45

Dear Mr. Lenthal,

I am so happy to have a sign of life from you. When people have known each other as long as we have and then hear that you were arrested, it is more than a joy to hear something good. I was not in a concentration camp like you—you surely had a harder time of it—but I too, thanks to my dear Grandmother Lewald, was also always in danger and in flight. I lost a great deal getting bombed out first in Hamburg and then in Dresden, and the rest was lost (was stolen, etc.) in the flight from Dresden. It was not easy, and being 50 pounds lighter now, I am much more “spiritually transparent” than I was before. Nevertheless, my family stayed healthy, and the children hopefully have not suffered too much harm; they are studying industriously and are happy, albeit hungry.

How did it go for your friends, whom I sometimes saw at your place without learning their names? How did it go for the ladies, and how did it go for your friend, the man who suddenly looked so different? Was it helpful at all? What times those were, for all of us, and for you far more than for me!

Is your mother still alive? Mine, 88 years old, is living utterly impoverished in Dresden. She was able to save nothing but what she had on. It was a dreadful night in my parents’ house, and everything people loved in Dresden went. A street has now been named after my father in Dresden, but my mother’s large widow’s pension has been entirely canceled.

Your letter arrived only today. It was indeed written on 21 August, but it was only postmarked in Neuilly on 16 September. You must be patient with me a few days, since I have to travel to town first, and one never knows whether one will get through to the Americans.

With the very best of wishes for you and your work,

Your devoted,

25 September 47

[signature]

[stamp]

Dr. Hildebrand Gurlitt

(13a) Aschbach, Oberfranken

near Bamberg