

17 LETTERS :

for the last time and forever



Musée Holocauste Montréal
Montreal Holocaust Museum

TEACHING GUIDE



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Introduction

The Montreal Holocaust Museum 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, dated between 1941 and 1944, were selected from the Museum's collection. They were written by people caught in the storm of Nazism and the genocide of European Jews during the Second World War.

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

These letters tell us about their writers' living conditions, hunger, and misery, and, especially, their feelings of despair and even resignation in the face of tragedy. They also illustrate the complex history of the Holocaust and the diversity of lives shattered by a relentless policy of mass murder. Although many of these writers died during the Holocaust, their last few words express a glimpse of their humanity and a symbol of hope for the living.

The texts of 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 of Canada.

January 27 – the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz – was proclaimed the International Day in Memory of Holocaust Victims by the United Nations in 2005. Unless mentioned otherwise, all documents are property of the Montreal Holocaust Museum.



Connections to the Quebec Education Program (QEP)

High school (Cycle 1)

Ethics and Religious Culture program

- Competency 1 - Reflect on Ethical Questions

Name the elements that influence a change in values and societal norms (e.g.: war, immigration).

Social Sciences – Geography, History and Citizenship Education programs

Enable students to:

- Construct his/her consciousness of global citizenship
- Examine social phenomena from a historical perspective
- Interpret social phenomena using the historical method
- Construct his/her consciousness of citizenship through the study of history, with particular reference to the Holocaust

Progression of Learning: Civil rights and freedoms; denial, struggle and recognition; Indicates situations in which governments may limit or suspend civil rights and freedoms; Indicates current situations in which civil rights and freedoms are ignored

Secondary English Language Arts program

Enable students to:

- Use language/talk to communicate and to learn
- Read written texts
- Produce written text

Progression of Learning: Interpretation of a text; interrelates aspects of his/her reading profile, the structure, features and content of the text, and its social/cultural/historical context; uses problem solving to interpret data and information critically

Students will interpret the texts written by people in horrific contexts (e.g.: ghettos, concentration camps).

High school (Cycle 2)

English Language Arts program

Enable students to:

- Use language/talk to communicate and to learn
- Read and listens to written, spoken and media texts (when using the Montreal Holocaust Museum's app for smartphones and tablets)
- Produce written texts

Progression of Learning: Interpretation of a text; Interrelates aspects of his/her reading profile, the structure, features and content of the text, and its social/cultural/historical context; Uses problem solving to interpret data and information critically; Interprets data/findings; Adopts a stance that promotes the smooth development of a hypothesis, thesis statement or controlling an idea in own research

Students will interpret the texts written by people in horrific contexts (e.g.: ghettos, concentration camps). They will also have the opportunity to conduct historical research.

History of the Twentieth Century

Social Phenomenon: "Crises and Conflicts"

Progression of Learning: The Second World War

Indicate key events that occurred during Germany's occupation of Europe (e.g. collaboration or resistance of the majority of the population, and genocide of Jews).

Contemporary World

Theme: "Tensions and Conflicts"

Progression of Learning: Sources of tension and conflict; Exercise rights and freedoms. Name rights and freedoms that populations are deprived of in situations of tension and conflict (e.g. right to justice, freedom of thought and expression).

Teaching with Primary Sources in the History Classroom

To make sure that students can learn from the documents available at the Museum, we propose that you introduce them to a five-step approach to critical analysis of sources. In addition, before you have them read these texts, take time to ask your students what they already know about the Holocaust and what they would like to learn by looking at these primary source documents.

Glossary

Primary source document:

A document written by an actor in or witness to the events recounted. Examples include, but are not limited to, testimonies, travel literature, legal codes, letters, newspaper articles of the time, and inscriptions on tablets (stone, clay, or wood).

Secondary source document:

A document written by a person who analyzes, comments on, or interprets primary source documents. Examples include, but are not limited to, works of non-fiction on historical subjects, novels, magazine articles, and websites.

Fact:

Information that can be verified.

Opinion:

A personal perspective, often arbitrary, not based on facts.

1. Preliminary Reading

The first step is to have students read the document and then 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: the date, the identity of its author, his or her intention, the nature of the document. Students 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 in or a witness to the events recounted?
- For whom is this document written?
- For what purpose has it been written?
- Is this document an original or a translation?
- Is this a summary or a complete text?

3. Internal analysis

Internal analysis of the document focuses on its content. It should highlight the information and facts contained in the document. To do this, students answer 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 that they found. To do this, they answer the following questions:

- What was learned from reading the document?
- For what purpose could the document be useful?
- Does the document answer the questions we had about this historical event?
- Which questions does it answer?

5. Questioning and research

If you wish, you can use these documents as a basis for students to conduct historical research. From the topics identified in steps 3 and 4, students can formulate questions to go further in their exploration of the subject matter and then proceed with the research in order to find answers. In doing so, they identify the subtext of those letters and raise questions that will help them get a better overview of the historical event.



Student Questionnaire

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

Who is the author?

Who is the 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 are the themes 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?



List of documents

1. Postcard sent from Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Paris (France) on February 19, 1942. Language: Polish. The letter is featured in the Museum's permanent exhibition.
2. Postcard sent from Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Paris (France) on May 18, 1942. Language: Polish. The letter is featured in the Museum's permanent exhibition.
3. Postcard sent from the Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Moscow (Russia) on May 30, 1941. Language: Polish.
4. Letter sent from 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 Deutz 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 Deutz, interned in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp (Poland), on July 25, 1943. Language: German. The letter is featured in the Museum's permanent exhibition.
8. Death notice for Willy Deutz, Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp (Poland), September 7, 1943. Language: German. The notice is featured in the Museum's permanent exhibition and part of stop 308 in the app.
9. Letter written by Bella Kaminski from the train deporting her to Auschwitz, date unknown, Belgium. Language: German. The letter is featured in the Museum's permanent exhibition and stop 109 in the app. Bella's daughter's video testimony accompanies the letter in the app.
10. Last letter sent to Lothar Lewin in the internment camp in Sherbrooke (Canada) from his parents in Berlin (Germany), January 6, 1943. Language: German.

To download the free app for smartphones and tablets: <http://museeholocauste.ca/en/app/>

11. Postcard written by Otto Bondy to his children, Malines transit camp (Belgium), September 20, 1943. Language: German. The letter is featured in the Museum's permanent exhibition.

12. Letter written by Gretl and Otto Bondy, September 22, 1943. Language: German. The letter is featured in the Museum's permanent exhibition.

13. Letter from Teddy Liebowitz to Wladek Biberkraut, smuggled out of Warsaw ghetto (Poland) 1942. Language: Yiddish. The letter is featured in the Museum's permanent exhibition.

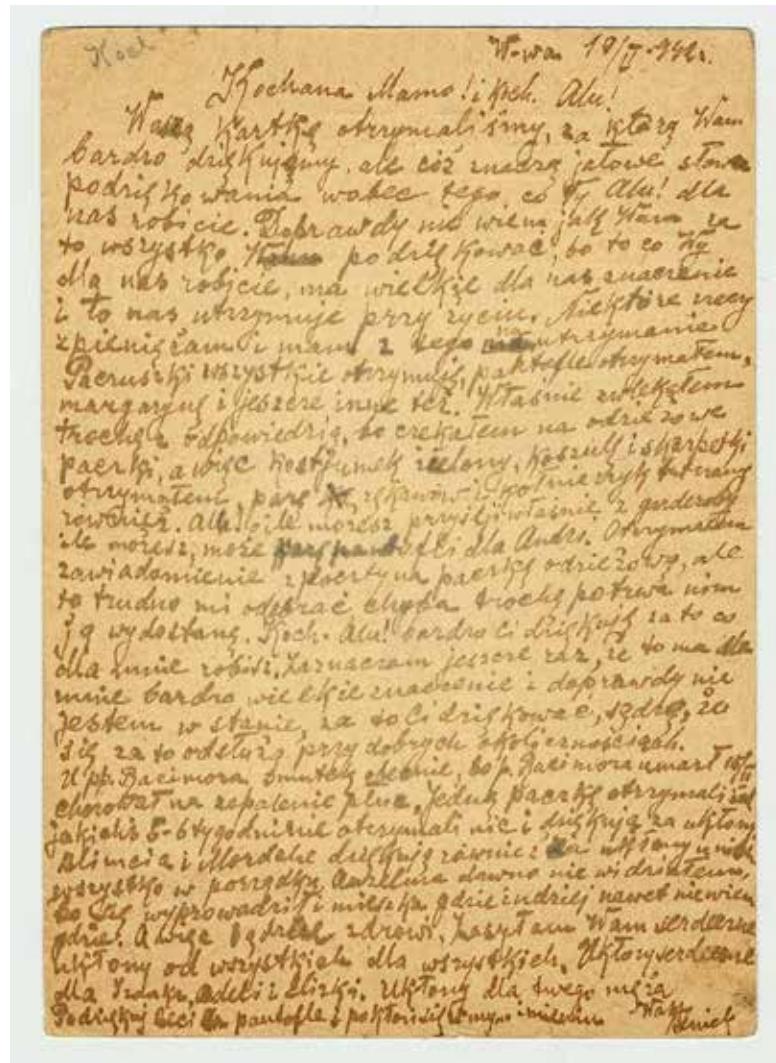
14. Smuggled letter from the Bund Coordinating Committee in Warsaw ghetto (Poland) to Charles Kotkowski in Piotrkow (Poland) forced labour camp, 1943. Languages: Polish and English. The letter is featured in the Museum's permanent exhibition and stop 113 in the app. Charles' video testimony accompanies the letter in the app.

15. Letter from a Hungarian father (in Hungary) to his brother living as a refugee in Italy, March 26, 1944. Language: Hungarian.

16. Letter from a Hungarian mother (in Hungary) to her sister-in-law, March 26, 1944. Language: Hungarian.

17. Letter written by Saul Stein to his father, Ben Stein, in Montreal (Canada) while serving in the RCAF, Germany, April 30, 1945. Language: English. The letter is part of stop 116 in the app.

Document 1



Document 1

Warsaw, February 19, 1942

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.

I'm selling some of the things from all the parcels I receive, shoes, margarine, and other things, and I live on the proceeds.

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.

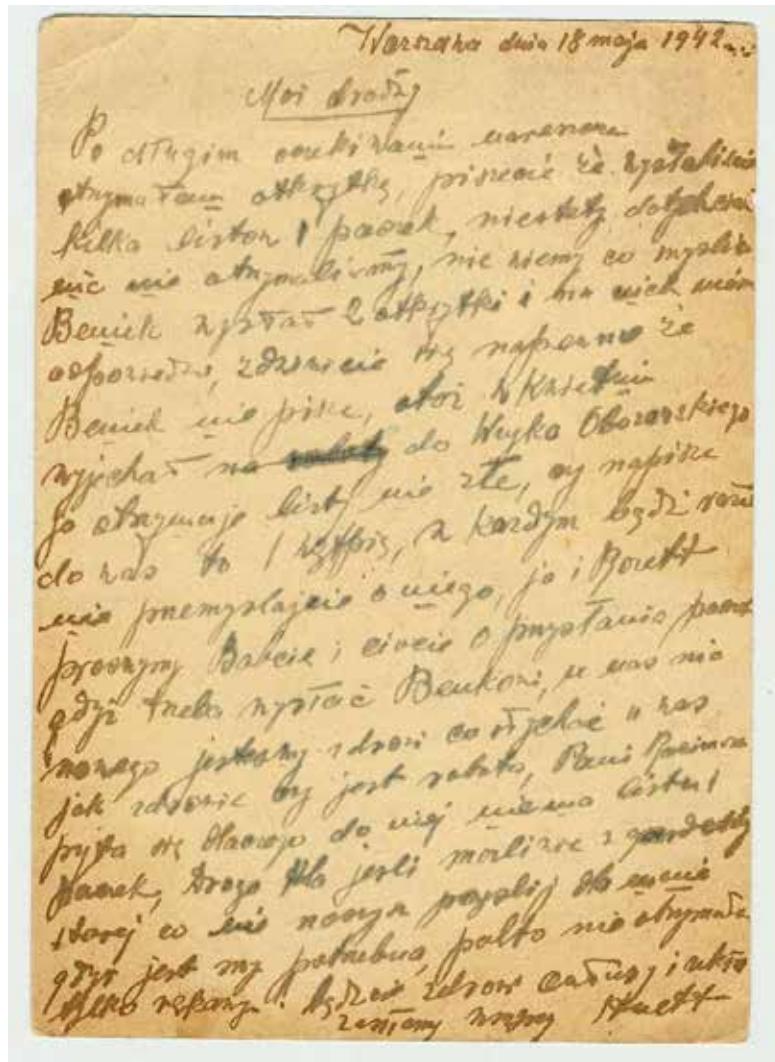
Dear Ala, I thank you for everything you do for me. I regret that I can't return the favours you do for me, but I will do so when conditions are better.

Sadness at present at the Racimorases' 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.

Blincia and Mordche thank you. As well, regards from them, everything is well with them, I haven't seen 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 on my behalf.

Document 2



Document 2

Warsaw, May 18, 1942

Dear Everyone,

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

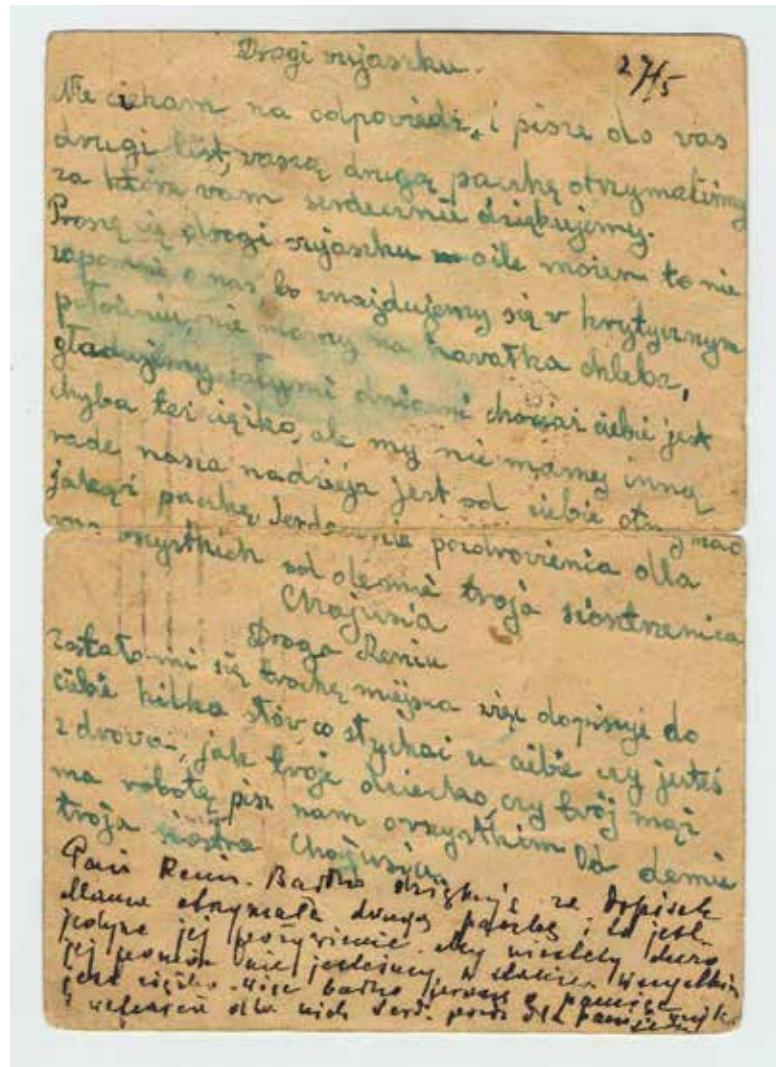
You must be wondering why Beniek doesn't write. He left in April for Uncle Obozorski. If you receive letters from him, conditions are not bad, reply, don't worry about him.

Rosette and I beg Grandma & Auntie to send parcels because they should be sent to Beniek. Nothing new with 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, please send the old clothing you are not wearing anymore to me because I'm in need of a coat, I received only sleeves. Be healthy, I kiss you,

Regards, Rosette

Document 3



Document 3

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

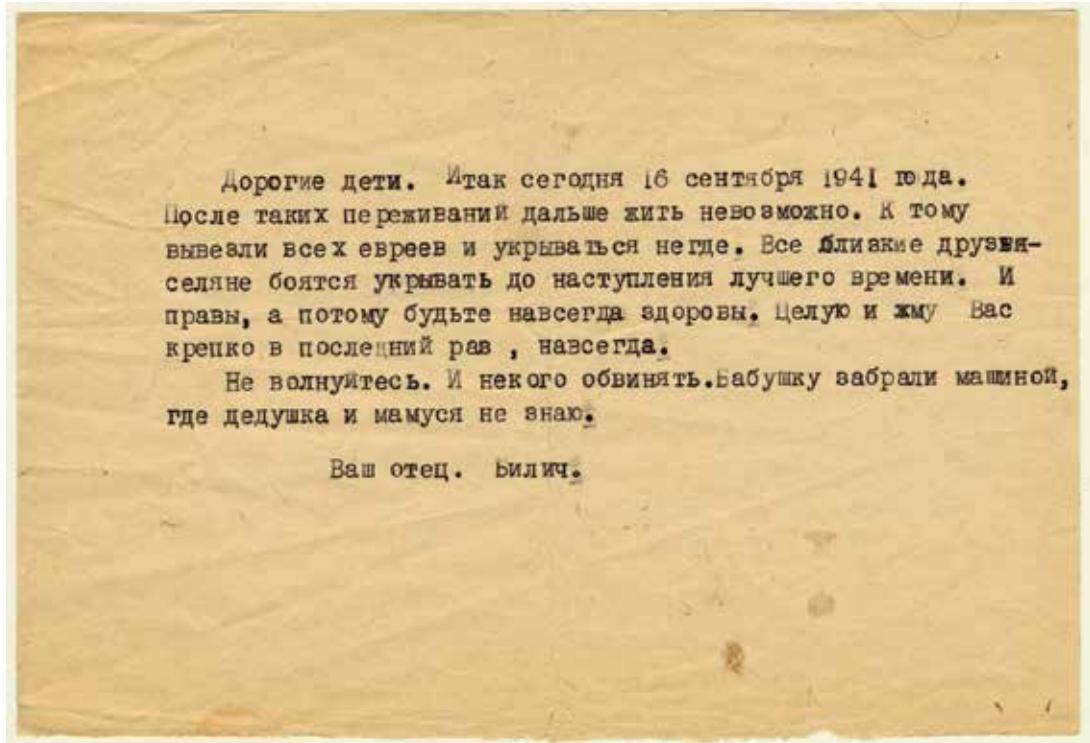
Dear Uncle!

I am not waiting for an answer and I am writing a second letter to you. I received your second parcel, for which we are very grateful. Please, my dear 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 every day, but we have no choice but to 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.

Document 4



Document 4

Dear children,

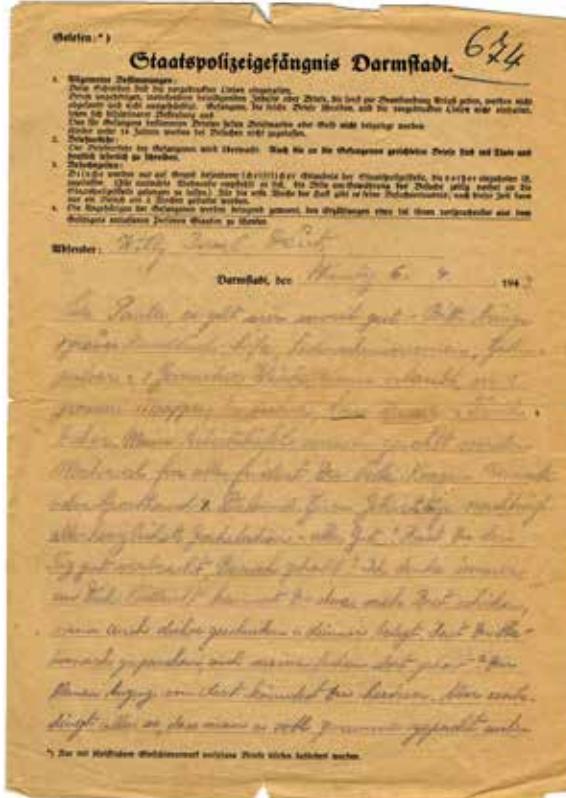
Today is Sept. 19, 1941. It's impossible to continue to live after these horrible experiences. All Jews have been taken away and there is no place to hide. Close friends are afraid to hide us until better times come. And they are right.

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.

Document 5



am heut' Abend kann' kommt du mit den Leuten?
Kommt du mit's Nachtmusikus? Da! Wie geht es an
Dir? Dir? Ich kann' mit den Leuten in Ordnung - jetzt
am Freitag haben Rehearsal für die Abschluss-Konzert und da
findet eigentlich kein' Zeit mehr da irgendwo - aber
nicht so ganz ungezogen wie ich. Ging wieder nach oben, um
zu telefonieren, wie ich gestern hat' sie verabredet. Dir -
Sie und ich kommen zu Schlossberg, das ist Geburtstag
Mannsgründungskomitee, weiß? Endlich. Gute Besserung
hat der mal was von mir. Maggi geht' auf die Mühle in
Tiefenort - Frau Bon - früher, als ich hier gewesen
bin, gründete sie nicht dort & eigentlich, hier, als man
gefeiert, in Weingut der Linsenbach und Eselspfad auf
die Tiere schauten hinunter. Diese große Loge ist
in Ordnung, und endlich ist! Wohl Freitag kommt
ich, kann' leider - die Uhr ist klein - nicht genau er-
mitteln. Frau Oberst de Polignac gekommen? Noch
doch nicht, nicht ausserhalb, woher, das ist mir ge-
wagt, so leicht, wenn wir eine andere geschrieben
wären. Ich muss jahrelang - lange und bei mir - ein
verdammtes Sattel aufgrund einer Kugel - habe sie
geworfen zu Brüder des Sonnenhof. Werde bald mehr
ausführlicher. Letzte Beobachtung auf der Straße. Maggi ist
gerne - kann' mir nicht erklären, warum.

Document 5

Darmstadt Police State Jail

Sender: Willy Israel Deutz

Darmstadt, 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 for your birthday, belated! Did you spend the day well? Did you have visitors? I always think of you. Perhaps you can send more bread, but 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 in "subtenants"? How is your relationship with Isi's wife? I get along with him as well as with the others.

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

Did you ever hear anything about Arab and Maggie? I hope Aunt's leg is well again. Is Uncle Praimham healthy and have you gone there sometimes? I hope that I will get a detailed account from you.

Are you still going to the beauty salon to get your hair cut on Saturdays? My greatest concern is that you take care of yourself and eat properly as well! I need foot rags, large size if possible, so that I do not get holes in my socks. Did you give the wooden box to Mrs. Maier? We have nevertheless felt so much so deeply in our 14-year marriage that it would be enough now, if only we would be together again.

All my thoughts and concerns are with you and your acquaintances. Stay healthy and happy; it is better to take someone into the apartment than to move out. Write detailed news as soon as possible. Stay in contact with the others.

Greetings and kisses,

Your loving Willy.

Document 6

Die Liede Willy, June 11. p. 43

Mein Amelie hat Geburtstag heut
möcht gern gratulieren,
möcht senden ihm die Wünsche mein
doch ich kann's nicht ausspielen.

Wie ist so nah, so bang uns Herz
möcht fassen Dein Händchen,
Ich drücken an mein wunders Herz
n. feinen Herzen Dein sprudeln.

Wo magst du sein, wo wird's geben,
Dort gab' nicht davon Drücken,
Doch hoff' ich, auf ein Wiedersetzen

Document 6

This letter, written on July 11, 1943, was never sent because Paula was receiving no news from her husband and did not know where he was interned at that time.

For you dear Willy, on July 11, 1943

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.

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

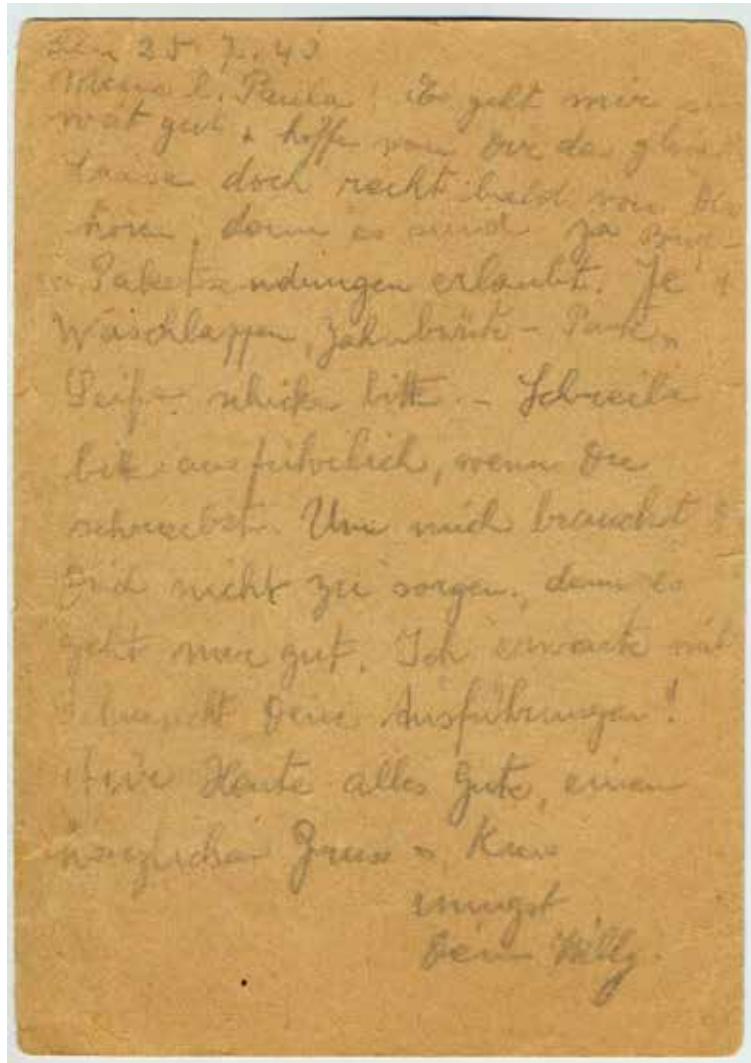
Where might you be, how are you doing,
I may not think of it.
Still I hope for our reunion
God will bestow you upon me once again.

May he (God) 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

Document 7



Document 7

The letter, sent on July 25, 1943 from the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, was received only on September 29.

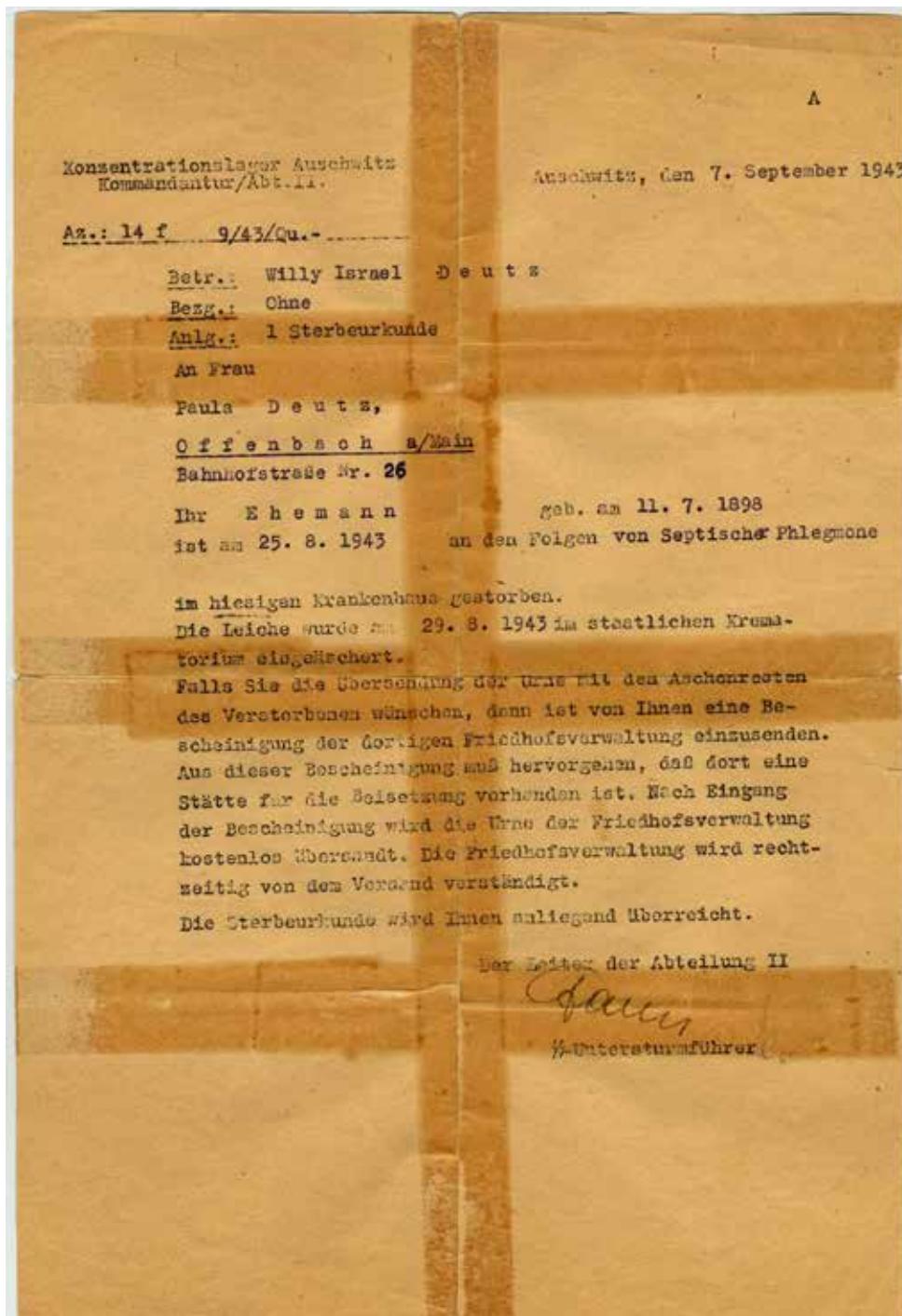
My dear Paula!

So far I'm well and I hope you're well, too. Please contact me soon. Letters and parcels are allowed. Please send a washcloth, 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

Document 8



Document 8

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 phlegmon. The corpse was cremated on 29 August 1943 in the governmental crematorium.

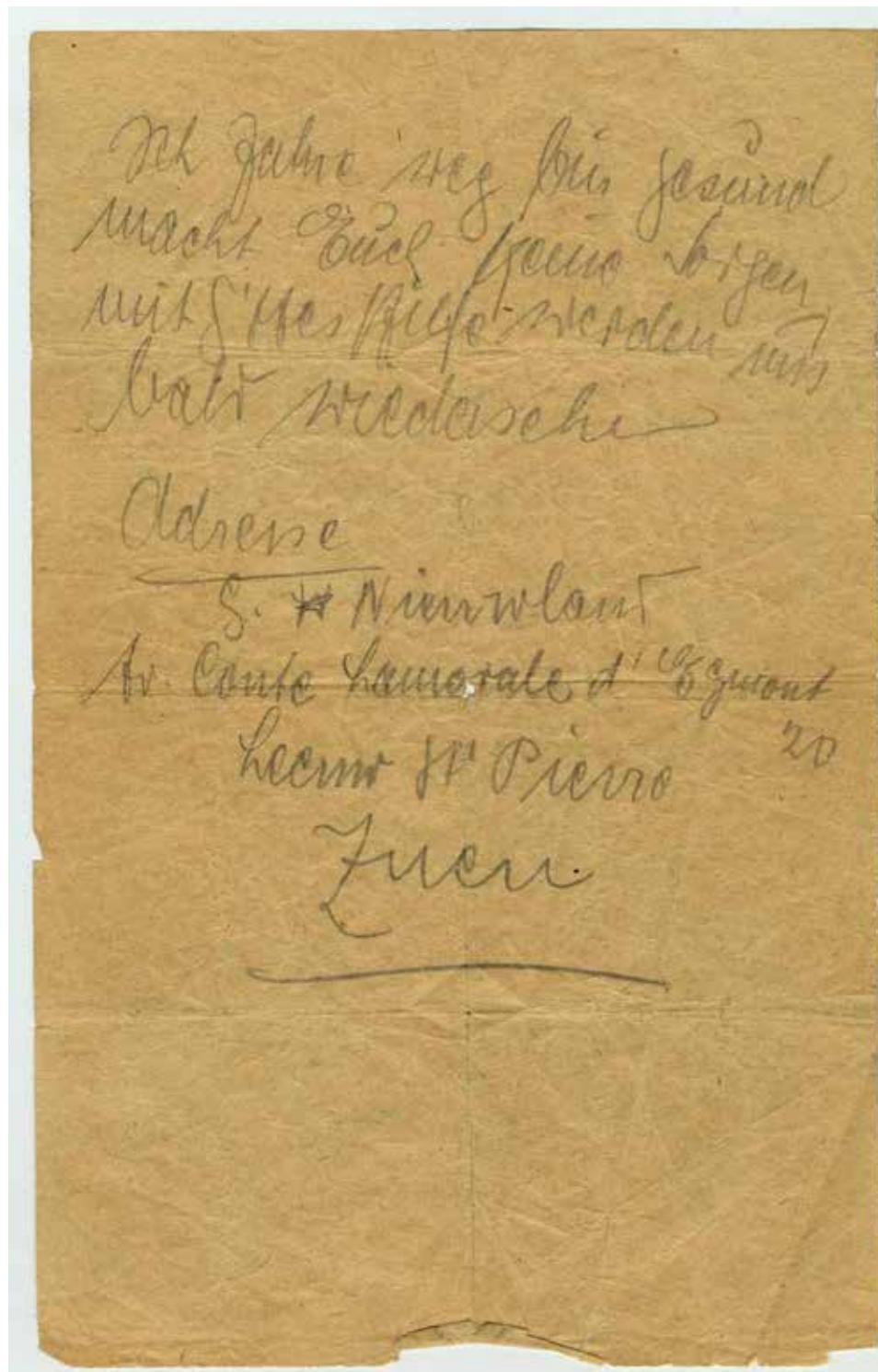
If you would like the urn with the remaining ashes of the deceased, you must send us a certificate from your cemetery director. This certificate must state that there is a plot available for the remains. After receipt of this certificate, we will forward the urn to the cemetery free of charge. The cemetery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

The death certificate is enclosed.

Chief of Section II

SS Second Lieutenant

Document 9

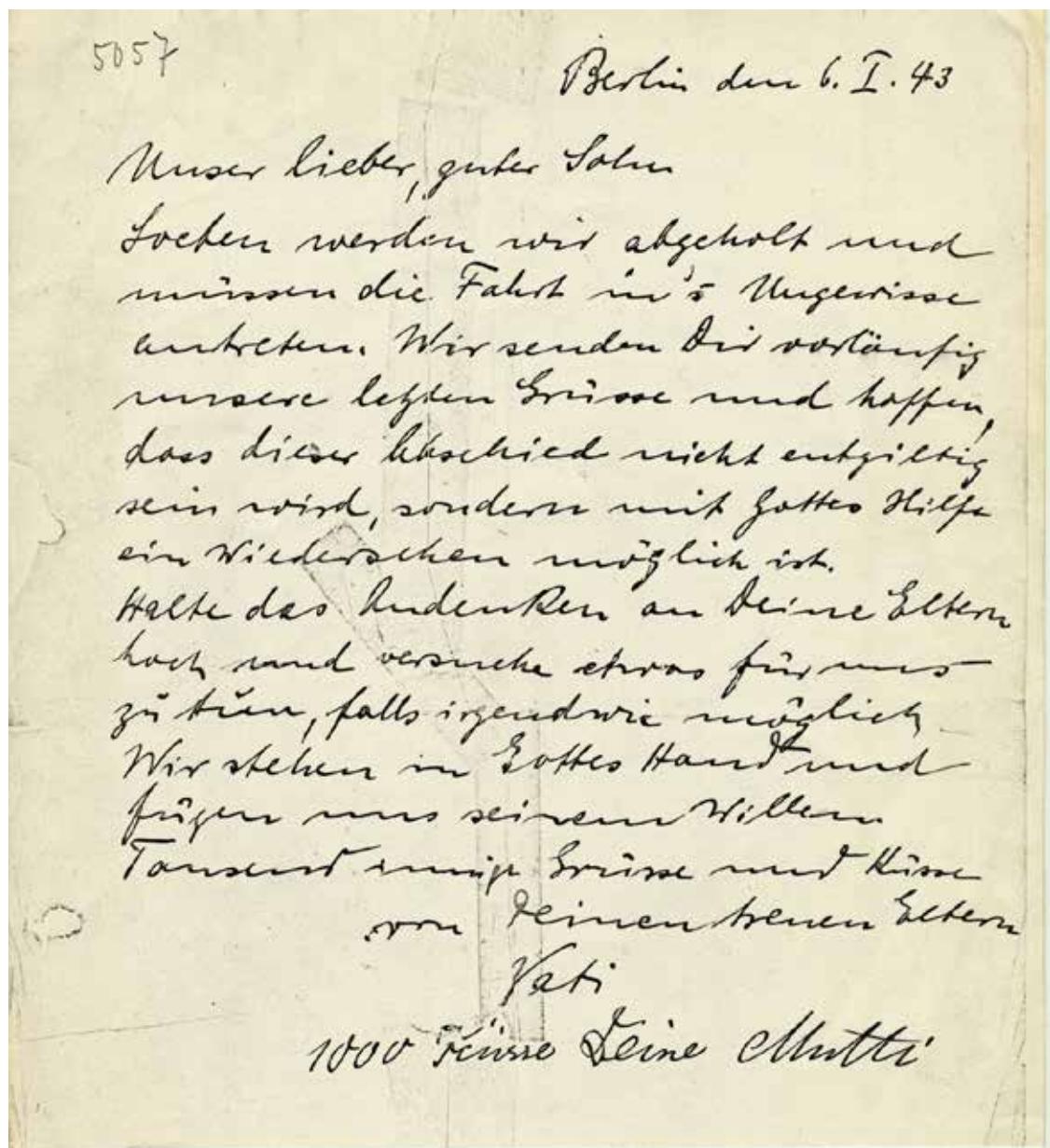


Document 9

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

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

Document 10



Document 10

Last letter sent to Lothar Lewin in the internment camp in Sherbrooke (Canada) from his parents

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 at all possible.

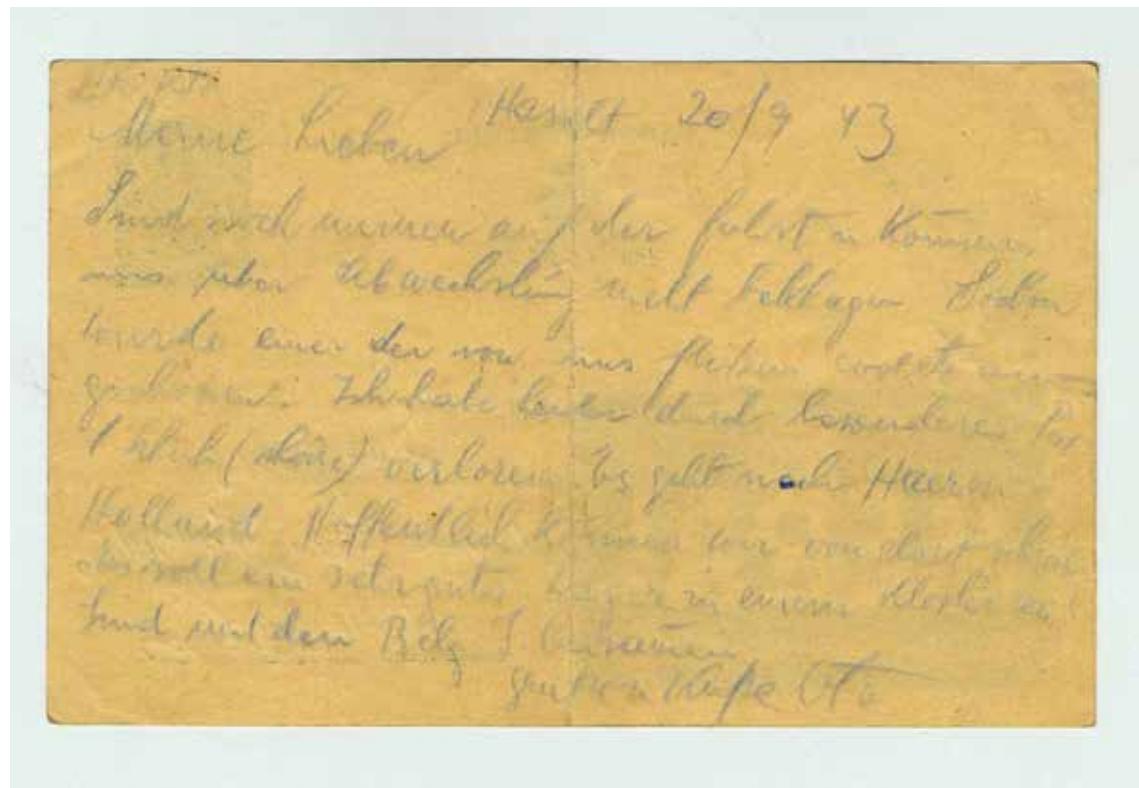
We are in God's hands now and will comply with His will.

A thousand heartfelt greetings and kisses from your faithful parents.

Daddy

1000 kisses, your Mom

Document 11



Document 11

Otto was a prisoner of the Malines transit camp (Belgium)

Hasselt, 20/9/43 (September 20, 1943)

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

Document 12

Und auf der Tafel nach
Herrn und Herrn Schulmeister zeigen
es sehr gut und man sieht
dass wir nicht nur wissen
wollen und kann kommen
wir sind sehr dankbar und
wir danken Ihnen auch für Ihre
Briefe zu lesen. Wie sind schon in
der Schule. Der Herr und
muss die alte Frau auf dem Lande von
der Mutter. Hier haben alle Freunde
und Freunde erhalten. Wie
kann ich Ihnen es wieder
teilen. Ich



Document 12

**Letter written by Walter's parents on a train headed for deportation to Auschwitz,
September 22, 1943**

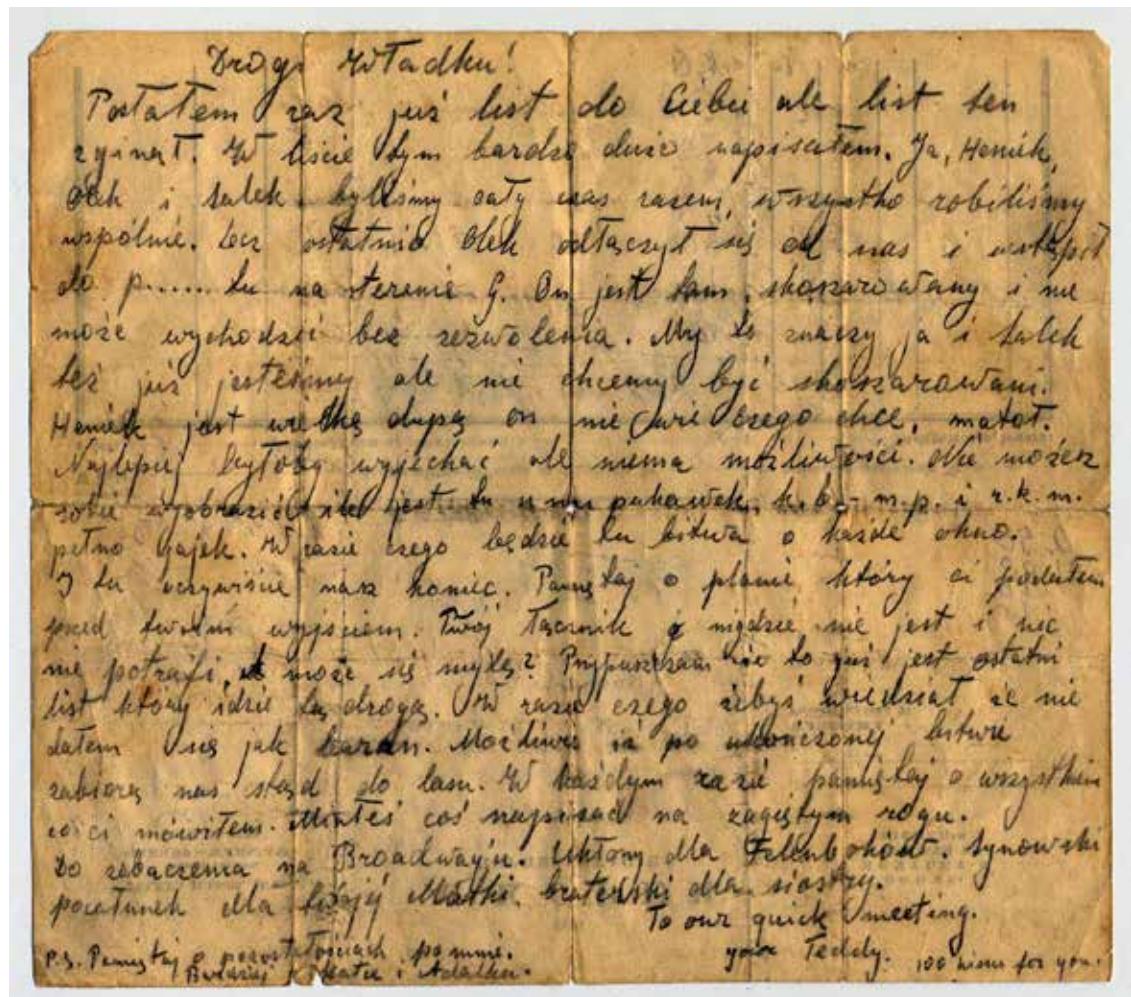
Dear Mother,

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. I'll write again as soon as I can.

1000 kisses

Gretl

Document 13



Document 13

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

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 stayed together all the time, and also did everything jointly. Recently, Olek left us and joined p. in the g. area. He is doing well there 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 the end of us. Remember the plan we had before you left the ghetto? Your go-between is useless, or am I 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!

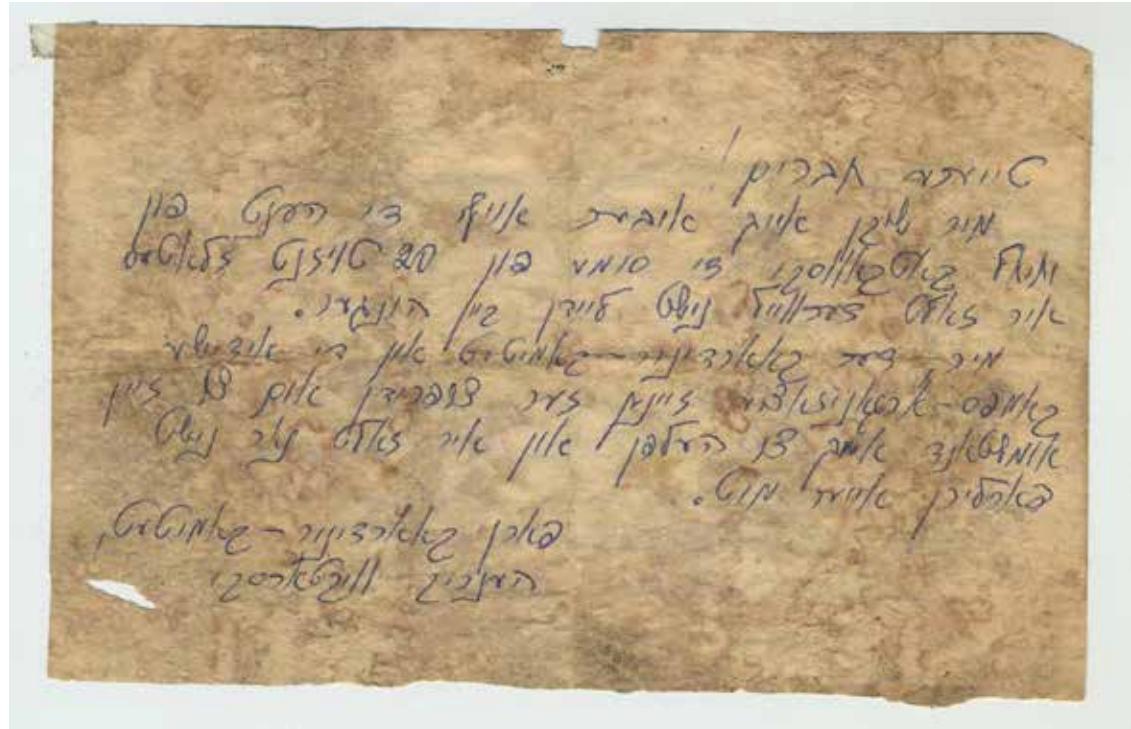
See you on Broadway!

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

Until our next meeting,

Your Teddy

Document 14



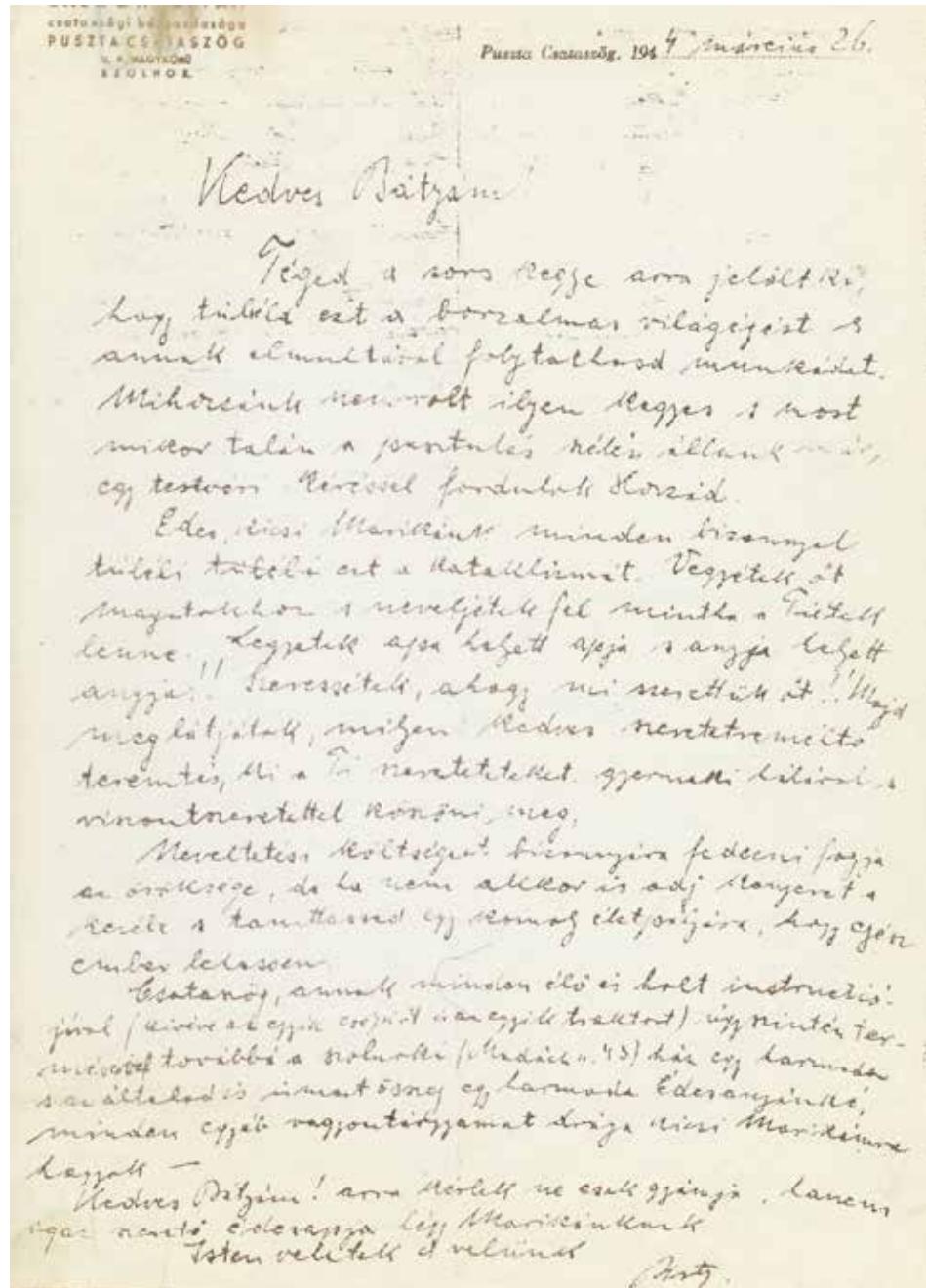
Document 14

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

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 lose your self-respect and courage. For the Coordinating Committee, Henryk Wiktorski

Document 15



Document 15

Letter from a Hungarian man to his brother living as a refugee in Italy

Puszta Csataszög, March 26, 1944

My dear Brother,

Fate has chosen you to survive the horrors of this inferno, and when it is over, you will resume your life. It has not been as kind to us, and now 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 and father to her! You will see what a sweet, affectionate child she is, and 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.

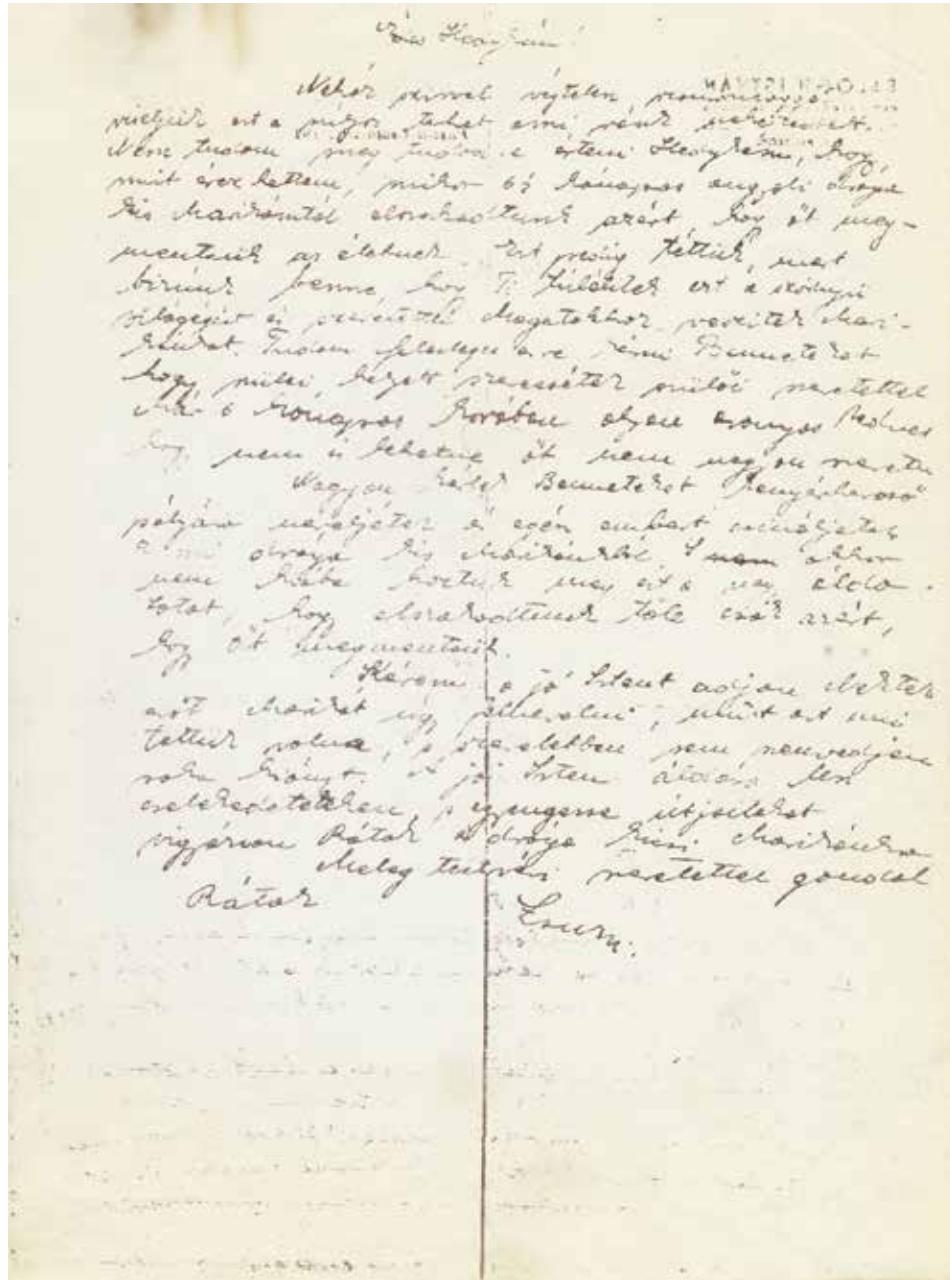
I leave to my darling little Marika Csatasgoeg, with all the surrounding land, livestock and machinery (except one tractor and one combine) as well as all the crops, one third of the house in Szolnok (Madach u. 43), one third of the money from our mother, and all my other worldly goods.

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

May God be with you and with all of us.

Pistu

Document 16



Document 16

**Letter from a Jewish Hungarian mother to her sister-in-law living as a refugee in Italy.
Hungary, March 26, 1944**

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 six-and-a-half-month-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 your parental love on her. At six months she is already so sweet that it is impossible not to adore her.

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

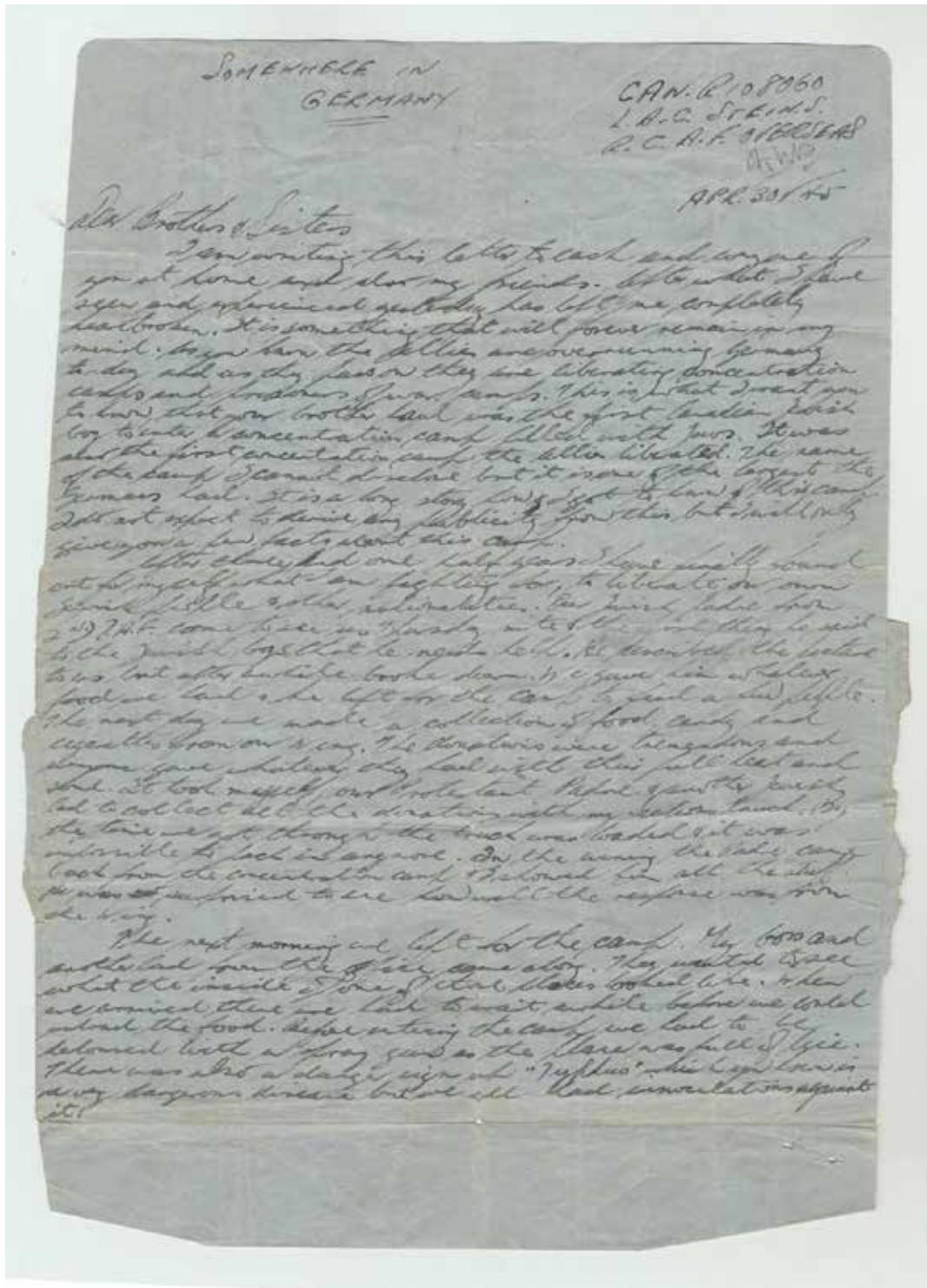
I beg the good Lord to give you strength to bear the responsibility of guardianship of our little girl and bring her up as we would have done, so that she never lacks love and attention. May the Almighty bless you and guide you throughout your lives.

Take care of our darling little Marika.

I will always think of you with warmest sisterly love.

Zsugsi

Document 17



Document 17

Letter written by Saul Stein to his family in Montreal, somewhere in Germany

April 30, 1945

Dear brothers and 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 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.

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 dreamt 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

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