress. In the middle of it, on October 18, Hitler issued the notorious Kommando-Befehl, his instruction to summarily execute or hand over to the Gestapo all captured members of enemy special forces.

Evidence that 'Wehrwolf' lay in an area increasingly penetrated by Soviet partisans came on October 26 when SS-Obersturmbannführer Carl Schnäbele, Himmler's personal pilot, was found ambushed and fatally wounded in his car, together with another officer, SS-Untersturmführer Johann Maurus and two ethnic-German women, near Shitomir. Himmler ordered the whole area to be searched but the partisans were never found.

By late October, with the 6. Armee tied in bitter battle for possession of Stalingrad, and the British offensive at El Alamein bringing the war in North Africa to a decisive stage, Hitler decided to return to the 'Wolfschanze'. Packing up and moving the headquarters took two days, October 31 and November 1, the transfer taking place by aircraft. After a journey of 20 hours, Hitler arrived back in Rastenburg on November 2. He had stayed a total of 103 days at Vinnitsa. With the Führer absent, 'Wehrwolf' reverted to 'Eichenhain' and security was wound down. The SS-Begleitkommando and Führer-Begleit-Bataillon departed, the GFP-RSD detachment stayed, and Landeschützen-Bataillon 318 took over guarding the site.



W. FRENTZ

Arriving at the OKW headquarters for the afternoon conference on August 27, 1942: (L-R) Generaloberst Hermann Hoth, commander of the 4. Panzer-Armee; Generaloberst Franz Halder, Chief-of-Staff of the OKH; Generalfeldmarschall Georg von Küchler, commander of Heeresgruppe Nord; Generalmajor Adolf Heusinger, chief of the Operational Staff of the OKH; General der Nachrichtentruppen Fritz Erich Fellgiebel, Chief of OKW Signals Communications; and Major Gerhard Engel, Hitler's Army adjutant.

**HITLER'S SECOND STAY
(February 19 to March 13, 1943)**

On February 19, 1943, Hitler arrived back at the 'Wehrwolf'. He flew in from Zaporozhye, where he had spent two days visiting the headquarters of Generalfeldmarschall von Manstein, the commander of Heeresgruppe Süd, who was just embarking on his offensive towards the Donets and Kharkov. This second stay was really little more than a temporary excursion from the 'Wolfsschanze'. Hitler arrived accompanied only by Jodl and Zeitzler, his adjutants and a small retinue consisting of Dr Morell, valet Linge, secretary Christa Schroeder and two stenographers. The bulk of the OKW staff did not travel with him and the satellite headquarters — OKH, OKL, SS and Foreign Office — were not manned. Security during Hitler's second stay was also reduced. Only SS-Untersturmführer Karl Danner and some GFP agents guarded the outposts around the 'Wehrwolf'. Danner complained about the lack of GFP-RSD personnel and was only able to man three of the four village outposts. Hitler's arrival and stay were kept secret. He was covertly brought in and by order of the GFP-RSD the local population was not informed about his presence.

On his second day at 'Wehrwolf', February 20, Hitler met with Generaloberst Heinz Guderian to ask him to return from retirement and accept the post of Inspekteur der Panzertruppen (Inspector-General of Armoured Troops). Guderian stayed at 'Wehrwolf' another day to discuss his new assignment with Jodl, Zeitzler, Schmudt and Oberstleutnant Gerhard Engel, Hitler's Army adjutant.

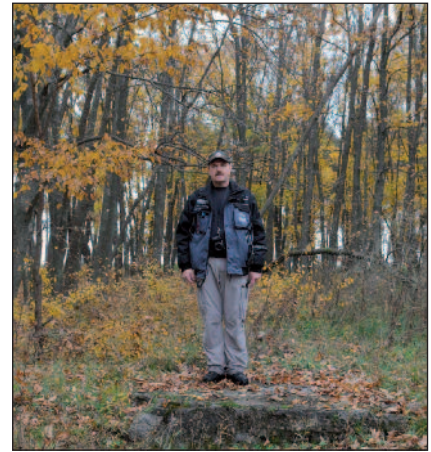
Next day, February 22, Hitler left 'Wehrwolf' for a short three-day visit to the 'Wolfsschanze', returning to Vinnitsa on the 25th.

On March 5, Speer flew in from Berlin, followed by Goebbels on the 9th. Both stayed until the 10th. With Speer Hitler discussed the plan to release 800,000 workers to the armed forces; with Goebbels he had long discussions about the escalation in British air raids on Germany. On the 9th, Guderian returned for his first conference with Hitler and the OKW in his new position as Inspekteur der Panzertruppen.

On March 10, Hitler left 'Wehrwolf' to again visit Manstein at his command post at Zaporozhye, this time to award him the Oak Leaves to the Knight's Cross. On his return, he found Rommel at 'Wehrwolf' who had come to report on the worsening situation in Tunisia. The next day, March 11, he pre-



Left: House No. 15, located on the northern edge of Sperrkreis I, was the Gästehaus (Guest-house) [12]. All the log-cabins at 'Wehrwolf' had the building number above the entrance and most of them also had a black oval shield announcing its function. Leaving the guesthouse here is Generalfeldmarschall Albert Kesselring, the Oberbefehlshaber Süd (C-in-C South). He arrived at 'Wehrwolf' on July 18, 1942 — two days after Hitler himself had first installed there — to report on the situation in the Mediterranean and also to receive the Swords to his Knight's Cross with Oak Leaves. Right: The brick steps are gone but the concrete foundations of the house remain. Original paint applied by the Organisation Todt is still visible on it.



sented Rommel with the Diamonds to his Knights Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords and, in view of his weak health, ordered him on convalescent leave. That same day, Göring flew in from Rome to report his view on the situation in the Mediterranean.

With Manstein having successfully pushed to the Donets and Kharkov about to be retaken (see *After the Battle* No. 112), Hitler felt he could return to the 'Wolfsschanze'. Also, security at Vinnitsa was being challenged by increasing partisan activity. On March 12, the garrison even sent out a mixed force, comprising armoured vehicles, a GFP-RSD party and a Feldgendarmarie section to the Kalinovka area to carry out a raid against a strong partisan group there.

The following day, March 13 — having stayed a total of 19 days at Vinnitsa — Hitler returned by air to Rastenburg, making an intermediate stop at Smolensk where he had a long and optimistic talk with Kluge at his Heeresgruppe Mitte headquarters at Krasnibor. It was on the second leg of this flight that Oberst Henning von Tresckow, Kluge's Ia (Operations Officer) and an opponent of Hitler, placed a bomb in Hitler's FW 200 aircraft — which for unexplained reasons did not go off.

**HITLER'S THIRD STAY
(August 27, 1943)**

On August 27, 1943, Hitler returned to 'Wehrwolf' for a third and final time. However, it was only a short visit, lasting just a few hours, to confer with Manstein, the commander of Heeresgruppe Süd, and his four subordinate army commanders about the upcoming operations in southern Russia. Göring and Grossadmiral Karl Dönitz, Raeder's successor as C-in-C of the Kriegsmarine, accompanied Hitler to the meeting. He left again that same afternoon, never to return.

THE END OF FHQu 'WEHRWOLF'

In early October 1943, faced with increasingly strong Soviet offensives, Manstein moved his Heeresgruppe Süd headquarters farther west and was invited by the OKW to make use of the 'Wehrwolf' installation. He gratefully accepted and was pleasantly surprised by the good amenities it offered. However, the front line moved steadily closer and during a situation conference in the 'Wolfsschanze' on December 28, Hitler suggested to Manstein to evacuate 'Wehrwolf'. When Generalmajor Schmudt mentioned that, on capturing Vinnitsa, the Red Army were certain to move everything found on the site to Moscow for an exhibition, Hitler was horrified, and ordered the complete destruction of the site.

Manstein moved out of 'Wehrwolf' on January 6, 1944, transferring his headquarters 160 kilometres westward to Proskurov. As soon as they had gone, all furniture and objects were removed, and the site was prepared for demolition. On March 10, Heeres-Pionier-Bataillon 215 set fire to the log-houses with flame-throwers and blew up the air raid bunkers with makeshift charges comprising aircraft bombs brought from the Kalinovka airfield. The fires and detonations set fire to many of the trees and much of the vegetation, thus also destroying large parts of the 'man-made' forest.

On March 20, the Soviet 38th Army under Colonel-General Kirill S. Moskalenko captured Vinnitsa and a special NKVD unit, headed by Colonel Gleb I. Rogatnev, immediately arrived to inspect the abandoned and wrecked enemy headquarters, compiling a detailed report and photo album for Moscow. In the process of searching for any underground installations or hidden entries, the Russians removed much of what was left of the burned and broken trees.



Left: Tucked away in the north-east corner of Sperrkreis I lay the installation's water reservoir [24]. Although the diving-board gives the impression of a swimming pool, the water here was for fire-fighting purposes only. The wooden building seen on the right among the trees is a shed for fire-fighting material. This picture was taken on July 16, 1942, the day of Hitler's first arrival in the new headquarters, when Oberst Kurt Thomas, the commander of the Führer-Begleit-Bataillon and Kommandant Führerhauptquartier, showed Hitler and the OKW staff around the installation. Right: The reservoir was the only structure left untouched by the German demolitions in March 1944, and remains completely intact today.



NKVD



Left: On March 20, 1944, troops of the First Ukrainian Front liberated Vinnitsa and captured the former Führerhauptquartier, which had been abandoned in January and thoroughly demolished by German engineers shortly before the Red Army's arrival. A team from the Soviet secret service NKVD soon arrived to survey and photograph the site and compile a report for

After the war the site was left neglected, and over the following years much of the loose debris was carried off. Bare of vegetation, since the 1970s trees and shrubbery has returned and become established so that today the site gives the impression of being a natural forest, albeit cluttered by large chunks

of concrete from the demolished bunkers. Openly accessible for the general public, the area was used for camping and barbecuing. A few buildings were erected in the north-west corner of what had been Sperrkreis II, but in 2011, management of the remainder of the site, encompassing most of Sperrkreis II and

all of Sperrkreis I, was handed over to the Vinnitsa Museum which sealed the area with a new fence, put up information panels at various points, and in 2012 erected a new exhibition building at the entrance. Today it is run as the Historical Memorial Complex to the Victims of Fascism.

NKVD



Left: An NKGB soldier stands at the northern gate to Sperrkreis I. Note the overturned sentry box on the right. This photo from the NKVD report is especially interesting as it depicts the ruins of a building in Sperrkreis I that was only completed in the summer of 1943: the new Kommandantur [10], which also served as Postdienst (postal centre) and additional Gästehaus (guesthouse). By far the largest building in



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Right: Nadya Khmel stands on one of the larger blocks left from the explosion, a huge fragment of the roof. Today, because part of what formerly was Sperrkreis II has been developed with new houses, this bunker is right at the entrance of the 'Wehrwolf' site that tourists can visit.



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the Sperrkreis, it measured 12,5 by 47,5 metres. All that was left standing after the demolition were its brick walls and chimneys. *Right:* Andrew stands in for the soldier at the gate and Martin stands on the Kommandantur's foundations. A huge lump of concrete, thrown here from the blast when demolishing the Allgemeine Bunker in Sperrkreis I, over 150 metres away, has landed right on them!

NKVD



Left: The remains of Hitler's private bunker seen from the foundations of his house. This picture clearly illustrates how close the bunker was to the edge of the forest. Very few items of interest were found by the Soviets, the NKVD report detailing



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little more than the 'remnants of a carpet or rug in reddish or orange colour'. *Right:* The remains of Hitler's bunker today. Treasure-hunters, lured by unfounded tales of undiscovered underground rooms, have dug deep holes around it.

Right: The OKH headquarters — Anlage ‘Winniza-Stadt’ — was based in Vinnitsa. Its Logistical and Military Intelligence departments took office in the Pirogovo Clinic on the outskirts of town (‘Waldheim’).

ANLAGE ‘WINNIZA-STADT’

The OKH was located at two sites in Vinnitsa town. The Operational Staff was lodged in the university quarters (code-name ‘Winfried’), in generally modern and spacious school buildings and military barracks, and the Logistical and Planning Staff and Military Intelligence department in the Pirogovo Clinic, a large chateau-like building on the outskirts of town (‘Waldheim’). Staff officers were generally lodged in private houses. The military barracks and university buildings in town provided an office and billeting space of 120,000 square metres — the equivalent of 16 football fields. The main communications centre for the whole ‘Eichenhain’ zone was also located here, and all off ‘Wehrwolf’'s telephone and telex lines ran through it, as did all lines to and from the units at the Eastern Front. Most of the communications made use of existing wiring.

ANLAGE ‘STEINBRUCH’

The operational headquarters of the Luftwaffe was located at Hulivtsi, near the village of Kalinovka, 30 kilometres north of Vinnitsa along the Shitomir road, and near the Luftwaffe airfield. To accommodate Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring's special train ‘Asien’, the OT built a 2.8-kilometre-long stretch of railway branching off from the main line, and a platform of 400 metres. When stationary, the train was connected to a specially-built freshwater and sewer system. For air raid protection, the OT built a Regelbau 102V shelter for 30 men, a standard bunker from the Westwall series requiring 900 cubic metres of concrete. For Göring's personal use, a wooden two-storey house in Bavarian style was built in the middle of the site. In addition 12 wooden huts were erected, giving a total of 3,882 square metres of floor space. The site had its own transformer distributing electricity to the various buildings; three diesel generators; a 120-metre-deep well feeding four concrete water basins with drinking water, and two settling tanks. The sewer, draining into the Bug, required a run of eight kilometres of sewer pipe. Five kilometres of high wire fence and 12 kilometres of double-apron fence surrounded the site. In addition, 1,760 metres of road were built or repaired. The whole installation required 104,500 days of work, i.e. well over 200 days for a workforce of 500.



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Göring's headquarters — Anlage ‘Steinbruch’ — was at the village of Hulivtsi, near Kalinovka airfield, 30 kilometres north of Vinnitsa.



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The remains of Göring's large Regelbau 102v bunker, blown up in 1944, now lie mouldering under the brushwood.



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Above: At Huyva, south of Shitomir, the two bunkers built for Anlage 'Hegewald' have survived intact. Right: This is the one for Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, on the east side of the Vinnitsa road. Garage sheds have been built against it, partly masking it from view, hence this picture taken from a mast.



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ANLAGE 'HEGEWALD'

The headquarters of Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler, Reichsminister Dr Hans Lammers, the chief of the Reich Chancellery, and Joachim von Ribbentrop, the Foreign Minister, and their staffs were accommodated in existing buildings at Huyva, just south of Shitomir, 100 kilometres from Vinnitsa. The buildings, mostly military barracks, provided 21,500 square metres of floor space. The existing electricity and water supply, sewer system and road network were sufficient. The OT, who worked at 'Hegewald' from October 10, 1941 to July 1, 1942, only needed to refurbish the buildings and add 500 metres of

road. They constructed two air raid bunkers, one for Himmler and one for Ribbentrop, each with 15 square metres of floor space and requiring 600 cubic metres of concrete. Three kilometres of wire fence and five kilometres of double-apron were erected and an area of 1,200 square metres camouflaged with trees, grass and netting. In all, the OT spent 27,000 working days on 'Hegewald'. The installation was originally referred to as 'Waldhof' but Himmler, on his first arrival there on July 24, 1942 re-named it 'Hegewald'. His special train 'Heinrich' and Ribbentrop's train 'Westfalen' were parked on a nearby branch line.

By the time it was all finished, the Organisation Todt had spent a total of 436,600 working days on 'Eichenhain', and used 11,400 cubic metres of concrete. They had provided 183 square metres of floor space in bunkers; 21,500 square metres in buildings and 140,505 in log-houses and huts. The combined headquarters — 'Wehrwolf', 'Winniza-Stadt', 'Steinbruch' and 'Hegewald' — had a total floor space of 162,005 square metres providing — when fully staffed with 13,850 persons — 12 square metres per person. This made 'Eichenhain' by far the largest of all headquarters used by Hitler and the OKW during the war.



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The bunker provided for Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop stands completely intact on the west side of the road.

Today it lies inside a Ukrainian Army barracks so it cannot be accessed without permission.

