

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS BRANCH
BIOGRAPHICAL REPORT

RESTRICTED

Index of Statements
in Report

Name: RÖCHLING, Hermann Region: R 2 b

Nationality: German Occupation: 6C, 25F, 27

Region: Völklingen, Saar, Richard Strasse 3 Political Attitude: 13

Major Positions: President (Vorsitzender Geschäfts-
führer of Röchlingsche Eisen und
Stahlwerke GmbH., Völklingen

Partner with personal liability
(Persönlich haftender Gesellschafter)
of Gebrüder Röchling Eisenhandels-
geschäft, Ludwigshafen/Rhein, and of
Gebrüder Röchling Bank, Saarbrücken

Chairman of the Board of Directors
(Aufsichtsrat) of numerous subsidiaries
of the Röchling combine including:
Stahlwerke Röchling-Buderus-AG,
Wetzlar, and Hallesche Salzwerte
und Chemische Fabrik Calbe AG.,
Calbe, Saale

Member of the Board of Directors (Aufsichtsrat)
of Saargruben AG., Saarbrücken
Eisenwerk Maximilianshütte, Rosenberg, Ober-
pfalz,

Head of the Reichsvereinigung Eisen

Head of the Main Ring Iron Production (Hauptring
Eisenerzeugung) under Speer's Ministry for
Armament and War Production

Leader of Economic Group Iron Producing Industry
(Wirtschaftsgruppe Eisenschaffende Industrie)

Wehrwirtschaftsführer

Birth Date and Place: 12 November 1872, Saarbrücken

Family History:

Hermann Röchling is the son of Kommerzienrat Carl Röchling, founder of the firm Gebrüder Röchling. Hermann Röchling's mother was Alvine, nee Vopelius (coming from a family of glass manufacturers). He married Theodora Müller, daughter of Kommerzienrat R. Theodor Müller of Metz, former President of the German Chamber of Commerce. His daughter, Ellen Ruth (born 1900) was married to Dr. Hans Lothar Freiherr von Gemmingen Hornberg. His son Karl Theodor (born 1902)

RESTRICTED

Family History, (cont'd.):

who played an important part in the management of many Röchling plants, was found murdered by Russian foreign laborers on the grounds of the Völklingen factory on 27 December 1944 according to German statements. Since 1898, Hermann Röchling has been in charge of the family business, which was in the hands of about nine members, most of whom were sons and grandsons of Carl. The Röchlings are related by marriage to the Stinnes family and to Otto Sarrazin, head of the important chemical combine Westfälisch-Anhaltische Sprengstoff-Werke.

Education and Work History:

Hermann Röchling attended the Ludwig Gymnasium in Saarbrücken and received practical training at several smelting plants including the Ilseeder Hütte, the Peiner Walzwerk and Friedrich Wilhelm-Hütte in Mülheim, a.d. Ruhr. He studied economics and mining at the Universities of Heidelberg and Berlin. A new smelting procedure invented by him was first tried out at his Völklingen plant and proved successful in obtaining iron from poor ore deposits.

He subsequently devoted most of his time to the development of the interests of the Röchling combine in the Saar Region, in Lorraine and in the Moselle district, especially the Völklingen steel mills, and the ore deposit properties in Algringen, Longwy, and Valleroy in France. After World War I, the French possessions of the combine were lost, the Moselle properties became part of the Hauts Fourneaux at Fonderies de Pont-a-Mousson, and the Lorraine properties had to be sold. Hermann Röchling was sentenced to ten years imprisonment for spoliation of French property during the war. He escaped the penalty by fleeing to unoccupied territory, and after a higher court suspended the sentence, he returned to the Saar. (In 1942 the Vichy Government, by special act, declared the whole proceedings void.

As leader of a rightist-nationalist party in the Saar territory, then administered by the French, Hermann Röchling became one of the most active protagonists of the German cause.

The Röchling combine expanded by acquiring new subsidiaries and by establishing connections with other German interests. An agreement (Interessengemeinschaft) was reached with the Buderus concern, and Hermann Röchling became Chairman of the Board of Directors (Vorsitzender des Aufsichtsrats) of the Stahlwerke Röchling-Buderus AG, and member of the Board of Directors of the Buderussche Eisenwerke AG, both at Wetzlar.

During the 1930's, the Röchlings greatly strengthened and consolidated their position, emerging in control of one of the largest blocks of Saar heavy industries. After the outbreak of the present war, the Röchlings again assumed complete control, though not legal possession, of the mines that had been given up to the French. In 1940 Hermann Röchling was appointed Plenipotentiary (Generalbeauftragter) for operation of the Steel Works in occupied Lorraine. In April 1941, the Röchlings took over for operation on their own account the Karlshütte Steel Mill.

RESTRICTED

Education and Work History (cont'd.):

In 1943, the Eisen und Stahlwerke Karlshütte GmbH was founded to take over the Thionville mills, and Hermann Röchling was named trustee of this company. At that time he also was Member of the Board of Directors of

Eisenwerksgesellschaft Maximilianshütte, Rosenberg/Oberpfalz
(a steel mill chiefly owned by the Flick combine)

Doggererz AG, Blumberg/Baden (coal and iron mines)

Hallesche Salzwerke und Chemische Fabriken Calbe AG., Calbe/
Saale (engaged predominantly in the production of
chemicals)

Kraftwerk Wehrden GmbH., Völklingen/, Saar (electric power
plant)

Brown, Boveri & Cie. AG., Mannheim (electrical industry,
owned by Swiss interests).

Hermann Röchling was partner (persönlich haftender Gesellschafter) of

Gebrüder Röchling Eisenhandelsgesellschaft, Ludwigshafen;
Rhein (a steel trading company) and of the
Gebrüder Röchling Bank, Saarbrücken.

He was a member of the Advisory Board (Beirat) of the Deutsche Reichsbank,
Berlin.

As staunch supporter of the Nazi regime, Hermann Röchling received numerous administrative functions under the Nazi regime. He was entrusted with the management of the Reich Association Iron (Reichsvereinigung Eisen), which had the task of rationalizing and increasing production, of allocating raw materials and of supervising imports and exports of iron, steel, scrap, etc. Under Speer's Ministry of Armaments and War Production, Herman Röchling was entrusted with the leadership of the Main Ring Iron Production (Hauptring Eisenerzeugung) (as of 1942). He also was appointed member of Speer's armament Council (Rüstungsrat) and given the title of a Wehrwirtschaftsführer. In the corporative system of economic controls Hermann Röchling held the position of a leader of the Economic Group Iron Producing Industry (Wirtschaftsgruppe Eisenschaffende Industrie). In October 1942 he established a new subdivision, the District Group Moselland; at that time he held the office of a leader of the District Group South West of the Economic Group Iron Producing Industry (Bezirksgruppe Süd-West der Wirtschaftsgruppe Eisenschaffende Industrie).

He was President of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce at Metz and Member of the Advisory Board (Beirat) of the Economic Chamber Westmark, Saarbrücken.

In recognition of his achievements in German heavy industries in German war production, Hitler bestowed many honors on Röchling, including the title of a Pioneer of Labor. On his 70th birthday (1942) Röchling received the Eagle Shield with the inscription "To the Pioneer of the Iron Foundry, to the

Education and Work History (cont'd.):

Champion of the Saar" (Dem Führer des Eisenhüttenwesens, dem Vorkämpfer der Saar). Many prominent party leaders attended this birthday celebration, among them Funk and Gauleiter Bürckel.

Nevertheless it may be possible that during recent years Röchling lost sympathy with Nazi policies when Germany's defeat had become clear. On 20 October 1944 it was reported that he had been taken into custody by the Gestapo and accused of fostering defeatism and recommending surrender. If the report is true that he was arrested, he evidently was released soon afterwards, for, according to an official German announcement of 17 December 1944, Hitler awarded Röchling a new sign of acknowledgement, the Knight's Cross with Swords of the War Merit Cross. Speer, acting on Hitler's personal instructions, presented this high award to Röchling in the Saar region.

Summary:

As head of the extensive and powerful Röchling combine and as leader of the Super-cartel, The National Association Iron (Reichsvereinigung Eisen) as head of the Main Ring Iron Production (Hauptring Eisenerzeugung) in Speer's Ministry of Armaments and War Production, as leader of the Economic Group Iron Producing Industry (Wirtschaftsgruppe Eisenschaffende Industrie), Hermann Röchling is one of the most influential figures in the German Iron and steel industry. He controlled and directed the German heavy industries in the interest of the German war effort.

An outstanding representative of German nationalism, he took part and profited from the exploitation of ore and coal mines in occupied French regions.

Sources:

Wer Ist's, 1935
Wer leitet, 1941/42
Neues Wiener Tageblatt, 25 May 1941
Frankfurter Zeitung, 5 September 1942
OSS, CID, A-234-139, 6 October 1942
Völkischer Beobachter, 10 November 1942; 13 November 1942
Deutscher Handelsdienst, 12 November 1942
Deutsche Bergwerkszeitung, 13 November 1942; 2 Oct. 43
OSS, CID #18601-C, 13 November 1942
Wirdenträger im Dritten Reich, 1943
OSS, Source S, 25 September 1943 9 May 1945
Hakenkreuzbanner, 6 October 1943
Franz Neumann, Behemoth, 1944
OSS, Source F, M 356-2T, 1 February 1944
OSS, Source S, 5 July 1944
R & A #1910, 25 July 1944
News Digest, 19 December 1944
OSS, Source S, 10 March 1945

This record is a summary of such intelligence (from one or more sources as indicated) as was available at the time of preparation. It may consequently be subject to amendment by additional or more recent intelligence. Index numbers and letters are solely for indexing statements in the report.

RESTRICTED