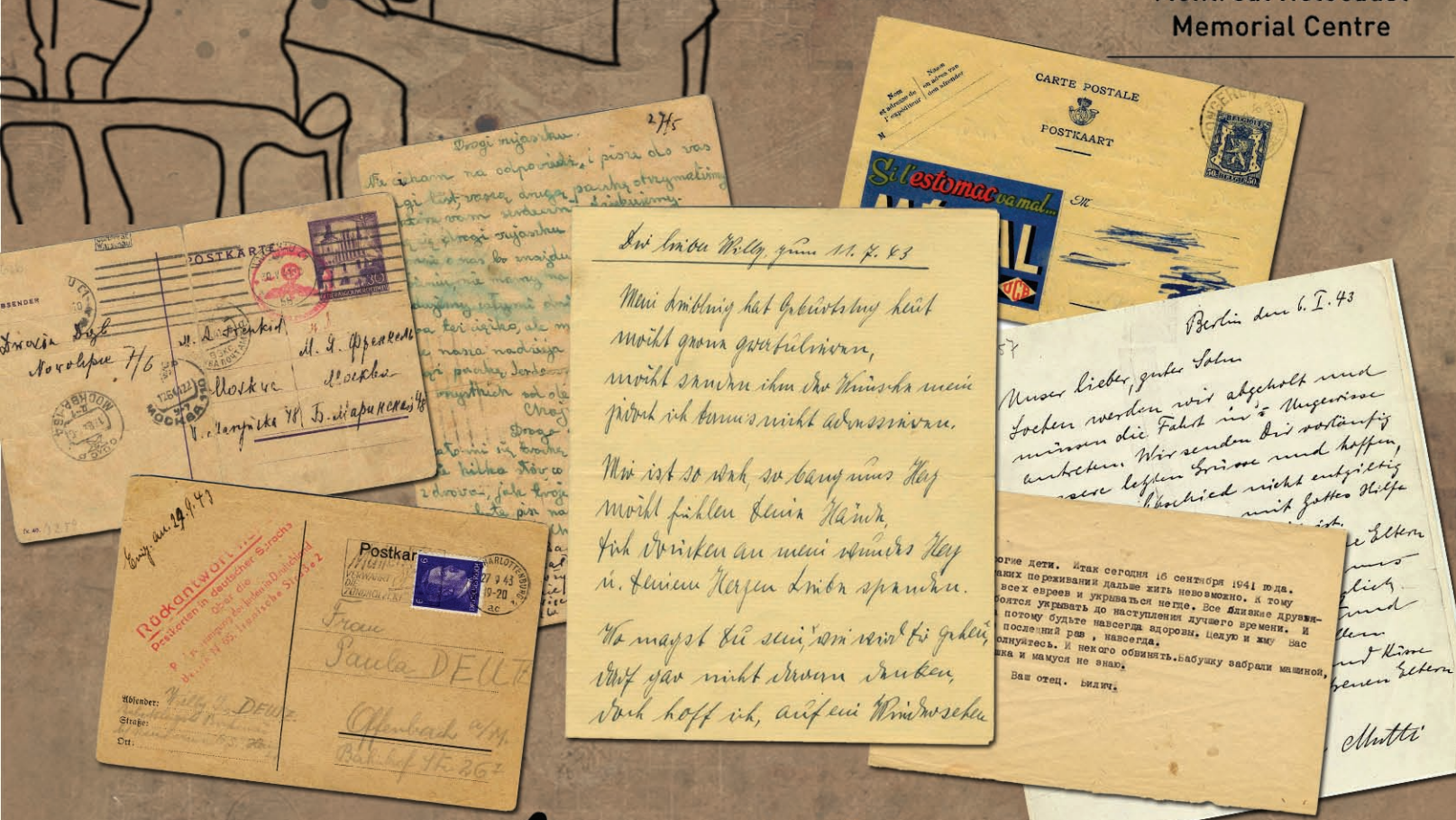
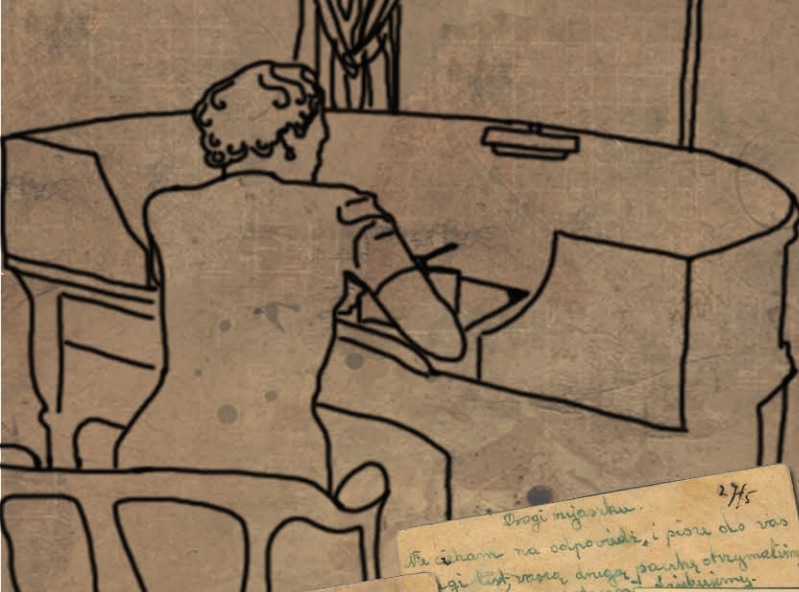




Centre commémoratif  
de l'Holocauste à Montréal

Montreal Holocaust  
Memorial Centre



# 17 letters:

## For the last time and forever

This document includes letters written during the Holocaust, preserved in the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre's collection.

Included, teachers will find a guide for teaching with primary sources and a student's questionnaire.



# 17 letters:

## for the last time and forever

The Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre invites you to discover powerful letters preserved in its collection.

A husband asks his wife to be happy, a mother throws a message of hope to her children from a deportation train, a father leaves his daughter in his brother's care, and a Jewish soldier discovers the fate of his people in concentration camps. Some 17 letters, written between 1941 and 1944, were selected from the Centre's collection. They are written by people caught in the storm of Nazism and the genocide of European Jews during the Second World War.

These are letters that are a call for help, letters of farewell or hope, and these words are often the last traces of life that relatives of Holocaust victims received.

These letters bear witness to the living conditions, hunger, misery and especially despair and even resignation in the face of tragedy. They also illustrate the complex history of the Holocaust and the diversity of fates shattered by a relentless policy of mass murder. Death is inevitable, we know, but these last few words are also a breath of humanity, a wind of hope that commands those who are still able to continue living.

These letters were performed during a public reading on the occasion of the International Day in Memory of Holocaust Victims on January 27, 2011 with the participation of the National Theatre School.

January 27 - the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz - was proclaimed the International Day in Memory of Holocaust Victims in 2005 by the United Nations.

Unless mentioned otherwise, all the documents are property of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre.

## Themes:

### 1. Warsaw Ghetto (and resistance)

Letters 1, 2, 3, 13, 14

### 2. Camps

(Epistolary exchange between Paula et Willy Deutz)

Letters 5, 6, 7, 8

### 3. Deportation (Letters from parents to their children)

Letters 4, 9, 10, 11, 12,

### 4. Despair

Letters 5, 16

### 5. Liberation

Letter 17

## List of Documents:

1. Postcard sent from Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Paris (France) on February 19, 1942. Language: Polish.
2. Postcard from Warsaw (Poland) ghetto to Paris (France) sent on May 18, 1942. Language: Polish.
3. Postcard sent from the Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Moscow (Russia) on May 30, 1941. Language: Polish.
4. Letter sent from the Ukraine, on September 19, 1941. Language: Russian.
5. Letter from Willy Deutz, State Police jail, Darmstadt, Germany, April 6, 1943. Language: German.
6. Letter from Paula to her husband for his birthday, Offenbach am Main (Germany), July 11, 1943. Language: German.
7. Postcard addressed to Paula Deutz, Offenbach am Main (Germany), from husband Willy interned in Birkenau concentration camp (Poland). Language: German.
8. Death notice for Willy Deutz, Auschwitz concentration camp (Poland), September 7, 1943. Language: German.
9. Letter written by Bella Kaminski from the train deporting her to Auschwitz, date unidentified, Belgium. Language: German.
10. Last letter sent to Lothar Lewin in the internment camp of Sherbrooke (Canada) from his parents in Berlin (Germany), January 6th 43. Language: German.
11. Postcard written by Otto Bondy to his children, Malines transit camp (Belgium), September 20, 1943. Language: German.
12. Letter written by Gretl and Otto Bondy, September 22, 1943. Language: German.
13. Letter from Teddy Liebowitz to Wladek Biberkraut smuggled from Warsaw ghetto (Poland) 1942. Language: Yiddish.
14. Letter smuggled from the Bund Coordinating Committee in Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Charles Kotkowski in forced labour camp Piotrkow (Poland), 1943. Language: Polish and English.
15. Letter from a Hungarian father to his brother living as a refugee in Italy, Hungary, March 26, 1944. Language: Hungarian.
16. Letter from a Hungarian mother to her sister-in-law, Hungary, March 26, 1944. Language: Hungarian.
17. Letter written by Saul Stein to his father Ben Stein in Montreal (Canada) while serving in the R.C.A.F, Germany, April 30, 1945. Language: English.

# Teaching with Primary Sources in History Class

To make sure that students can learn what the documents made available here can offer, we propose a five steps approach to critical analysis of sources you can achieve with them. However, before reading these texts, take time to ask your students what they already know about the Holocaust and what they would like to know by looking at these primary documents.

## Glossary

### Primary document:

The primary document is written by an actor or a witness of the events recounted (narrative, travel book, legal code, letter, newspaper article of the time, listing on shelves, etc.).

### Second-hand document:

The second-hand document was written by a person who analyzes, comments or interprets primary documents (book on a historical subject, novel, magazine article, website, etc.).

**Fact:** Information which can be verified.

**Opinion:** A personal perspective, often arbitrary and volatile, not based on facts.

## 1. Preliminary Reading

The first step is to conduct a first reading of the document in which students are asked to locate the subject and the main topics of the document.

## 2. External analysis

External analysis of a document deals with the context in which the document was produced, that is to say the date, the identity of its author, his intention, the nature of the document. Student must then answer the following questions:

- What is the date of this document? (When was it written?)
- Who is the author?
- Is the author an actor or a witness to the events recounted?
- To whom this document is written for?
- For what purpose has it been written?
- Is this document an original or a translation?
- Is this an abstract or a full reproduction?

## 3. Internal analysis

The internal analysis of the document focuses on its content. It should highlight the information and facts contained in the document. To do this, the student answers the following questions:

- What is the main subject of this document? (general)
- What are the topics? (more specific)
- Does the author present facts or opinions?
- Is the content reliable? (Does it match with what is already known on this subject?)

## 4. Interpretation

Once the review is complete, students can pursue their historical thinking in trying to make sense of the content and themes they found. To do this, they answer the following questions:

- What was learned from reading this document (or documents)?
- For what purpose could this document be useful?
- Does the document answers to the questions we had about this historical phenomenon?
- To which questions does it bring any answers?

## 5. Questioning and research

If you wish, you can use these documents as a basis for historical research conducted by students. From the topics identified in steps 3 and 4, students can formulate questions to go further in their understanding of the subject matter and then proceed with the research in order to find answers. In so doing, they identify what is not said in those letters and they raise questions which will help them to get a better overview of the phenomenon.

# Student Questionnaire

## 1. What is the context in which this document was produced?

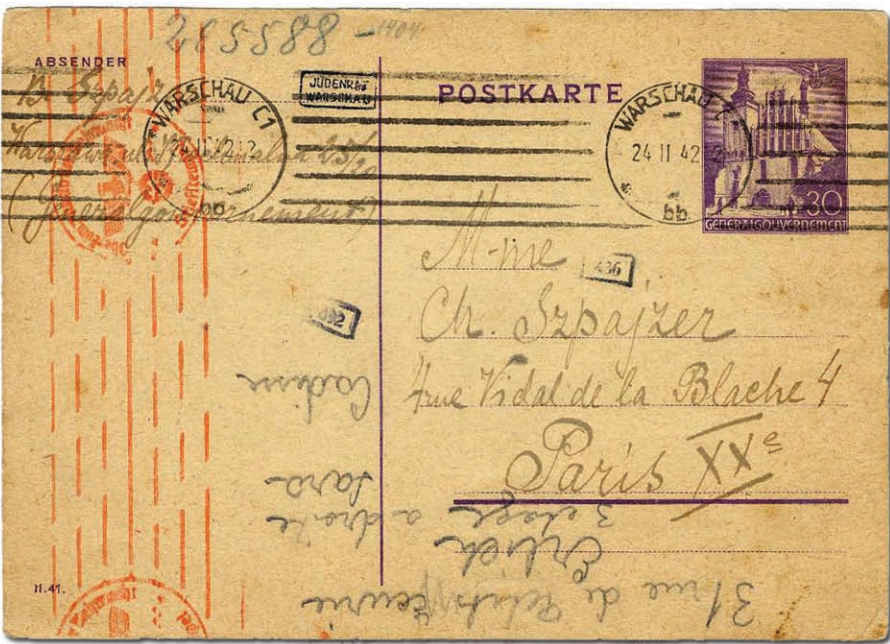
- Who is the author ?
- Who is this letter for?
- Why was it written ?
- Is it an original document or a translation ?
- Is it an excerpt or a complete reproduction ?

## 2. What is the content of the letter?

- What is the main topic of the letter ? (in general terms)
- What themes are discussed ? (in specific terms)
- What do we learn about the author's quality of life ?
- Does the author use facts or opinions? (Use examples to back up your answer)
- Is the content realistic ? (Does it correspond to what we already know on the topic) Use examples to back up your answer.
- What do we learn about the Holocaust through this letter ?

## 3. What is the historical value of the document ?

- Would you use this letter as a source for a historical research project?
- If you were conducting a historical research project on the Holocaust, how could this letter be used? What specific event or phenomena could it illustrate?



# Letter 1.

Postcard sent from Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Paris (France) on February 19, 1942

Language: Polish

Beloved Mom & Beloved Ala,  
 We received your cards for which we thank you, but of what value are simple words of thanks compared to what you and Ala are doing for us? I really don't know how to thank you for what you are doing for us, it means so much to us and this keeps us alive.  
 Some of the things I'm selling and from this I live, all the parcels I receive: shoes, margarine and other things.  
 I was late in answering your letter because I was waiting for the parcel of clothing, the green suit, the shirt & socks that I received, as well as a fur collar, but if possible send me clothing and maybe also shoes for Andzia.  
 I have received a notice from the post office. They have a parcel of clothing for me but there seems to be some problem and it will take some time to get it.

Dear Ala, I thank you for everything you do for me, I regret that I can't return the favors you do for me, but will do so when conditions are better.  
 Sadness at present at the Racimoras' because Mr. Racimoras died Feb 15th of pneumonia. They received a parcel about five to six weeks ago and they thank you for your regards.  
 Blicia and Mordche thank you. As well, regards from them, everything is well with them, I didn't see Andzia for a long time because they moved elsewhere and I don't know where.  
 So be healthy, I send you regards from everyone, regards to Izak, Adela & Eliza, regards to your husband, thank the children for the shoes in my name.

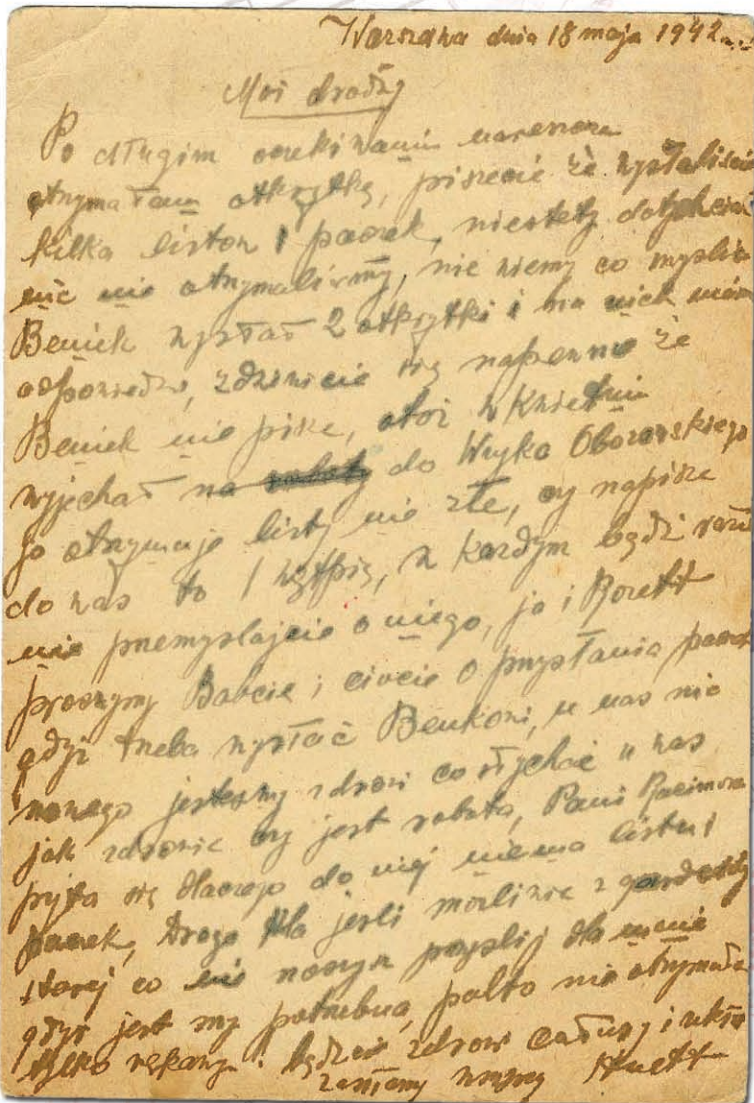
W-wa 19/II-42.  
 Kochana Mamo! i Koch. Ala!  
 Wasz kartkę otrzymaliśmy, za którą Wam bardzo dziękujemy, ale co znaczą jakowe słowa podziękowania wobec tego co Ty Ala! dla nas robicie. Dobra wdy nie wiem jak Wam za to wszystko. ~~Wam~~ po dziękować, bo to co Ty dla nas robicie, ma wielkie dla nas znaczenie i to nas utrzymuje przy życiu. Niczego nie mogę spełnić mam z tego utrzymywania. Racimorski wszystkie otrzymaliśmy, pantofle, margarynę i jeszcze inne też. Właśnie wróciłem trochę odpowiedzi, bo czekałem na odzież, paerki, a więc kostiumek zielony, koszulki i skarpetki, otrzymaliśmy, pare ~~z~~ szanów i gotowe tryk ~~z~~ rękawiczki. Ala! ile moresz przysłałaś i garderobę i te moresz, moie ~~z~~ pantofli dla Andzi. Otrzymaliśmy też wiadomości i poerty na paerki, odzież, ale to trudno mi odebrać chyba trochę potrzebę nim ja wydotknę. Koch. Ala! bardzo ci dziękuję za to co dla mnie robisz. Zarazem jeszcze raz, że to ma dla mnie bardzo wielkie znaczenie i naprawdę nie jestem w stanie, za to ci dziękować, sądzię, że się za to odstąpię przy dobrych okolicznościach.  
 Upp. Racimora smutny obecnie, bo p. Racimora umarł ~~z~~ chorobą na zapalenie płuc. Jedną paczkę otrzymaliśmy jakichś 6-tygodniem otrzymaliśmy i dziękuję za ubstony Blicia i Mordche dziękuję również i za ubstony i widać wszystko w porządku, Adela dawno nie widziałem, bo się wprowadziła i mieszka gdzieś indziej, nawet niewiem gdzie. A więc są zdrowi, kasztam Wam serdecznie ubstony od wszystkich dla wszystkich. Ubstony serdecznie dla Izaka, Adeli i Elzki. Ubstony dla swego męża. Podziękujcie za pantofle i pokrótce i tym wszystkim. Waff. Sienicki



## Letter 2.

Postcard from Warsaw (Poland) ghetto to Paris (France) sent on May 18, 1942

Language: Polish.



Dear Everyone,

After waiting for some time finally I received your card in which you write that you sent cards & parcels, unfortunately we didn't receive anything yet and we don't know what to think. Beniek sent two cards and had no replies.

You must be wondering why Beniek doesn't write. He left in April for uncle Obozorski, if you receive letters from him, conditions are not bad, reply, don't worry about him.

I and Rosette beg Grandma & Auntie to send parcels because it should be sent to Beniek, nothing new by us, we are healthy, what's new with you? How is your health? Do you have work?

Mrs. Racinora is asking why she is not receiving any letters and parcels. Dear Ala if possible the old clothing you are not wearing anymore, please send them to me because I'm in need of a coat, I received only sleeves, be healthy, I kiss you,

Regards,  
Rosette





## Letter 3.

Postcard sent from the Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Moscow (Russia) on May 30, 1941

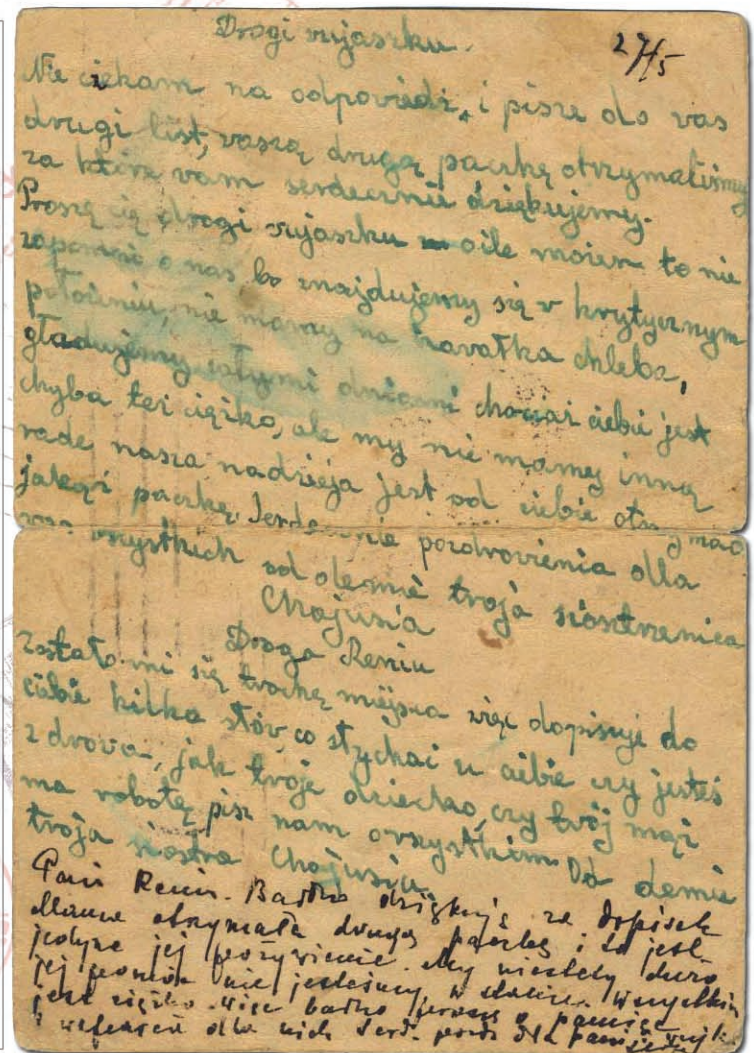
Language: Polish

Dear Uncle!

I am not waiting for answer and I am writing to you a second letter. I received your second parcel for which we are very grateful. Please my darling uncle do not forget us. We are in a very critical situation. We don't have enough money for a piece of bread. We are starving everyday but we have no other choice but hope that something will come from you. All the best regards to all of you. Your niece, Chaya.

Dear Renia, there is a little place left on the card so I am trying to write a few words. How are you? Are you healthy? How is your child? Is your husband working? Your sister, Chaya.

Dear Mrs. Renia, thank you for the little note. My mother received the second parcel. This is her only food. Unfortunately, we can't help her too much we are starving ourselves. Please remember them and see what you can do for them. Dorka.



## Letter 4.

Lettre sent from the Ukraine, on September 19, 1941

Language: Russian

Дорогие дети. И так сегодня 16 сентября 1941 года. После таких переживаний дальше жить невозможно. К тому вывезли всех евреев и укрываться негде. Все близкие друзья-селяне боятся укрывать до наступления лучшего времени. И правы, а потому будьте навсегда здоровы. Целую и жму Вас крепко в последний раз, навсегда.

Не волнуйтесь. И некого обвинять. Бабушку забрали машиной, где дедушка и мамуся не знаю.

Ваш отец. Билич.

Dear children,

Today is Sept. 19, 1941. It's impossible to continue to live after these horrible experiences. All Jews are taken away and there is no place to hide. The close friends are afraid to hide us till better times come. And they are right.

I kiss you and hug you tight for the last time, and forever. There's no one to blame.

Grandma was taken away by the car, I don't know where grandpa and mother are.

Your father.

Billich.



Centre commémoratif  
de l'Holocauste à Montréal  
Montreal Holocaust  
Memorial Centre

5151, ch. de la Côte-Ste-Catherine  
Montréal (Québec) H3W 1M6



# Letter 5.

Letter from Willy Deutz, State Police jail, Darmstadt, Germany, April 6, 1943

Language: German

Geflesen:\*)

## Staatspolizeigefängnis Darmstadt. 674

- Allgemeine Bestimmungen:**  
Beim Schreiben sind die vorgezeichneten Linien einzuhalten. Briefe unangehörigen, insbesondere beleidigenden Inhalts oder Briefe, die sonst zur Veranlassung Anlaß geben, werden nicht abgesandt und nicht ausgehändigt. Gefangene, die solche Briefe schreiben, und die vorgezeichneten Linien nicht einhalten, setzen sich disziplinärer Bestrafung aus.  
Den für Gefangene bestimmten Briefen sollen Briefmarken oder Geld nicht beigelegt werden Kinder unter 14 Jahren werden bei Besuchen nicht zugelassen.
- Briefverkehr:**  
Der Briefverkehr der Gefangenen wird überwacht. Auch die an die Gefangenen gerichteten Briefe sind mit Zinte und deutlich leserlich zu schreiben.
- Besuchszeiten:**  
Besuche werden nur auf Grund besonderer schriftlicher Erlaubnis der Staatspolizeistelle, die vorher einzuholen ist, zugelassen. (Für auswärtige Wohnende empfiehlt es sich, die Bitte um Gewährung des Besuchs zeitig vorher an die Staatspolizeistelle gelangen zu lassen). Für die erste Woche der Haft gibt es keine Besuchsurlaubnis; nach dieser Zeit kann nur ein Besuch alle 2 Wochen gestattet werden.
- Die Angehörigen der Gefangenen werden dringend gewarnt, den Erzählungen etwa bei ihnen vorkommender aus dem Gefängnis entlassenen Personen Glauben zu schenken.**

Abfender: Willy Deutz

Darmstadt, den April 6, 1943

Dear Paula,  
I am well so far. Please bring a large towel, soap, a leather tying belt, tooth powder and a set of laundry, if permitted, in a large briefcase. A set of cutlery, no knives, drinking cups. My work boots would have to be resoled. You will have to find the material for everything. Collar, tie and sport shirt or polo shirt. All most cordial congratulations and all the best to your birthday, belated! Did you spend the day well? Did you have visitors? I always think of you. Perhaps you can send more bread, however more thickly cut and more thinly spread. Did you speak to Herbernack and did you pick up my belongings? You could shorten the blue suit from there. But everything has to be done in a way that it can be put together and possibly carried under the arm. Do you manage with the (amount of) leather? Do you think about the possibility of taking "subtenants" in? How is your relationship between with Isi's wife? I get along with him as well as with the others.  
For the heavy boots you will find nails, leather, horseshoe. I hope you don't let your head hanging and you don't live so withdrawn as I do. Haas's wife is particularly interesting, since she traveled a lot. Try to get in contact with her. She spoke to her husband yesterday. Please send Leucot-creme, powder and dish cloth.  
Did you ever hear anything of Arab and Maggie? Aunt's leg is hopefully well again. Is uncle Praimham healthy and have you been there sometime? I hope that I will get a detailed account from you.  
Are you still going to the beauty salon to get you hair cut on Saturdays? My greatest worry is that you take care of yourself and eat properly as well! I need foot rags, of large format if possible, so that I do not get holes in my socks. Did you bestow the wooden box upon Mrs. Maier? We have nevertheless as much deeply felt in our 14 year old marriage that it would be sufficient now, if only we would be together again.  
All my thoughts and concerns are with you and your acquaintances. Stay healthy and jolly; rather take someone into the apartment before you move out. Write detailed news as soon as possible. Keep the contact with the others. Greetings and kisses,  
your loving Willy.

\*) Nur mit schriftlichem Einsichtvermerk versehene Briefe dürfen befördert werden.

Dear Paula,

I am well so far. Please bring a large towel, soap, a leather tying belt, tooth powder and a set of laundry, if permitted, in a large briefcase. A set of cutlery, no knives, drinking cups. My work boots would have to be resoled. You will have to find the material for everything. Collar, tie and sport shirt or polo shirt. All most cordial congratulations and all the best to your birthday, belated! Did you spend the day well? Did you have visitors? I always think of you. Perhaps you can send more bread, however more thickly cut and more thinly spread. Did you speak to Herbernack and did you pick up my belongings? You could shorten the blue suit from there. But everything has to be done in a way that it can be put together and possibly carried under the arm. Do you manage with the (amount of) leather? Do you think about the possibility of taking "subtenants" in? How is your relationship between with Isi's wife? I get along with him as well as with the others.

For the heavy boots you will find nails, leather, horseshoe. I hope you don't let your head hanging and you don't live so withdrawn as I do. Haas's wife is particularly interesting, since she traveled a lot. Try to get in contact with her. She spoke to her husband yesterday. Please send Leucot-creme, powder and dish cloth.

Did you ever hear anything of Arab and Maggie? Aunt's leg is hopefully well again. Is uncle Praimham healthy and have you been there sometime? I hope that I will get a detailed account from you.

Are you still going to the beauty salon to get you hair cut on Saturdays? My greatest worry is that you take care of yourself and eat properly as well! I need foot rags, of large format if possible, so that I do not get holes in my socks.

Did you bestow the wooden box upon Mrs. Maier? We have nevertheless as much deeply felt in our 14 year old marriage that it would be sufficient now, if only we would be together again.

All my thoughts and concerns are with you and your acquaintances. Stay healthy and jolly; rather take someone into the apartment before you move out. Write detailed news as soon as possible. Keep the contact with the others. Greetings and kisses,  
your loving Willy.



ABSENDER



Centre commémoratif  
de l'Holocauste à Montréal

Montreal Holocaust  
Memorial Centre

5151, ch. de la Côte-Ste-Catherine  
Montreal (Québec) H3W 1M6

## Letter 6.

Letter from Paula to her husband for his birthday, Offenbach am Main (Germany), July 11, 1943. This letter, written on July 11, 1943 was never sent because Paula had no news from her husband anymore and did not know where he was interned at that time.

Language: German

Iwi lieben Willy, zum 11. 7. 43

Mein dringlichst hat Geburtstag heut  
möcht genau gewahrwerden,  
möcht sprechen ihm die Wünsche mein  
jedoch ich kann's nicht adressieren.

Mir ist so weh, so bang ums Herz  
möcht fühlen deine Hände,  
sich drücken an mein wundtes Herz  
in deinem Herzen Liebe spenden.

Wo magst du sein, wo wird dir gehen,  
auf gar nicht davon reden,  
doch hoff ich, auf ein Wiedersehen

For you dear Willy, on 11.7.43

It's my darling's birthday today,  
would love to congratulate (him),  
would love to send him my wishes.  
However, I don't know where to address them.

Woe and fearful is my heart.  
Would like to feel your hands,  
Press you against my wounded heart  
and in your heart speak of love.

Where might you be, how are you doing,  
I may not think of it.  
Still I hope for our reunion  
God will bestow you back upon me.

May he (G-d) give you daily strength  
to endure everything  
that the human mind so gruesomely creates.  
may you never quail.

A time will come, it won't,  
when we will have each other again.  
Then we will in happiness  
move on through our life.

Your Paula



Centre commémoratif  
de l'Holocauste à Montréal  
Montreal Holocaust  
Memorial Centre

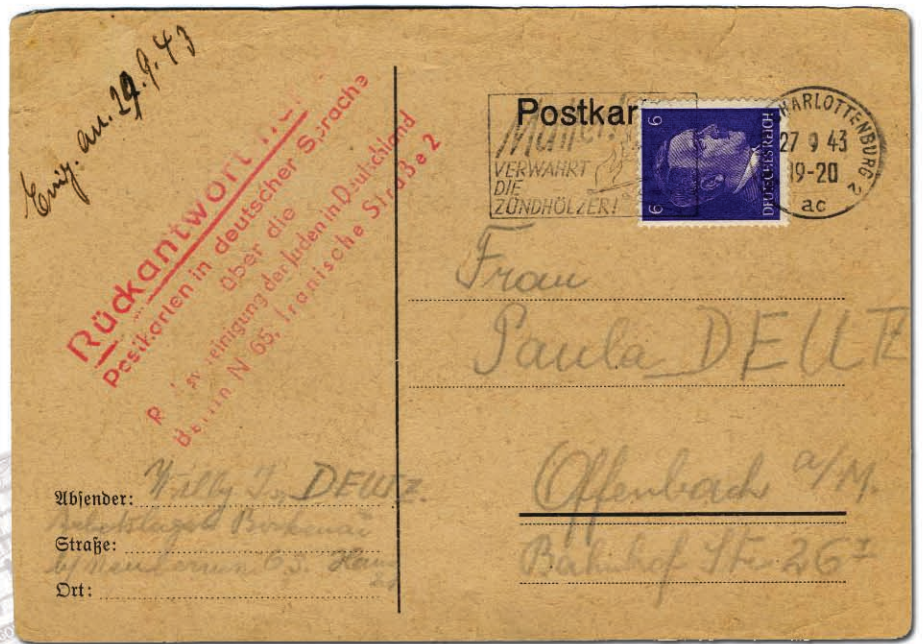
5151, ch. de la Côte-Ste-Catherine  
Montréal (Québec) H3W 1M6

# Letter 7.

Postcard addressed to Paula Deutz, Offenbach am Main (Germany), from husband Willy interned in Birkenau concentration camp (Poland).

The letter, sent on July 25th, was only received on September 29, 1943

Language: German



Jan 25 7. 43  
Meine l. Paula! es geht mir  
sehr gut + hoffe von dir das gleiche  
Lasse doch recht bald von dir  
hören, denn es sind ja auch  
in Paket sendungen erlaubt. Je  
Wäschlappen, Zahnbürste - Paste  
Seife schicken bitte. - Schreibe  
bitte ausführlich, wenn du  
schreibst. Um mich brauchst  
du nicht zu sorgen, denn es  
geht mir gut. Ich erwarte mit  
Schmerz deine Ausführungen!  
Habe heute alles gute, einen  
angenehmen Genuss - Komm  
umgehend  
dein Willy.

*(Faint background text from the reverse side of the postcard is visible)*

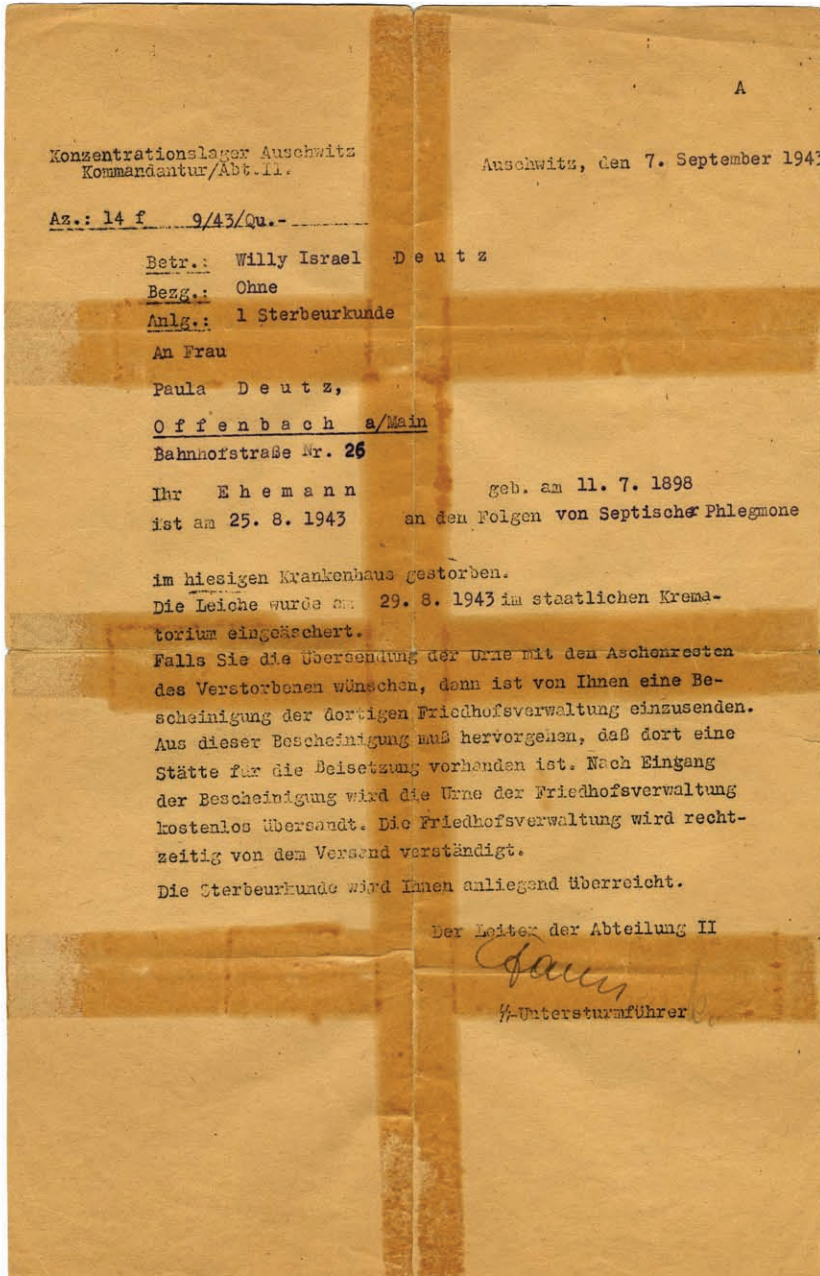
My dear Paula!  
So far I'm well and I hope you're well, too. Please contact me soon. Letters and parcels are allowed. Please send a washrag, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap. Please write extensively, if you write. Don't worry about me, I'm fine. I'm waiting desperately for your stories. For today best wishes, heartfelt greetings and kisses.  
Intimately yours,  
Willy



# Letter 8.

Death notice for Willy Deutz, Auschwitz concentration camp (Poland),  
September 7, 1943

Language: German



Auschwitz Concentration Camp,  
Command, Department II

Auschwitz, September 7th, 1943  
Concerning: Willi Israel Deutz  
To: Paula Deutz

Attachment: Notice of Death

Your husband, born 11 July 1898, died in our hospital on 25 August 1943, as a result of septic phlegmone. The corpse was cremated on 29 August 1943 in the governmental crematorium.

In case you desire the urn with the remaining ashes of the deceased, then you must send us a certificate from your cemetery management. This certificate must state that there is a plot available for the remains. After receipt of this certificate, we will forward the urn to the cemetery free of charge. The cemetery management will be advised beforehand of this shipment.

The death certificate is enclosed.

The Chief of Section II



Centre commémoratif  
de l'Holocauste à Montréal  
Montreal Holocaust  
Memorial Centre

5151, ch. de la Côte-Ste-Catherine  
Montréal (Québec) H3W 1M6

# Letter 9.

Letter written by Bella Kaminski from the train deporting her to Auschwitz, date unidentified, Belgium

Language: German

Ich fühle mich bin gesund  
macht auch keine Sorgen  
mit Gottes Hilfe werden wir  
bald wiedersehen  
Liebe  
Adresse  
S. # Niemiłow  
Av. Conte Lamoral d'Arguon  
Heim # Pierre 20  
Zuer

I'm leaving, am healthy, don't worry with the help of God we will soon see each other again.



Centre commémoratif  
de l'Holocauste à Montréal  
Montreal Holocaust  
Memorial Centre

5151, ch. de la Côte-Ste-Catherine  
Montréal (Québec) H3W 1M6

5057

Berlin den 6. I. 43

Mein lieber, guter Sohn

Soeben werden wir abgeholt und müssen die Fahrt in's Ungewisse antreten. Wir senden dir vorläufig unsere letzten Grüße und hoffen, dass dieser Abschied nicht endgültig sein wird, sondern mit Gottes Hilfe ein Wiedersehen möglich ist.

Halte das Andenken an deine Eltern hoch und versuche etwas für uns zu tun, falls irgendwie möglich. Wir stehen in Gottes Hand und fügen uns seinem Willen. Tausend meine Grüße und Küsse von deinen treuen Eltern  
Pati

1000 Küsse Deine Mutti

## Letter 10

Last letter sent to Lothar Lewin in the internment camp of Sherbrooke (Canada) from his parents in Berlin (Germany), January 6th 43

Language: German

Our dear, good son,

Right now we are being picked up and have to begin our journey into the unknown. For the time being we are sending you our last greetings and hope that this farewell will not be final but that, with the help of God, we'll meet again.

Keep up the memory of your parents and try to help us, if anyhow possible.

We are in God's hands now and will comply with His will.

A thousand heartfelt greetings and kisses from your faithful parents.

Daddy

1000 kisses, your Mom

# Letter 11.

Postcard written by Otto Bondy to his children, Malines transit camp (Belgium), September 20, 1943.

Loan M. Walter Absil

Language: German



Dear Family,

We are still on this journey. I cannot complain there is much variety on this journey. Someone tried to escape and was shot but not killed. It was bad luck that I lost my good shoes. The journey goes to Holland (Haeren). I hope we can write from there. It should be a good camp-secluded. We are together with people from Belg. J.

Greetings and kisses  
Otto

Handwritten German text on a postcard, dated 20/9 43. The text reads: "Liebe Lieben, Heute 20/9 43. Sind noch immer auf der Fahrt in Holland. uns über Abwehrung mit belagerten Soldaten wurde einer der von uns fliehen konnte in gelassen. Ich habe heute durch besondere bei 1 Schuh (ohne) verloren. Es geht nach Haeren in Holland. Hoffentlich können wir von dort schreiben. Soll ein sehr gutes Lager in einem Kloster sein. Sind mit dem Belg. J. zusammen. Aus dem Lager Otto".



Centre commémoratif  
de l'Holocauste à Montréal  
Montreal Holocaust  
Memorial Centre

5151, ch. de la Côte-Ste-Catherine  
Montréal (Québec) H3W 1M6



## Letter 12.

Letter written by Gretl and Otto Bondy, September 22, 1943.

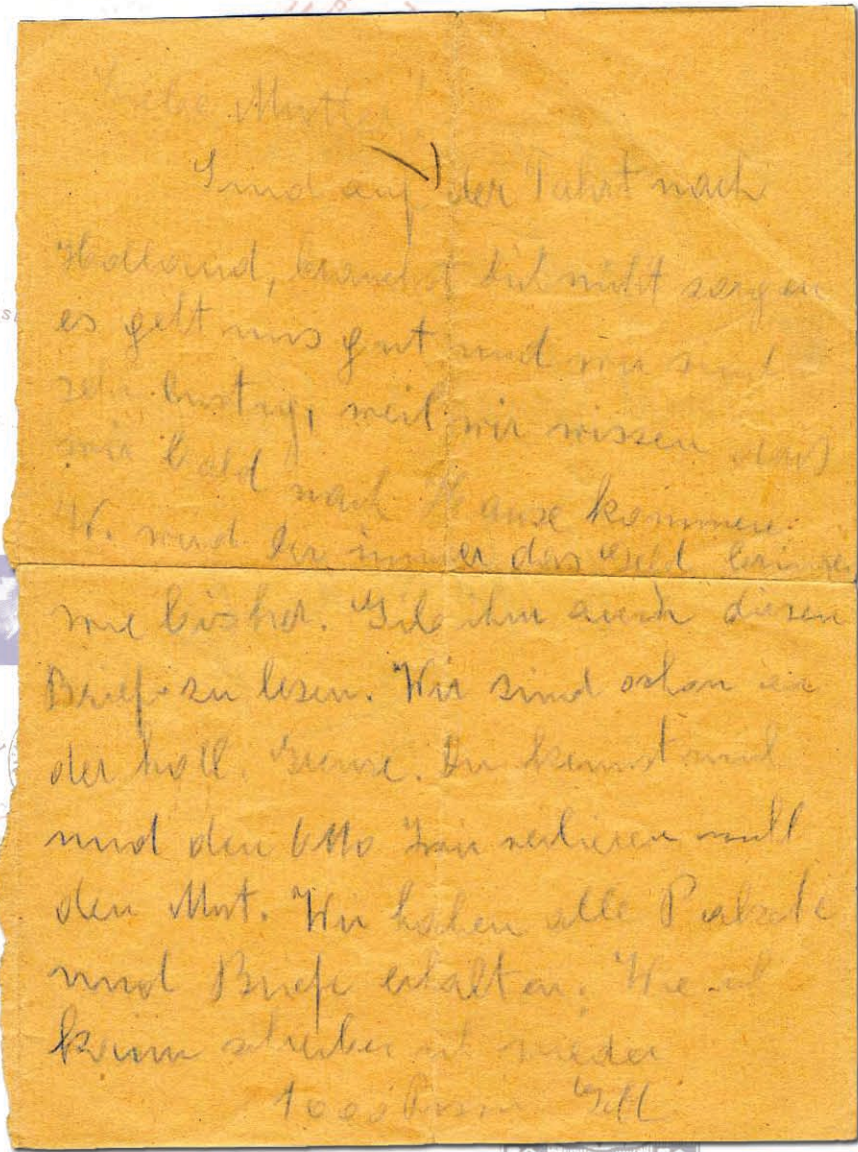
Loan M. Walter Absil

Language: German

Dear Mother,

We are on our way to Holland, don't be worried, we are well and we are very cheerful because we know that we'll soon return home. W. will always bring the money to you as in the past. Give him also this letter to read. We are already on the dutch border. You know me and Otto, we don't lose our courage. We received all parcels and letters. As soon as I can I write again.

1000 kisses  
Gretl



50c BELGIUM 50c



## Letter 13.

Letter from Teddy Liebowitz  
to Wladek Biberkraut  
smuggled from Warsaw  
ghetto (Poland) 1942

Language: Polish, English.

Drogi Władku!

Postaćem raz już list do Ciebie ale list ten  
zginął. W tym razem bardzo dużo napiszę. Ja, Heniek,  
Olek i Salek byliśmy cały czas razem, wszystko robiliśmy  
wspólnie. Teraz ostatnio Olek odstąpił się od nas i wrócił  
do p. ... do na terenie g. On jest tam, skoczarski i nie  
może wychodzić bez zezwolenia. Myślisz, że ja i Salek  
leżymy już w jaskini ale nie chcemy być skoczarskami.  
Heniek jest w tym dupa, on nie chce być z nami.  
Najlepszy byłoby wyjechać ale niema możliwości. Nie możemy  
sobie wyobrazić ideal jest. W naszym pakiecie, k. b. m. p. i r. k. m.  
pismo Hajek. W razie czego będzie tu bitwa o każde okno.  
W tym przypadku nasz koniec. Pamiętaj o planie który ci przedstawiłem  
przed tygodniem. Twój bratnik g. niedługo nie jest i nie  
nie potrafi, ale może się mylić. Najważniejszą rzeczą jest ostatni  
list który idzie do drogi. W razie czego trzeba wiedzieć że nie  
datem Was jak baran. Niechciecież po ubranym listwie  
zabiorę nas stąd do tam. W każdym razie pamiętaj o wszystkim  
co ci mówiłem. Miałeś coś napisać na zaginionym rdze.  
Do zobaczenia na Broadwayu. Wszystkim dla Felenboków. Synowski  
pocztunek dla siostry, braterski dla siostry.  
To our quick meeting.  
your Teddy. 100 kisses for you.

P.S. Pamiętaj o porostach, po mnie.  
Bardziej i więcej. Władku.

Dear Wladek,

I have written to you before, but that letter was probably lost. I told you a lot in that letter.

Heniek, Olek, Salek and I kept together all the time, and also did everything jointly. Recently, Olek left us and joined p. in the g. area. He is there rejuvenated and isn't allowed to leave without permission. Heniek is dumb. He doesn't know what he wants - the moron. It would be best to leave this place, but it's impossible.

You have no idea how many weapons are in our possession, also lots of eggs.

In any case, there will be a fight for every stone and window, and of course, it may be our end. Remember the plan we had before you left the ghetto? Your go-between is useless, or I may be mistaken?

This is most likely my last letter going this way. In any case, you should know that I didn't go like a sheep!

There is a possibility that we will be taken into the forest after the battle. In any case, remember all I told you!

See you on Broadway!

Regards for the Felenboks. A son's kiss for your mother. A brotherly kiss for your sister!

To our quick meeting,

Your Teddy



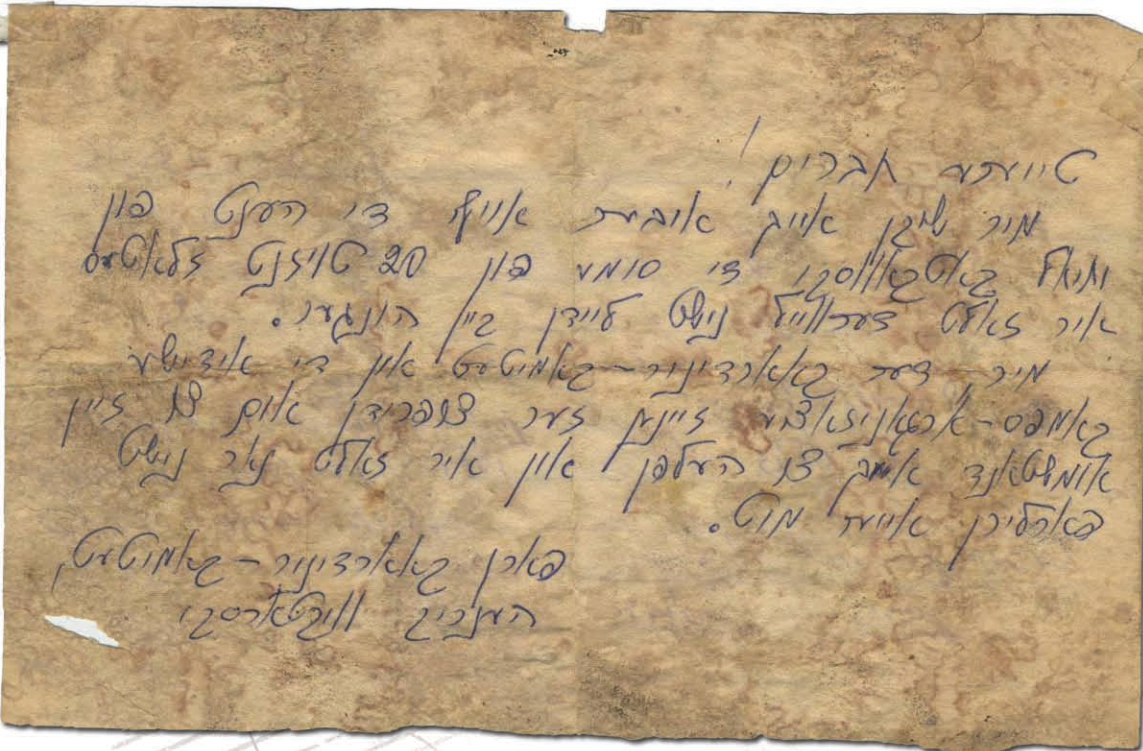
Centre commémoratif  
de l'Holocauste à Montréal  
Montreal Holocaust  
Memorial Centre

5151, ch. de la Côte-Ste-Catherine  
Montréal (Québec) H3W 1M6

# Letter 14.

Letter smuggled from the Bund Coordinating Committee in Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Charles Kotkowski in forced labour camp Piotrkow (Poland), 1943

Language: Yiddish



Dear comrades!

We are sending the sum of 20.000 Zlotys to Chil Kotkowski, so that in the meanwhile you should not suffer from hunger. We the Coordinating Committee and the Jewish fighting organization are very pleased to be able to help you, so that you will not loose your self respect and courage.

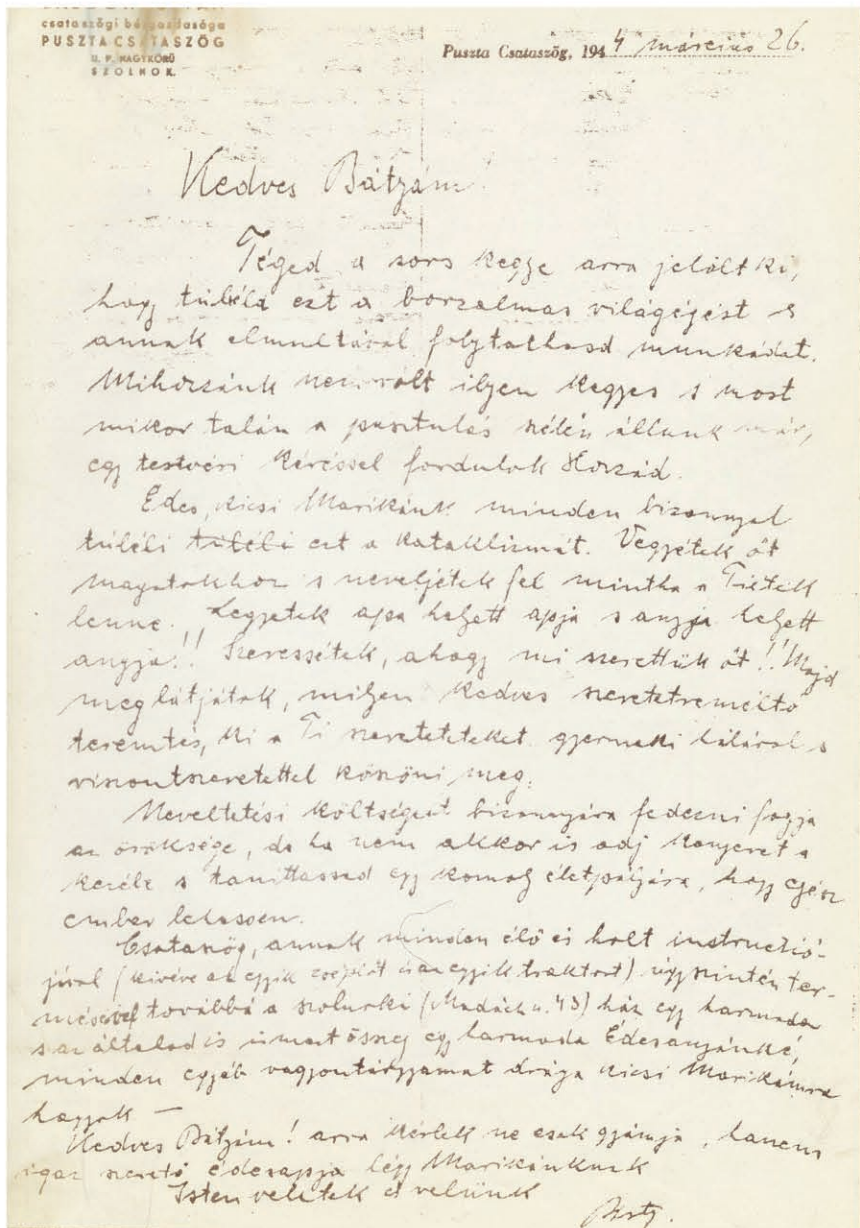
For the Coordinating Committee,  
Henryk Wiktorski



# Letter 15.

Letter from a Hungarian father to his brother living as a refugee in Italy, Hungary,  
March 26, 1944

Language: Hungarian



My dear Brother!

Fate has chosen you to survive the horrors of this inferno, and when it will be over, you will resume your life. It has not been as kind to us, and now that we are standing on the brink of extinction! I turn to you with a brotherly request.

Our darling little Marika in all probability will survive this cataclysm. I implore you, please take her and bring her up as your own. I beg you, take our place and be mother, father to her! you will see what a sweet, affectionate child she is and that in return she will shower you with a child's innocent love and gratitude.

Her inheritance, I believe, will cover the expenses of her upbringing, but if it does not, I beg you, please support her, educate her and steer her toward a serious profession so that she will grow up to be a fulfilled, self-reliant adult. Csatasgoeg with all the surrounding land, livestock and machinery (except one tractor and one combine) as well as all the crops, one third of the house in Szolnok (Madach u. 43), one third of the money from our Mother and all my other worldly goods I leave for my darling little Marika.

Dear Brother! I beseech you in my stead be her loving father not only her guardian.

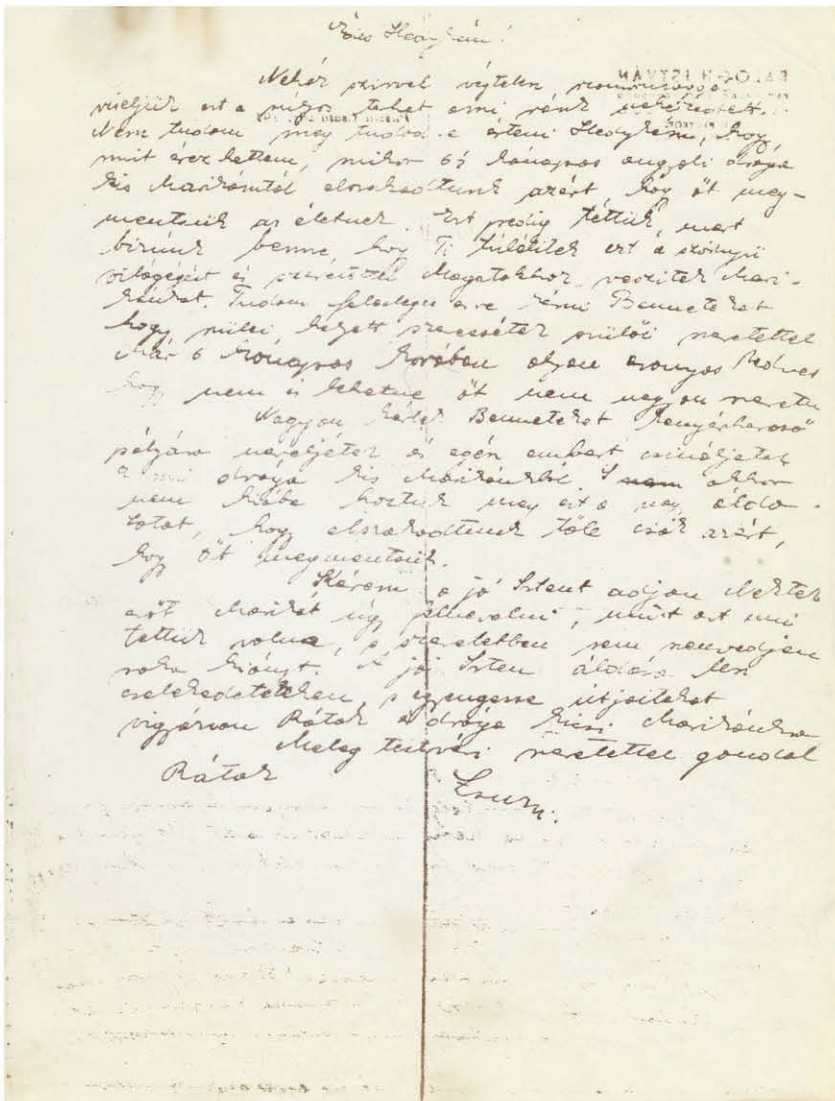
May god be with you and with all of us.

Pistó

# Letter 16.

Letter from a Hungarian mother to her sister-in-law, Hungary, March 26, 1944

Language: Hungarian



My dear Hedy!

With heavy heart and infinite sadness we bear this heavy burden that is ours. I don't know if you can understand what I felt when I had to part with my 6 1/2 months old angelic darling little Marika so her life could be spared. We are doing this because we believe that you will survive this horrific inferno and that you will take our Marika in with love. I know it is unnecessary to ask you to bestow on her your parental love. At 6 months she is already so sweet that it is impossible not to adore her.

I implore you, nurture her and steer her towards a lucrative career so that she will grow up to be a well educated self-sufficient adult.

I beg the good Lord to give you strength to bear the responsibility of guardianship of our little girl and bring her up as we would have done, that she should never lack love and attention. May the Almighty bless you and guide you throughout your lives.

Take care of our darling little Marika.

I will always think of you with warmest sisterly love.

Zsuzsi



# Letter 17.

Letter written by Saul Stein to his father Ben Stein in Montreal (Canada) while serving in the R.C.A.F, Germany, April 30, 1945

Language: English

SOMEWHERE IN  
GERMANY

CAN. R. 108060  
L.A.C. STEIN S.  
R.C.A.F. OVERSEAS  
4-30-45

APR. 30/45

Dear Brothers & Sisters

I am writing this letter to each and every one of you at home and also my friends. After what I have seen and experienced yesterday has left me completely heartbroken. It is something that will forever remain in my mind. As you know the Allies are overrunning Germany today and as they pass on they are liberating concentration camps and prisoners of war camps. This is what I want you to know that your brother Saul was the first Canadian Jewish boy to enter a concentration camp filled with Jews. It was also the first concentration camp the Allies liberated. The name of the camp I cannot disclose but it is one of the largest the Germans had. It is a long story how I got to know of this camp. I do expect to derive any publicity from this but I will only give you a few facts about this camp.

After three and one half years I have finally found out for myself what I am fighting for, to liberate our own Jewish people and other nationalities. Our Jewish padre from 2nd T.A.F. came to see us Thursday night and the first thing he said to the Jewish boys that he needs help. He described the picture to us but after a while broke down. We gave him whatever food we had and he left for the camp to feed a few people. The next day we made a collection of food, candy and cigarettes from our wing. The donations were tremendous and everyone gave whatever they had with their full heart and soul. It took myself, our Protestant padre and another Jewish lad to collect all the donations with my section's truck. By the time we got through the truck was loaded and it was impossible to pack in any more. In the evening the padre came back from the concentration camp and I showed him all the stuff. He was surprised to see how well response was from the wing.

The next morning we left for the camp. My food and supplies had from the office come along. They wanted to see what the inside of one of these places looked like. When we arrived there we had to wait outside before we could unload the food. Before entering the camp we had to be deloused with a spray gun as the place was full of lice. There was also a danger sign up "Typhus" which had been in a very dangerous disease but we all had immunization against it.

Somewhere in Germany  
April 30, 1945

Dear brothers and sisters,  
I am writing this letter to each and everyone of you at home and also my friends. After what I have seen and experienced yesterday has left me completely heartbroken. It is something that will forever remain in my mind. As you know the Allies are overrunning Germany today and as they pass on they are liberating concentration camps and prisoner of war camps. This is what I want you to know that your brother Saul was the first Canadian Jewish boy to enter a concentration camp filled with Jews. It was also the first concentration camp the Allies liberated. The name of the camp I cannot disclose but it is one of the largest the Germans had. It is a long story how I got to know of this camp. I do expect to derive any publicity from this but I will only give you a few facts about this camp.

After three and one half years I have finally found out for myself what I am fighting for, to liberate our own Jewish people and other nationalities. Our Jewish padre from 2nd T.A.F. came to see us Thursday night and the first thing he said to the Jewish boys that he needs help. He described the picture to us but after a while broke down.

We gave him whatever food we had and he left for the camp to feed a few people. The next day we made a collection of food, candy, and cigarettes from our wing. The donations were tremendous and everyone gave whatever they had with their full heart and soul. It took myself, our Protestant padre and another Jewish lad to collect all the donations with my section's truck. By the time we got through the truck was loaded and it was impossible to pack in any more. In the evening the padre came back from the concentration camp and I showed him all the stuff. He was surprised to see how well response was from the wing.



# Letter 17 (cont'd)

The next morning we left for the camp. My boss and another lad from the office came along. They wanted to see what the inside of one of these places looked like. When we arrived there we had to wait a while before we could unload the food. Before entering the camp we had to be deloused with a spray gun as the place was full of lice. There was also a danger sign of "Typhus" which you know is a very dangerous disease but we all had inoculations against it.

While waiting the Jewish padre showed us around the camp. I have never yet seen so many people in all my life in one camp. There were dead bodies sprawled outside wherever we walked. Those who are living look practically dead and everyone is starving from hunger. The army is trying their utmost to clear out the camp and get them to hospitals. The main problem is food and medical supplies. I cannot begin to describe to you how grim the picture is. We have got to do something for these people immediately as they are dying like flies. Our own people must help them. I never dream that one day I would see such horrible scenes. I can't believe how there could be such a fanatic race as the bloody German people. The greatest pleasure I had in the camp was to see German prisoners load the dead and believe me the army is working the ass off them. This is just a few of the things which I can tell you, but when I get home I am going to see what I can do to help them. If only more people would see this camp they would realize how they were tortured by the Germans. I never slept all night thinking of that camp.

You were told all this but your brother who is there to see all this and who was the first one to visit a concentration camp. Kindly relate all this to Micky and see whether he can write an article in the "Y" Beacon. Cheerios for now and the best of luck. Hoping to see you all soon.

Saul



Translations:  
Renata Zadzman (Polish to English),  
Helena Daniel (Russian to English),  
Aurélie Petite (English to French)

To receive information on our educational programs, please contact:

Sabrina Moisan  
Coordonnatrice éducation  
Education Coordinator

Tél. 514 345-2605 poste 3025  
5151, chemin de la Côte-Ste-Catherine, Montréal (Québec) H3W 1M6  
Sabrina.moisan@mhmc.ca

