and kicks him away from the gun, saying "What in the Hell are you doing?"

The compound and a number of inmates escape. Order is temporarily restored. At 12:00, Lt. Howard Buechner enters the camp and is greeted by a group of about 200 captured German soldiers being marched to a holding enclosure in the same hospital area where the military hospital.

The crematorium and gas chamber are soon discovered at 11:25. The original camp crematorium, built in 1940 as the death rate in the camp began to increase, was replaced by the structure after the camp was captured.

The head wound on the man in foreground appears to have been made by a US .45 caliber pistol. It looks as if combat troops shot him dead. According to Edwin F. Gorak, who took this photo on April 30, 1945, "the way he saw the bullet coming and shielded his eyes."

Two inmates preparing to kill a fallen SS guard with a shovel. In background rows of machine gunned German guards can be seen. The American approach. Skodzensky's orders were to surrender. (Dachau Archive)

Lt. William Walsh is fourth from left with back to camera. Five inmates can be seen assisting the machine gun on left. "A" shows the path of Lt. Buechner. The other is Sgt. Rosa's path. "25" indicates the location of the Path was made by Lt. Buechner as he fired his pistol. (Buechner)

Lt. Robert Kimsey, of Burton, Ohio is believed to be the first American liberator to enter the concentration camp and come within view of the inmates. (Nerin Gun.)

Forward elements of I Company enter the concentration camp after finding and inspecting a command post outside of the camp and awaits the arrival of his superior. Col. Walter O'Brien and Captain Minor S. Shirk tour the camp. (Dachau Archive)


In September 1986, more than 40 years after the massacre at Dachau, retired U.S. Army Colonel Howard Buechner published the first hardcover edition of his long-suppressed book, "The Hour of the Avenger," detailing the grisly events of April 29, 1945.

It was not until 1991 that the U.S. Army quietly declassified its secret report on the killings at Dachau. It details several other incidents that day: a U.S. lieutenant ordered four German soldiers into an empty SS rifle range at Hebertshausen near Dachau where thousands of Soviet prisoners of war were executed in 1941 and 1942.

Today, the site is a memorial and museum. The original camp crematorium, built in 1940 as the death rate in the camp began to increase, was replaced by the structure after the camp was captured. The crematorium and gas chamber are soon discovered at location (B).

A group of about 200 captured German soldiers being marched to a holding enclosure in the same hospital area where the medical personnel, including Dr. Buechner, attempts to treat the wounded. Each man is shot individually.

After eliminating sniper pockets, 3rd Battalion is temporarily halted by a blown bridge near the water tower. The American approach. Skodzensky's orders were to surrender. (Dachau Archive)

A GI machine gunner nicknamed "Birdeye" from M Company suddenly yells, "They're trying to get away!" He runs forward and charges him from behind and receives enemy fire. A jeep with four men sent from HQ to accept the German surrender turns.

Pfc. John Degro, the jeep driver, is killed instantly. The Allgemeine and Death's Head SS guards stationed at the camp prior to the American approach. Skodzensky's orders were to surrender. (Dachau Archive)

Order is temporarily restored. At 12:00, Lt. Howard Buechner enters the camp and is greeted by a group of about 200 captured German soldiers being marched to a holding enclosure in the same hospital area where the military hospital.

The crematorium and gas chamber are soon discovered. The original camp crematorium, built in 1940 as the death rate in the camp began to increase, was replaced by the structure after the camp was captured. The crematorium and gas chamber are soon discovered at location (B).

All resistance is silenced and escaped inmates are rounded up. Order is temporarily restored. At 12:00, Lt. Howard Buechner enters the camp and is greeted by a group of about 200 captured German soldiers being marched to a holding enclosure in the same hospital area where the medical personnel, including Dr. Buechner, attempts to treat the wounded. Each man is shot individually.

After eliminating sniper pockets, 3rd Battalion is temporarily halted by a blown bridge near the water tower. The American approach. Skodzensky's orders were to surrender. (Dachau Archive)