

Volume Nine

The Ringelblum Archive

Underground Archive
of the Warsaw Ghetto

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יידישער **JEWISH**
היסטארישער **HISTORICAL**
אינסטיטוט **INSTITUTE**

**ONEG
SZABAT**
PROGRAM



ASSOCIATION OF
THE JEWISH HISTORICAL
INSTITUTE OF POLAND

Letters about the Destruction

Edited by

Eleonora Bergman, Maria Ferenc

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Preface to the English edition

The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw is honored to present to the English speaking public the 9th volume of documents from the Ringelblum Archive – The Underground Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto. It contains correspondence sent from other locations of occupied Poland or from abroad, to various individuals as well as institutions in the Warsaw ghetto. Often, when the letters were delivered, their addressees had already been murdered by German occupiers, or died due to dire living conditions.

For people confined in the ghettos, the need for contact was enormous: until 22 July 1942 – when the Germans undertook the great deportation of 300,000 Jews to their death in Treblinka, Warsaw Ghetto had been receiving c. 120,000 postal communications monthly. This means that on average almost every family and every office had contact with the outside world. The postal service was suspended during the Grossaktion, but otherwise functioned until 19 April 1943.

The letters included in this volume reflect the Shoah as seen by common people, family members, friends, and represent the intimate perspective of the victims: emotions of hope or desperation, information on deteriorating health or the death of loved ones. Some postcards or letters describe observed facts or situations and attempt to predict fate, or send a warning.

The letters collected by Oyneg Shabes group constitute a very important part of documentation of daily life, and in most cases the names inscribed therein are the only trace of the existence of the people mentioned. The methodology adopted by Emanuel Ringelblum and his associates show their focus both on macro- and micro- stories and interest in encompassing the broadest



possible scope of wartime reality. In a certain way that personal documentation is in fact the essence of the collection and prevails on the uniqueness and importance of the collected material as a primary source of the Holocaust studies.

The Polish-language version, on which this edition is based, was published in 1997. We believe that the Jewish Historical Institute has fulfilled the will of the Archive founders and continues to serve further research on the period. We hope that this book will be a memorial to the Holocaust. As we read the collected letters we bring to life the silenced voices of the victims, may their memory be an eternal blessing for the living.

The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute wishes to express the deepest gratitude to all people and institutions, especially to Tad Taube and Taube Philanthropies, who contributed their resources for creating this publication.

Monika Krawczyk
Director

July 2023

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Abbreviations

AJDC	American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee
ARG	(Polish) <i>Archiwum Getta</i> , Ghetto Archive = Ringelblum Archive
AŻIH	(Polish) <i>Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego</i> , Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute
B	(Polish) <i>Biuro Ewidencji</i> , Registration Bureau
B"H	(Hebrew) <i>Be'ezrat Hashem</i> , with God's help
CENTOS	(Polish) <i>Centrala Związku Towarzystw Opieki nad Sierotami i Dziećmi Opuszczonymi</i> , Central Association for the Care of Orphans
CKU	(Polish) <i>Centralna Komisja Uchodźców</i> , Central Committee for Refugees
DAF	(German) <i>Deutsche Arbeitsfront</i> , German Labour Front
deka, d.	(Polish) dekagram, ten grams, one hundredth of a kilogram
DP	displaced person
DRB	(German) <i>Deutsche Reichsbahn</i> , German State Railways
Gestapo	(German) <i>Geheime Staatspolizei</i> , Secret State Police
GG	(German/English) General Government, from German <i>Generalgouvernement</i>
JDC	see AJDC
Joint	see AJDC
KHŻ/JHQ	(Polish/English) <i>Kwartalnik Historii Żydów/Jewish History Quarterly</i>
OBW	(German) <i>Ostdeutsche Bautischlerei Werkstätte</i>
ORT	(Polish) <i>Organizacja Rozwoju Twórczości [Przemysłowej, Rzemieślniczej i Rolniczej wśród Ludności Żydowskiej w Polsce]</i> , Society

	for the Promotion of Industrial, Craft and Agricultural Labour [among Jews] in Poland
POW	prisoner of war
P.T.	(Latin) <i>pleno titulo</i> , full title
RAB	(German) <i>Reichsautobahn</i> , The Reich Highways
Sipo	(German) <i>Sicherheitspolizei</i> , Security Police
TOZ	(Polish) <i>Towarzystwo Ochrony Zdrowia Ludności Żydowskiej w Polsce</i> , Society for the Protection of Health of the Jewish Population in Poland
W.E.L.Ż.	(Polish) <i>Wydział Ewidencji Ludności Żydowskiej</i> , Department of Registration of the Jewish Population
YIKOR	(Yiddish) <i>Yidishe Kulturele Organizatsye</i> , Jewish Organisation for Culture
YIVO	(Yiddish) <i>Yidisher Visnshaftlekher Institut</i> , Jewish Scientific Institute
YVD	(English) Yad Vashem, The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names
ŻKN	(Polish) <i>Żydowski Komitet Narodowy</i> , Jewish National Committee
ŻKOM	(Polish) <i>Żydowski Komitet Opiekuńczy Miejski</i> , Jewish Welfare City Committee
ŻOB	(Polish) <i>Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa</i> , Jewish Fighting Organisation
ŻSS	(Polish) <i>Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna</i> , Jewish Social Self-Help

Abbreviations used for identified authors of handwritten material:

BG*	Bronka Górna
FLIG*	Daniel Fligelman
H*	Eliyahu Gutkowski
JG*	Yekhiel Górny
LEG*	Eliyahu Gutkowski
LP*	NN
NG*	NN (from Gąbin)
RA*	Rachel Auerbach

Introduction

This book is based on *Listy o Zagładzie* [Letters about the Destruction], the first volume of the Polish edition of the materials of the Ringelblum Archive, the underground archive of the Warsaw ghetto. It was published in 1997 and contained letters testifying to the dying ghettos, destruction of Jews in killing centres and mass executions. Although many of the letters concerned the individual persons and families, most often it was a way to convey information about entire communities.¹ The editor of the volume was Ruta Sakowska (1922–2011), a pioneering researcher and expert in the history of the Warsaw ghetto and the Oyneg Shabes group. She was an initiator of the project to publish the entire Ringelblum Archive in Polish.²

Since the publication of that volume, the body of knowledge about the Oyneg Shabes group, the Ringelblum Archive, and the history of the ghetto in Warsaw has grown dramatically. Fundamental studies have been written on these topics, which allow us today to understand more deeply many of the issues which were barely touched upon in Sakowska's edition. This, in turn, encouraged the editorial team to expand her anthology by adding other letters that fit thematically, and sometimes are even part of the collections she originally published. Therefore, the editorial team decided to edit this volume of documents anew, instead of just translating the old version into English.

1 *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy*, vol. 1: *Listy o Zagładzie*, ed. Ruta Sakowska (Warszawa 1997).

2 See Eleonora Bergman, "Ruta Sakowska (1922–2011)" and "Ruta Sakowska. Bibliografia prac 1960–2007," *KHŻ/JHQ* no. 4/240 (2011), pp. 545–556.

Letters preserved in the Ringelblum Archive

Correspondence played a vital role in the daily lives of ghetto residents. They anxiously anticipated mail, often their only tenuous link with relatives elsewhere. The significance of correspondence is reflected in the Ringelblum Archive. It contains a total of several hundred letters received by Warsaw ghetto inmates, 186 of which are published in this volume.

Some of the letters had been compiled by Oyneg Shabes members or associates into collections, like the so-called Kalisz letters and Płock letters, which so far have only been published in Polish.³ There are also smaller batches of correspondence, such as the letters from petitioners to Yitzkhak Giterman (a director of the Joint Distribution Committee and the Jewish Social Self-Help), which have been published in Polish and will be published also in English in a volume of documents pertaining to the ŻSS.⁴ The Archive contains many individual letters and postcards, the latter with printed postage stamps, which were permitted for private correspondence among the Jews. Most of them were sent to the Warsaw ghetto from other towns in occupied Poland; some were sent from other countries.

What distinguishes the correspondence preserved in the Oyneg Shabes Archive is the fact that the **addressees of these letters were inmates of the Warsaw ghetto**. Large collections of letters can be found in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Yad Vashem, and many other museums and archives. Those holdings represent letters mostly sent from ghettos to recipients outside of Nazi-occupied Europe. The addressees or their descendants donated them after the war to those institutions.

Written messages between loved ones provided the strongest available link between the inmates of the closed Jewish quarter in Warsaw and the

3 Of the original 146 Kalisz letters collection, 92 survived; the Płock collection consists of duplicates of 39 letters. See *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy*, vol. 15 *Wrzesień 1939. Listy kaliskie. Listy płockie*, ed. Aleksandra Bańkowska, Tadeusz Epsztein, Justyna Majewska (Warszawa 2014).

4 *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy*, vol. 27: *Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna w Warszawie (1939–1943)*, ed. Aleksandra Bańkowska, Maria Ferenc Piotrowska (Warszawa 2017); *The Ringelblum Archive. Jewish Social Self-Help*, ed. Aleksandra Bańkowska, Maria Ferenc (forthcoming).

outside world. Ghetto inhabitants and their relatives strove to sustain their relationships, either because they believed that they had a future ahead of them in which they would reunite with their loved ones, or because they wanted an opportunity to say farewell. Unable to meet in person, the letter had to serve as a temporary meeting place.⁵

Despite obvious limitations (censorship and self-censorship), letter writing was popular and egalitarian.⁶ With a low entry barrier (one had only to know how to read and write and have a small amount of money for postage stamps), many people wrote. Letters served as an easily available way to pass on knowledge and news: both personal accounts about family members and friends and essential warnings about killing centres and massacres.

These letters are valuable primary sources, written concurrently with the events described. They provide us exceptional insight into what average Jews knew and thought about the events of the war as they were unfolding, and how they understood their own situation.⁷ They also depict their lives' entrapment in historical events as well as an intimate portrait of people facing the destruction. Letters constitute one of the largest groups of personal narratives during the war. Women wrote more letters than men and used letters more often than other types of personal documents (diaries, memoirs).⁸

The documents published in this volume can also serve as a basis for research into strategies used to circumvent wartime censorship of correspondence. The reference literature has been dominated by the micro-historical perspective. The most frequently analysed collections of letters to date have been

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- 5 Andrew Stuart Bergson, Laura Fahrenbruck, Christine Hartig, "Working on the Relationship. Exchanging Letters, Goods and Photographs in Wartime," in *Private Life and Privacy in Nazi Germany*, ed. Elizabeth Harvey, Johannes Hürter, Maiken Umbach, Andreas Wirsching (Cambridge–New York 2019), p. 257.
 - 6 Cornelia Osborne, "Love Letters from Front and Home. A Private Space for Intimacy in the Second World War?" in *Private Life and Privacy in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge 2020), p. 284; Rebecca Earle, "Introduction," in *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-writers 1600–1945*, ed. Rebecca Earle (London–New York 2016), p. 1.
 - 7 Dalia Ofer, "Personal letters in research and education on the Holocaust," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* vol. 4, no. 3 (1989), p. 345.
 - 8 For more about the relationship between gender and epistolography, see Earle, *Epistolary selves*, p. 6; Jenny Hartley, "'Letters Are Everything Those Days': Mothers and Letters in the Second World War," in *Epistolary Selves*, pp. 186–196.

those which help to recreate the wartime fate of a family or group of people,⁹ although there have also been studies based on comparative analyses of larger sets of letters. There is hardly any research that puts Holocaust letters into comparative perspective.

The postal service in the Warsaw ghetto

Inhabitants of the General Government could communicate with correspondents in countries which were not at war with the Third Reich (*Umfeindliches Ausland*). As more and more countries declared war, postal communication was discontinued: with the Soviet Union after June 1941¹⁰ and with the United States after December of that year.¹¹ Only short messages, up to 25 words, could be sent to recipients in belligerent countries through the Red Cross.

Warsaw Jews had very limited ability to correspond with recipients abroad. At the beginning of the war, they were allowed to send letters abroad only to a very limited extent (two days a week), during which period they still used the services of the Polish Post Office.¹² From July to September 1940, Warsaw Jews could send international letters only at the post office No 41 at Zamenhof Street 19, which was located in an 'epidemic risk' area.¹³ After

9 *Tęsknota nachodzi nas jak ciężka choroba...: korespondencja wojenna rodziny Finkel-sztejnów (1939–1941)*, ed. Ewa Koźmińska-Frejłak (Warszawa 2012); Jakub Gelbard, *Adre-sat nieznany*, ed. Ewa Koźmińska-Frejłak (Warszawa 2010); Michał Trębacz, "Ręka pisze zupełnie co innego, niż serce czuje". Listy rodziny do Szmula Zygielbojma, 1940–1941," *KHŻ/JHQ* no. 4/268 (2018), pp. 789–815; Marcin Urynowicz, "Jeżeli starłem choć jedną łzę... Abrahama Gepnera listy z getta warszawskiego," *KHŻ/JHQ* no. 2/250 (2014), pp. 364–387; Shirli Gilbert, *From Things Lost: Forgotten Letters and the Legacy of the Holocaust* (Detroit 2017).

10 Ruta Sakowska, "Łączność pocztowa warszawskiego getta," *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Insty-tutu Historycznego* no. 45–46 (1963), p. 99. As the German-occupied zone expanded to the east, postal communication with those places, for instance Lwów/Lemberg, was restored.

11 Koźmińska-Frejłak, "Wstęp," in *Tęsknota nachodzi nas jak ciężka choroba*, p. 31.

12 Koźmińska-Frejłak, "List należy do życia..." Listy prywatne jako źródło badań nad Zagładą," *KHŻ/JHQ* no. 2/250 (2014), p. 326.

13 In German, *Seuchensperrgebiet*, lit. the area in danger of epidemic; wording on the signs put around the future ghetto from March 1940.

September until the closure of the ghetto they could still use other post offices; however, they had to form a separate queue.¹⁴

The rules for postal services for Warsaw Jews were established in early 1941. They were later applied to all ghettos in the GG. Both *Deutsche Reichspost* and *Deutsche Post Osten*, with the latter subordinate to the government of the General Government, stopped providing postal services to the Jews and forced the *Judenräte* to set up their own post offices. In case of Warsaw, it was the post office No 41 just mentioned above, which from 15 January 1941 became the ghetto post office. It was subordinate to Warsaw Post Office C-1, or the former Main Post Office.¹⁵ From that date, letters sent abroad from the Warsaw ghetto could no longer be dropped into letterboxes. They had to be posted in person at the Postal Items Reception Office at the ghetto post office at Zamenhof Street 19. The envelopes had to be open and the senders had to prove their identity.¹⁶

The Warsaw Judenrat had to cover all the expenses of the functioning of the post. Therefore it took additional fees for all services, which were more expensive than outside the ghetto (25 per cent from March 1942). People in the ghetto had also to pay for the mail at delivery, which was especially hard for the poorest. Beginning in December 1941, Jews in the General Government could send abroad only postcards, which put a limit on the length of the messages.¹⁷ Disclosing information about the “military, economic, or political situation potentially detrimental to the Reich” was prohibited.¹⁸ The letters were subject to censorship organised by the Warsaw *Judenrat* and the German *Sicherheitsdienst*. They were censored at the place of posting. This means that the letters coming to the Warsaw ghetto were not censored in Warsaw.¹⁹

A postage stamp cost a few dozen groszes; for comparison, in May 1942 sending a postcard abroad cost 35 groszes, while the price of a loaf of plain

14 Sakowska, “Łączność pocztowa,” p. 94.

15 Sakowska, “Łączność pocztowa,” pp. 94–95; Koźmińska-Frejłak, “List należy do życia...,” p. 326.

16 Koźmińska-Frejłak, “List należy do życia...,” pp. 327–328.

17 “Pocztówki zagranicę,” *Gazeta Żydowska* no. 122, 10 December 1941.

18 “Przesyłanie wiadomości z Generalnego Gubernatorstwa,” *Gazeta Żydowska* no. 56, 13 May 1942.

19 Sakowska, “Łączność pocztowa,” p. 100; Koźmińska-Frejłak, “List należy do życia...,” pp. 331–332; Trębacz, “Ręka pisze zupełnie co innego,” p. 791.

bread rose to 13 zlotys.²⁰ Unsurprisingly, there was a large volume of correspondence sent into and out of the Warsaw ghetto. Families were desperate to keep in touch, and the cost of doing so by mail was inexpensive. A perceptive reader of these documents will notice that letters from various ghettos in the General Government and Wartheland reached the Warsaw ghetto within a few days.

Between 1 and 15 May 1941, the postal system delivered 113,697 letters (domestic and international) to addressees in the Warsaw ghetto. Between 1 and 15 August, the number of letters and postcards totalled 101,892, while the number of parcels was 54,192.²¹ In January 1942, addressees in the ghetto received 129,050 letters, 6,885 parcels, 33,160 packages, and 11,267 pieces of printed matter. During that time, 160,214 letters and postcards were sent from the ghetto along with nearly 3,000 registered letters, over 12,000 international postcards, and 2,000 telegrams.²² Thousands of Warsaw Jews fled to the Soviet Union at the beginning of the war in 1939. With the outbreak of the war between the Third Reich and the USSR and the resulting suspension of correspondence between those now belligerent countries, the number of parcels arriving in the ghetto decreased significantly.²³

In July 1942, just before the beginning of the deportations from the Warsaw ghetto to the Treblinka killing centre, approximately 4,000 letters were delivered daily to the ghetto along with 250–300 international postcards, almost 300 telegrams, 2,000 parcels, and 400 money orders.²⁴ With the beginning of the *Grossaktion* on 22 July, Sipo assumed authority of the Warsaw ghetto.

20 Barbara Engelking, Jacek Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto. A Guide to the Perished City* (New Haven 2009), p. 368; *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy*, vol. 7: *Spuścizny*, ed. Katarzyna Person (Warszawa 2012), p. 324.

21 YIVO, Territorial Collection: POLAND II, series II: Warsaw Ghetto (ID: RG 116 Poland). A report based on the materials available in, for instance, *Gazeta Żydowska*, folder 18, p. 11. Correspondence with the Soviet Union was prohibited after the outbreak of the war between the Third Reich and the USSR in June 1941; however, the postal service resumed delivery of food parcels from those territories to the Warsaw ghetto, which had been suspended during the initial stage of the war. This accounts for the very large number of parcels delivered to the ghetto in that period.

22 *Tak było... Sprawozdania z warszawskiego getta, 1939–1943 (wybór)*, ed. Jolanta Adamska, Janina Kaźmierska, Ruta Sakowska (Warszawa 1988), p. 72.

23 Sakowska, “Łączność pocztowa,” pp. 101, 103.

24 See ARG II 324 (Ring. II/280), p. [4].

As a result of deportations, the area south of Leszno Street (“small ghetto”) was excluded, and on 10 August 1942 most of the *Judenrat* offices were moved from Grzybowska Street 26/28 to Zamenhof Street 19, where the post office was reduced along with all other departments of the *Judenrat*.

The postal service in the Warsaw ghetto continued to operate until 19 April 1943,²⁵ although its functioning was suspended for a few days at the beginning of the *Grossaktion*. Nevertheless, unlike the Łódź ghetto residents, the Jews who remained in the Warsaw ghetto were still able to correspond with their loved ones in other ghettos.²⁶ Sakowska claims that after the *Grossaktion*, all outgoing correspondence from the ghetto was stopped by Sipo, but the latest research does not confirm her thesis.²⁷

Languages using Hebrew characters or constructed languages like Esperanto were not allowed in correspondence.²⁸ The languages allowed were predominantly German and Polish; French, Italian, and Romanian were also accepted.²⁹ In the Łódź ghetto, the only accepted language for correspondence was German. That sometimes meant that the ghetto residents who spoke Yiddish penned their letters in Yiddish using Latin characters, imitating the German spelling rules. Some wrote in Polish. There are letters with numerous spelling and grammar mistakes. The editors chose to approximate the character of the originals in English, based on the assumption that the senders’ mistakes are a testament to their attempts to communicate within the limitations imposed by the occupier.

25 Koźmińska-Frejlik, “List należy do życia...”, p. 325.

26 Adam Sitarek, “Otoczone drutem państwo”: struktura i funkcjonowanie administracji żydowskiej getta łódzkiego (Łódź 2015), pp. 194–195; Adriana Bryk, “Najlepsze dziecko Prezesa’ – poczta w getcie łódzkim (1939–1944).” *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* no. 16 (2020), pp. 523–553.

27 According to Sakowska, “Łączność pocztowa,” p. 106–107, at the beginning of the *Grossaktion*, Sipo stopped all outgoing mail from the Warsaw ghetto (*Postsperre*). Letters sent to the ghetto were delivered, while letters from the ghetto (except those sent to labour camps) were transferred to the Sipo headquarters at Żelazna Street 103, where they remained.

28 Tomasz Szarota, *Okupowanej Warszawy dzień powszedni. Studium historyczne*, ed. 4 (Warszawa 2010), p. 255; Koźmińska-Frejlik, “List należy do życia...”, p. 331; Sakowska, “Łączność pocztowa,” p. 99.

29 Engelking, Leociak, *A Guide to the Perished City*, p. 369.

Until October 1942, not only institutions in the ghetto, but also some private individuals, especially physicians, had registered telephones. The Germans gradually reduced their number; a few still functioned during the first days of the uprising, until 24 April 1943.

Listy o Zagładzie / Letters about the Destruction

In the Archive there are letters which make specific reference to the persecution, and to the senders' foreboding about the German plans to destroy the Jews. In the foreword to the Polish edition of the Archive, Feliks Tych³⁰ wrote that the contents of these documents express some of the most dramatic subjects in the Archive. They present a close-up view of Holocaust-era family relationships, as most of the letters that survive in the Archive were exchanged among close relatives. At the same time, the writers offer stark, unfiltered descriptions of what must have been an unimaginable escalation of violence.

This volume includes all the documents from Ruta Sakowska's anthology, along with over thirty others which the editors found complementary. We added letters whose senders or addressees appeared in Sakowska's volume, even if their other letters were included in different volumes of the Polish edition. One example is a group of letters from Gąbin to Tauba Różana (Doc. 15), some of which were included in the volume *Tereny wcielone do Rzeszy: Kraj Warty*. Another is a series of letters from the village ghetto of Pacht (Docs. 32, 33, 40), some of which appeared in the same volume, and another (Doc. 31) in *Wrzesień 1939. Listy kaliskie. Listy ptockie*.³¹

The editors have also chosen to include letters sent and received within the Warsaw ghetto at the time of the *Grossaktion* and afterwards, when parts of the ghetto were isolated (Docs. 86–93).³² Some senders requested

30 Feliks Tych (1929–2015), historian of Polish workers' movements and of the Holocaust; director of the Jewish Historical Institute 1995–2006; the first editor-in-chief of the Ringelblum Archive publication series; see *Listy o Zagładzie*, p. VIII.

31 *Tereny wcielone do Rzeszy: Kraj Warty*, ed. Magdalena Siek (Warszawa 2012); *Wrzesień 1939. Listy kaliskie. Listy ptockie*, ed. Aleksandra Bańkowska, Tadeusz Epsztein, Justyna Majewska (Warszawa 2014).

32 These letters were included in three volumes in Polish: *Kolekcja Hersza Wassera*, ed. Katarzyna Person (Warszawa 2014); *Getto warszawskie, cz. I*, ed. Tadeusz Epsztein, Katarzyna

help in getting out of the *Umschlagplatz*; others conveyed information on the fate of people in different parts of the ghetto or workshops who could not meet in person.

We have also added letters which were streaming into the Warsaw ghetto from several localities in occupied Poland in autumn and winter of 1942 with urgent requests for information about the whereabouts and fate of ghetto residents (Docs. 94–141). Some of these letters read as long testimonies (Docs. 56, 90).

The letters about the destruction contain detailed information which their senders managed to collect: intelligence they either knew first hand or learned from testimonies of eyewitnesses whom they encountered (see Docs. 2, 6). Letters sent by post, without using underground channels,³³ were censored and had to comply with the regulations governing correspondence. The most essential content was coded. Most letter writers used rather obvious codes to ensure that the content would be clear to the recipient. They often referred to religious and family tropes, and also alluded to events known only to the addressee and the sender; in this way messages could be conveyed in a manner incomprehensible to the censor.³⁴ The letters often refer to the biblical story of Haman, the Persian vizier from the Book of Esther, who wanted Jews dead; the Day of Atonement – *Yom Kippur*; and the mourner's *kaddish*. They also wrote about a *shechita*, which means slaughter in both Hebrew and Yiddish. The authors often reported that the deportees had joined their deceased relatives, or that a severe illness had affected their entire community. What is more, even at a time when using Hebrew in letters was prohibited, the senders sometimes interjected a few words in that language to estimate the number of the dead (Doc. 4) or clearly convey an essential piece of information ("remember that our *chaim* [life] is at stake" (Doc. 3). They also sometimes briefly quoted a line of Torah, assuming that the reader would know the full quote and understand the meaning of the message.

Person (Warszawa 2016); *Uzupełnienia*, ed. Eleonora Bergman, Tadeusz Epsztein (Warszawa 2020).

33 Special couriers certainly delivered letters addressed to community or organisation leaders, e.g. Docs. 49, 62, 65, 84; it can be assumed that the letters written in Yiddish were not delivered by post, e.g. Docs. 6, 12, 55, 70, 73; an exception is Doc. 57, sent in an envelope against regulations.

34 Marcin Urynowicz, "Listy o Zagładzie. Kryptoinformacja," *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość* no. 1 (2002), p. 124.

Many letter writers asked the addressees to notify ghetto community leaders about the catastrophe, in the hope that the latter would be able to help the persecuted. Which authorities they appealed to depended on their personal connections in the Warsaw ghetto and their affiliations within the Jewish community (Docs. 2, 6). Those appeals were aimed at mobilisation, while referring to the authorities and leaders of the Jewish community confirmed the extreme gravity of the matter. The senders' imperative – aside from appeals for rescue – was to warn the addressees, to sound an alarm, and make residents of the Warsaw ghetto realise that they too were in danger. "Move heaven and earth to ensure that this does not happen to you," wrote A. Zontag from Grabów (Doc. 7).

The letters delivered not only words of warning, but also of farewell, as some of the senders had lost hope of saving their own lives. Although the scope of the destruction was inconceivable and not precisely understood at that stage, the authors of these letters were convinced that they too would die. Yet others expressed hope for the future and promised that they would write from their place of resettlement. It is sometimes impossible to say whether the promises of future contact were coded references to the destruction (employing a reversal of meanings), a conventional formula of letter writing,³⁵ or an expression of real hope for the future.

The recipients of such letters must have been shocked by the disruption with previous communication style. This might be why these letters were so important for their recipients: the flagrant disregard of previous letter-writing custom convinced the Warsaw ghetto residents that those messages were truthful. These distressing letters streaming into Warsaw ghetto from other localities in the spring of 1942 must have been one of the main sources of knowledge about the beginning of the extermination of Jews.³⁶

Alongside warnings and pleas to save communities, letter writers begged loved ones in Warsaw for help in organising their own move to the Warsaw ghetto, which, to Jews in the provinces, seemed large and stable, and therefore safe.³⁷ In addition, some of them asked for financial aid, and/or food (Docs. 17, 55, 56, 59).

35 Urynowicz, "Listy o Zagładzie," p. 123.

36 See Maria Ferenc, "Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie." *Mieszkańcy getta warszawskiego wobec wiadomości o wojnie i Zagładzie*, (Warszawa 2021), pp. 283–291.

37 Urynowicz, "Listy o Zagładzie," p. 121.

A separate group are letters written to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw after the *Grossaktion* (see e.g. docs. 111-113, 119-122, 129-135). Most of the senders ask for information about the whereabouts of their loved ones, many of whom, as we understand, had died in Treblinka in the summer of 1942. Such letters were forwarded by the post office to Kurza Street 9,³⁸ to the Department of Registration of the Jewish Population, commonly called the Registration Bureau,³⁹ whose employees tried to establish the addresses of persons being sought. Heaps of undelivered letters were mounting at the post office and at the Registration Bureau, as most of the addressees had been murdered. This group of letters probably came to the Archive thanks to the Department's head, Pinchas Wasserman,⁴⁰ a pre-war journalist who cooperated with Oyneg Shabes.

How did the personal letters about the destruction, held by the addressees as mementos of their murdered relatives, find their way to the Ringelblum Archive? Many of the letters published in this volume had been given to the Archive as duplicates (either typewritten or handwritten), so it can be assumed that the originals remained in the hands of the family members. The letters reached Oyneg Shabes through its collaborators. Gołda Tabaczyńska,⁴¹ who escaped from Kłodawa, gave many letters sent from Wartheland to her friends and relatives. Some letters came to the Archive thanks to its members' contacts with the addressees. Let us take, for example, Szmuel Kapłan, who worked with Hersch Wasser from the Central Commission for Refugees. He was the husband of Róża Kapłan from Krośniewice,

38 Kurza Street was formerly Rabina Meiselsa Street.

39 In Polish, *Biuro Ewidencji*, hence the capital letter B in the postal annotations.

40 Pinchas (Paweł) Wasserman (1903?–1943?), before WWII editor of *Głos Gminy Żydowskiej*, in the ghetto head of the W.E.L.Ż. See *The Warsaw Judenrat* (forthcoming).

41 Gucia (Gołda) Tabaczyńska (ca. 1916–1944) lived with her family in Kłodawa; graduated from high school in Włocławek; in 1935 she left for Palestine. In the summer of 1939, she came to Kłodawa and here she was taken by surprise by the war. In December 1941, after the first deportations to Chełmno, she was one of the scouts sent by the concerned *Judenräte* to gather information about the fate of the deported Jews. After the deportations from Kłodawa, Gołda and her family traveled to nearby Krośniewice, from where she made her way to the Warsaw ghetto. She cooperated with the Oyneg Shabes group and handed over to the Ringelblum Archive many letters with warnings of the destruction sent from the Wartheland. She died during the Warsaw Uprising in 1944; see Przemysław Nowicki, "Tabaczyńska Gołda (Gucia)," in *Włocławski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 8, ed. Stanisław Kunikowski (Włocławek 2019).

from whom he received letters about the operation of the Kulmhof am Nehr (Chełmno) killing centre. Avrom Leyb Gips from Gąbin, another friend of Hersch Wasser, submitted his daughters' letters to the Archive. The number of private letters collected in the Archive once again strongly emphasises its role as a centre for collecting information about the destruction.

In her introduction to *Listy o Zagładzie*, Ruta Sakowska included a detailed history of the activities of Oyneg Shabes, which under Emanuel Ringelblum's leadership collected the materials known today as the Ringelblum Archive. In 1997, her text was pioneering, but as was already noted, during the last quarter of a century much more detailed research has been published on the history of Ringelblum's group, as well as a biography of Ringelblum himself.⁴² It should be emphasised, however, that Sakowska was the first researcher to divide the history of the Oyneg Shabes' activity into two periods. The first was the creation and collection of the documents pertaining to the fate of the Jews under Nazi occupation. In the second period, after receiving information about the systematic murder of the Jews (first in Wartheland), Ringelblum and his collaborators focused on collecting and disseminating information about the impending extermination.

The letters collected in this volume represent the second period of the group's activity: first news and warnings about mass murder of Jews in Chełmno on the Ner and in Bełżec arrived in Warsaw in letters sent from the vicinity of those killing centres.⁴³ The editors hope that supplementing Sakowska's anthology with additional documents will make the picture which emerges from this volume even fuller.

The volume is comprised of several thematic sections. Within each, letters are presented in chronological order. Two letters are from late 1941 (Docs. 30, 31), and two from early 1943 (Docs. 73, 93); all others are from 1942,

42 See Samuel D. Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History? Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto and the Oyneg Shabes Archive* (Bloomington and Indianapolis 2007); *Oyneg Shabes. People and Works*, Introduction; Aleksandra Bańkowska, "Nieznani i mniej znani współpracownicy Ringelbluma, czyli co wynika z odczytania książki kasowej Oyneg Szabat," *KHŻ/JHQ* no. 4/256 (2015), pp. 621–628; Aleksandra Bańkowska, Agnieszka Haska, "...w podziemiach wymienionych domów zakopane są... Poszukiwania Archiwum Ringelbluma," *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* no. 12 (2016), pp. 317–333.

43 Ferenc, "Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie.", p. 322–330, 348. After three prisoners had escaped from Chełmno, the news about that killing centre spread in Wartheland ghettos.

the year when the majority of Polish Jews were murdered. Part I, divided into four subgroups, includes letters from the Polish territories incorporated into the Reich (Wartheland, Provinces of Upper Silesia and East Prussia). It opens with the collection of letters from the vicinity of Chełmno: group Ia also contains letters from places such as Mława, Będzin or Sosnowiec. A common motif running through several letters from ghettos in Wartheland is information about a head tax in the amount of eight marks which preceded the deportation to death in Chełmno. Group Ib is a collection of letters sent to and from Szlama Winer. He escaped from Chełmno, managed to reach the Warsaw ghetto, and gave testimony to Oyneg Shabes of the events he witnessed. Later, after moving to Zamość, where his family lived, he was the first person to inform the Warsaw ghetto underground about the existence of Bełżec death camp. (Winer himself perished there.) Group Ic contains letters from a single place: Pacht in Turek County. Pacht was a part of a rural ghetto, one of a few which had been established by the Germans in the area. This large collection survived because the senders were relatives of Yekhiel Górný,⁴⁴ an important Oyneg Shabes collaborator. Group Id are farewell letters sent to the Warsaw ghetto by Jews deported from the ghetto in Płońsk. These are singular and powerful documents, which allow insight into the state of mind of people departing on what turned out to be their final journey.

Part II contains letters from the territories in the East occupied by Nazi Germany after June 1941, primarily Rohatyn (today Ukraine) and Wilno (Vilna, today Vilnius, Lithuania). While letters from Rohatyn are about the first *Aktion*, the latter are testimony to the last period of the existence of the Vilna ghetto, a time of relative calm and very intensive cultural and educational activity.

Part III is composed of letters sent from the territory of General Government. One letter from an unidentified sender in Włodawa in June 1942 warned the addressee in Warsaw about the creation of yet another killing centre envisioned for Warsaw Jews. Emanuel Ringelblum called this letter a part of the ‘pre-history’ of the great deportation from Warsaw.⁴⁵ Part IV are letters from forced labour camps, which were established in occupied Poland

44 See Doc. 30 and footnote 200 about the Górný family.

45 See ARG II 257/1 (Ring. II/227), p. [9]; it is quoted by Ringelblum in September or October 1942.

and also in Germany. Part V consists of letters relating to the *Grossaktion* in the Warsaw ghetto in the summer of 1942. Part VI contains letters with queries about the fate of Warsaw Jews, written mostly during and after the *Grossaktion*. Such letters flowed into the Warsaw ghetto from all over occupied Poland. But the addressees were no longer there.

Editors' note

The present publication is based on the Polish edition of selected documents from the Oyneg Shabes Archive which were included in *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta Warszawy. Listy o Zagładzie* [The Ringelblum Archive – Underground Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto. Letters about the Destruction] published in 1997. It has been expanded to include several documents omitted by Ruta Sakowska in accordance with her editorial concept.

Documents contained in this volume are presented in their entirety. Translations were made from the originals. Each document is preceded by a heading containing basic information about the letter: date, place, and the name and/or surname (if known) of sender and addressee. The date most often appears on the letter; however, if only the postmark date is known, the heading starts with the word “before;” when we worked from a duplicate, the heading for obvious reasons starts with the word “after” (i.e., after the date on the letter or the postmark date). In some cases, the date is based on Hebrew abbreviations or on the contents of the letter; if so, this is explained in footnotes.

Missing or illegible fragments of texts, due to physical deterioration or biological decay, are marked [...]. Words or phrases crossed out in the documents are marked with [x] and, where legible, are provided in footnotes.

Documents are concluded with technical descriptions. They include archival numbers, both current (according to the new collection catalogue)⁴⁶

46 Robert Moses Shapiro and Tadeusz Epsztein, *The Warsaw Ghetto Oyneg Shabes–Ringelblum Archive Catalog and Guide*, (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2009).

and those used in older publications; whether the letter is an original or a duplicate (with number of copies); handwritten (in ink, pencil, or crayon) or typewritten; language(s); size; and number of sheets and pages. It also gives the postmark date and the date of the stamp of the ghetto post office (wherever available).

Many letters in the volume are duplicates; most probably the addressees did not want to part with last letters they received from their loved ones. When the information is given by the copyist, it is treated as part of the document; in other cases, it is included in the technical description.

As in the Polish edition, in order to help the reader focus on the contents of the letters, their graphic layout has been made uniform. At the beginning of each entry, the sender's name and address (wherever available) is on the left side and those of the addressee (again, wherever available) on the right. The format of dates has been standardised, using full names of months instead of Arabic or Roman numbers. The word "street" is added to their names, for clarification.

Whenever possible, first names, surnames, place names, etc. which appear in the originals as abbreviations are written out in full to make the documents easier to understand.

Words or phrases within a document in a second language, or sections of documents written in various languages, are marked as follows: ^{y-y}Yiddish in Latin characters (transliterated), ^{y-y}Yiddish, ^{h-h}Hebrew in Latin characters (transliterated), ^{h-h}Hebrew, ^{p-p}Polish, ^{g-g}German.

Additional information, comments, references to sources or reference books are included in the footnotes.

Editors of the English edition have updated footnotes and references, and expanded the bibliography. The material is now presented according to formatting established in recent years during ongoing work on the Polish edition. Therefore, this volume is not only a translation; it also provides the English-language reader with an extended editorial apparatus based on the current research in the field.

Spelling of geographical names reflects the situation of September 1939. Exception is made for localities with accepted English names, such as Warsaw. In the case of names and surnames that already appear in the existing literature on the subject (including previously published volumes of Ringelblum Archive series), the forms adopted there have been used. For names in the

letters written in Yiddish, transliteration according to YIVO rules has been used. In the case of letters written in the Latin alphabet (in Polish, German and also in transliterated Yiddish), the original spelling of names has been retained.

The specific terminology used in the text: names of institutions, political parties, social organisations, military formations, and terms pertaining to Jewish religion have been included in a glossary at the end of the volume. There is also a bibliography and two indices, of names and places.

Documents

Part I

Letters from
the Polish territories
incorporated into
the Reich (Wartheland,
Province of Upper
Silesia, Province
of East Prussia)

a) Letters from the ghettos in small towns

1

[January] 1942, place unknown.¹ [Family] Gelbart, letter to Rywen [Gelbart].

Dear Rywen,

Yesterday we received a horrifying postcard from Regina,² where she writes that people from that area are being sent to Chełmno, where they gas them so that nobody returns from there. They too are in danger because they are already taking people from Kłodawa.³ She's asking us to save her. But there is nothing we can do. But we have heard that at your place⁴ there is someone who could rescue them from there. We shall send you the appropriate sum because she must be saved.

1 It was probably sent from some place in the GG but is included in this part because of the reference to events in Wartheland and also because of its direct connection to Doc. 2.

2 See other mentions of Regina in Róża Kaplan's and Fela Mazierska's letters, Docs. 2, 4.

3 The Jews of Kłodawa were murdered at Chełmno, 9–12 January 1942.

4 In the Warsaw ghetto.

We have already sent her money using the attached form. Szmulek⁵ wrote that somebody had arrived from there⁶ and had given them Regina's regards. So do find out how that person came from there.

Do what you can because time is short – people from Kłodawa are already being taken away. We replied to her that she should cross over and that we would send somebody to fetch them.

As soon as you learn something or decide what to do, be sure to write to us at once because it has been *Yom Kippur* in our home ever since we received that message.

Do not sleep! For every hour is precious!

Greetings, the family Gelbart

I attach the address of that Varsovian with whom you arrived. If you want to, you can drop us a line through his agency because he is going to be in Warsaw tomorrow.

ARG I 1116 (Ring. I/543/1)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Polish, 146×203 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

5 Possibly Szmuel (Szmul) Kapłan (?–1942?), Bund activist in Kalisz, escaped to Warsaw with his wife Róża and their children in September 1939. He sent his family to relatives in Krośniewice, where it was easier to obtain food. He remained in the Warsaw ghetto, where he was staying with his friend Rywen Gelbart; perished probably in 1942. See Ferenc, *"Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie."*, pp. 327, 331.

6 Probably from Kłodawa.

12 January–22 February 1942, Krośniewice. Róża (Rózia, Shoshana) Kapłan, letters (1)–(13) to her husband Szmuel Kapłan, brother Wolf Dawid Lewi⁷ and his wife Hela.

(1)

Krośniewice, 12 January 1942

My dears,

Today I received Father's postcard dated 8 January. He has received your letters, that is, the ones from you, Dawid and Hela. As for the money, he has not received it because money is not delivered in the place where he is.⁸ I think you could get it back. Besides, Father wrote to you and told me to write too. You could go inquire about this matter and ask for the money back. As for the parcels, I do not get it. So much time has passed since I sent the money to Rybicki⁹ and still to Przedecz,¹⁰ but Father has not yet received anything. You know that Mela's¹¹ parcel was sent to the wrong address to Leimnitz.¹² Although parcels could also now be sent from Krośniewice, it cannot be done because they are to be sent elsewhere any day now, hopefully, back home.

As for the money, he wrote that he had enough money for the time being, because I had sent him some on several occasions. Father said to take the risk and send some insulin to his brother-in-law, because he had run out. May they be well.

7 Wolf Dawid Lewi (ca. 1905–1942?), Róża's brother, was originally from Krośniewice; lived in the Warsaw ghetto during the war. He was related to the Taube family, his mother was Chaja née Taube.

8 The sender's father, like most men from the ghetto in Krośniewice, was deported to a forced labour camp, probably in the Poznań region. Letters coming to Krośniewice from the labour camp mentioned the hunger and beating suffered by the prisoners: see AŻIH, 301/4490, A. Radzicki's testimony.

9 Possibly the copyist's error, could be Rybski, see below.

10 Przedecz (Koło County).

11 Hela's sister, who went to Gostynin.

12 Leimnitz (in Brandenburg in the Reich, now Glińsk, Świebodzin County), a forced labour camp for Jews operating from the spring of 1940 to the spring of 1942; the inmates worked on the construction of the highway.

I wrote to you that Uszer Taube had been staying with us with his wife and child.¹³ Weksler has been staying with the Rybskis,¹⁴ and Tabaczyński,¹⁵ Trzaskowski, and a few others are staying with us. Mrs Lajzer¹⁶ is at Minia's with her little son. Everybody else is gone. It remains unknown where they are. You realise that we are not in the best of spirits. I was barely able to sit up to write to you. This too shall pass.

And now, my dears, I can tell you that last week I received 50 marks by post, but it took me until today to write.

Dear Dawid, do write how you knew. You wrote that we should be ready to set off. I am upset now so do not pay attention to what I am writing. Tomorrow I will be in a better frame of mind and I will look at everything in brighter colours. I already regret writing to you about this.

When Father was sent away, we were more certain that we would be deported than we are now. Kind regards from Surcia, Chaimek, and the Hodeses [?]¹⁷

Kisses,

Rózia

At Father's, it's now *Stube* 8.¹⁸

13 Uszer Taube (1916–1942?), a baker by profession. He and his wife Balcia (Bela, née Natanowicz) (1917–1942?) and their daughter, Edzia (Edziunia), lived in Kłodawa before the war; on the eve of the *Aktion* they escaped to nearby Krośniewice, and from there to the Warsaw ghetto; see Docs. 76–80. They survived the *Grossaktion*, but eventually all perished. See Yad Vashem, The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, 694485, 1548714, 1399232, 2023615.

14 Probably parents of Fela Rybska, possibly Itzik (1892) and Chava (1894) Rybski of Krośniewice. See YVD, 9040297 and 9040299.

15 For the family of Gołda (Gucia) Tabaczyńska, see Introduction.

16 Perhaps Brakha (Bracha) Lajzer (Leizer) from Kłodawa (1895–1942?); see YVD, 335159.

17 Question mark in the duplicate.

18 The line refers to one element of the father's address, the number of his *Stube*.

(2)

A. Szoszana¹⁹
Krośniewice

To W.D. Lewi
Warsaw
Leszno Street 60, flat 25

Krośniewice, 20 January 1942²⁰

My dears,

It is possible to send parcels from here, so we sent one parcel and then I added one kilogram of millet to a different parcel along with a quarter of a kilogram of *hema*,²¹ and the second time I added sugar cubes.

And now, dear Hela, as I wrote you, Mela and Samek are in Gostynin and it was a wise decision, because otherwise they would have been where your father is along with old uncle Dawid Taube²² and his wife, and everybody else – you certainly remember when we visited your aunt Neuma and the Nasielskis at Easter. Everybody is already where Uncle Dawid is. You can discuss this with Bornstein and Alek Szczeciński's cousin. He will tell you all the details.

This is worse than the plague. If we ever see one another, it will be a god-send. All those people had *Shema Israel* on their lips. Their *ksysa*²³ was terrible. I wish we had never been born.

Dear Dawid, I know that this will cause you pain, but you must know that it is the scream of a pained heart.

Dear Hela and Dawid, stay brave, try to stay healthy because you are the only ones left. Do not give in to hunger or high prices. Now we can see that this is not the most important thing.

My dears, we are going to send packages for Father for as long as possible. Be well.

Yours, Różia

19 (Hebrew) rose, also female name Rose, the same as Róża in Polish. The sender was Róża Kapłan.

20 In the original, 1941 by mistake.

21 (Hebrew) butter.

22 Coded reference to the Jews of Kłodawa all being murdered. Dawid Taube was probably the father of Uszer Taube, see Docs. 76–80.

23 (From Hebrew *gesisah*) agony.

(3)

To Mr Rywen Gelbart
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 28, flat 18

Krośniewice, 21 January 1942

My dear,²⁴

I should not be writing to you in such a mood. I know that this will take its toll on you. I pity you, my dear, but I regard my every letter as my last. I am off balance.

I have just spoken with a man who came from Chełmno. This is the town where [people] from Turek, Koło, Dąbie, and Koło²⁵ have gone to. They have met the same fate as aunt Parzęczewska in Kalisz.²⁶ This is not a fib. You will find out at Bornstein's and Dr Milejowski's.²⁷ Go to them, my dear, because I have written to them. Do not be surprised by my being so energetic. It may be possible to do something for us. Speak with Luzer – I know I cannot come back to you because it is winter, so do raise an alarm. These people might be able to help me to save me from suffering and leaving this world in such a tragic manner.

Forgive my writing in this vein. You might think that I am hysterical. Let all this be a lie.

Accept my regards,
Różia

24 Róża wrote to her husband Szmuel Kapłan at Rywen Gelbart's address, see footnote 5.

25 Repetition in the original.

26 Probably a reference to the murder of approximately 290 sick and elderly Jews in Kalisz in November 1941.

27 Israel Milejowski (1887–1943), physician and social activist, Zionist of the Et Livnot faction of the General Zionists. In the Warsaw ghetto, chairman of the Health Department of the *Judenrat*, lecturer at clandestine medical courses, organiser of scientific research on hunger. He was killed during the January *Aktion* in 1943.

(4)

M. Świącicki²⁸
Krośniewice

To Mr R. Gelbart
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 28, flat 18

Krośniewice, 22 January 1942

My dear,

Although I have not heard from you yet, I am writing to you because, as I have already said, I have decided to write to you every day. As you can see, I am still here and we are well. But if you had looked at me a week ago, your heart would have swollen with contentment on account of how well I looked.

What happened has depressed us greatly, particularly me. I cannot work. I cry for days on end. I feel so sorry for my children. Why did I have them? Do not think that what I wrote is a story. The proceedings continues. Every day full wagons from Łódź pass by in the same direction.²⁹ This thing is on everybody's lips. I cannot describe to you what is happening here. Even though it is peaceful here we are constantly waiting. Nobody sleeps at night. Where Kibel's wife was,³⁰ that happened at 2 o'clock in the morning. Her brother has arrived from there.

Have you done anything already? Have you visited Czerniaków?³¹ Have you intervened with Dr Milejowski or Bornstein? Do intervene. It could help.

I know perfectly well that you cannot do much. I write this only because I do not want you to reproach yourself later.

Send me an ID for Moniek in a letter because I cannot get anything from those thieves in the *gmina*. He was born on 6 March 1928 – this is what the document should state; it is going to be a temporary ID.

28 According to some accounts, Róża Kapłan's maiden name was Świącicka; see YVD, 1698072. Most often it is assumed that she was née Lewi, as Wolf Dawid Lewi was her brother.

29 A reference to transports of Jews from the Łódź ghetto to Chełmno, 16–29 January 1942.

30 The locality has not been identified. See mentions of Moshe Mendel Kibel in Docs. 79–80.

31 Eng. Adam Czerniaków (1880–1942), economic and social activist, senator of the Republic of Poland; from 1937 deputy chairman of the appointed board of the Jewish Religious Community in Warsaw; from October 1939 chairman of the *Judenrat*. He committed suicide on 23 July 1942, the second day of the *Grossaktion* in the Warsaw ghetto.

The thought of escaping death is tormenting me. Come what may. Stay brave, and I will try to calm down too.

Lots of kisses,

Rózia

Regards to Rywen.

(5)

M. Świącicki
Krośniewice

To Mr R. Gelbart
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 28, flat 18

Krośniewice, 24 January 1942

My dear Szmul,

You must have received some bad news from me by now. We are still here. The whole thing is on everybody's tongue, even beyond our circle. They were looking for them here.³² But we have been promised³³ that that applies to that county and that we are to remain here until April. Because I disbelieve them, I am still anxious, and my heart is constantly trembling.

I would scream at the top of my lungs, but I cannot go anywhere in this terrible frost. The children would get very cold. But once the frost subsides, it might be too late. For now, all I can do is sit and wait. This ailment might go away because that whole thing became so infamous. Write to me what your people say about this. Have you come together? Why do you write so little? I have not received a letter from you in a week. I never receive more than one postcard a week from you. You must be short on time.

I am angry with myself. It is horrible that we know in advance what awaits us. It is better to be ignorant. When you do not expect this, you think that you will cope even when you are being deported.

I have convinced myself that I can cope wherever, but then this happened. Everybody is resigned and we are waiting for the final goodbye. The panic defies description. I have to work in this situation even though

32 The German police were looking for the escapees from Chełmno, see Docs. 22–29.

33 Probably by occupation authorities.

I find it hard. But I work on and this might be good because I sometimes forget what awaits me.

Be well. Lots of kisses.

Your loving Rózia

Regards to Rywen. Regards from Moryc and Blima.

(6)

M. Świącicki
Krośniewice

To Mr R. Gelbart
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 28, flat 18

Krośniewice, 27 January 1942

My dear Szmul,

Although I promised that I would write every day, I did not keep my word and I did not write to you yesterday. I do so because you write so little. I have already become restless as I have not received a letter from you. You know well that nowadays I am at the end of my rope and when I do not hear from you, I think that something has happened. So far I have heard from you once a week. Over a week has passed since your last letter. What is this supposed to mean? Are you well? Or has something happened, God forbid?

Today, I fasted for the second time in the course of one week. Jerzyk did not eat anything either. Yes, my dear, a drowning man will clutch at straws. This might help.

Words cannot express how depressed we are. This *shechita* continues. Everybody is talking about it. They looked here for those who came from the other world.³⁴ Do not think this to be a lie. I am so down and resigned that I cannot work. I should not think so much about it but I cannot help it.

Write to me every day, dear Szmul. Let this be my joy. For people here are saying that letters are not being delivered. Have you sent the ID for Moniek?³⁵ I look forward to your letter. I have read that you do not have electricity. Why is that?

I cannot write but I must. Have you seen Bornstein or Dr Milejkowski? What are people where you are saying about our misery? What does Luzer

34 A reference to the escapees from Chełmno.

35 Moniek, Aruś and Jerzyk – children of Róża and Szmuel Kaplan.

think? Tell him that I have become pious, a lunatic in fact, and that I am ready to do anything to survive, to come to you, or you could come to me.

The children are healthy. Be well,

Rózia

Regards from Moryc and Blima. Regards to Rywen.

I send lots of kisses to you, dear Daddy. Aruś³⁶

(7)

M. Świącicki
Krośniewice

To Mr R. Gelbart
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 28, flat 18

[Krośniewice, 30 January 1942]

My dearest,

The unpleasant postcards and wires surely cannot have reached you, because your last postcard does not mention them at all. And now that I have composed myself, I am writing rather calmly, but this is not because all that I wrote to you is a lie. No! Everything is one hundred percent true, but as it is on everybody's lips, our *farzorgers*³⁷ say that this does not apply to our county and that we are to stay here, and even if they do send us away, it will not be to heaven...

We are keeping hope alive and we cannot do anything about this, so come what may, one cannot live for ever after all. A lot of people have hurried to you. Somebody will surely contact you.

Have you seen Bornstein or Dr Milejkowski? I wrote about everything. I felt as if I was drowning. Unfortunately, I have not yet calmed down completely, but I have to work and I cannot work when I feel this way. As long as my eyes are open, I cannot fully believe that we are to meet this fate.

It is impossible for me to come to you. Some people have already written from Warsaw inquiring where those people were. They were told that they

³⁶ The line is in a child's handwriting.

³⁷ (Yiddish, ironically) caretakers.

were here or there. We know best where they are. What can we do? We must forget about it and may they rest in peace.

The children and I are healthy. I do not care for what you wrote to Moniek, namely that he should learn a profession.

He is a fine, strapping young man now. If times were normal, our hearts would swell with pride on account of us having three such men for sons. Nothing pleases me today, I do not care about anything.

Yesterday I fasted for the third time like a saint on *Yom Kippur*. I have become pious, and I pray to God for days on end for him to spare our life, because this is the only thing we desire...

Szmul dear, have you sent the ID for Moniek? Do try to do that.

Lots of kisses,

Yours, Rózia

Regards to Rywen. My family sends their regards. Write at once and a lot...

(8)

Krośniewice, 4 February 1942

Dear Hela,

I have received your postcard. I was very surprised that I had not received a reply to my postcard. Others had received as many as three during that time. That was why I stopped writing.

I am very interested if you have received a letter from Uszer Taube's cousin. I wrote at once. It is urgent. I worry about Dawid.

Dear Dawid, write whether it is the same disease you suffered from a few years back. Is it arthritis? I have an impression that it due to bad living conditions, namely lack of fuel. Write what is ailing you. I will feel better when I know that at least both of you are all right. Hela, you are inquiring about Mela. She and her husband are in Gostynin.³⁸ It's clear to me from your postcard that you know about everything. If so, we can imagine what mood you are in. All this waiting. Many a time I am ready for anything but then comes

38 Jews from Gostynin perished at Chełmno in April 1942, see Doc. 9.

a wave of defiance – why? Neither I nor my loved ones want to die like this. Even Chaimek says he wants to go to uncle Dawid.³⁹

Gucia⁴⁰ with Wekszler and Bronia⁴¹ have asked me to go with them, but sister Mania [?]⁴² has been unwell lately. Tough luck! A *nes*⁴³ might happen. We are but waiting for it. I will try to do what you have asked of me, I will write often but on the condition that you write too.

My dear, I have received a letter from Father. He writes that he has received a postcard from you. Calel is better, he had an ulcer – thank God – [?]⁴⁴ the worst is over.

My dear, I took 20 marks from Korn. I cannot sew so I am not making money but I have to eat.

Rózia

(9)

Krośniewice, 9 February 1942

My dears!

We have received your letter, as well as Regina and Dawid's postcard. I think that it is a very good idea,⁴⁵ although Surcia will have a hard time accepting this. But there is no other way, we rely on you, we will do what you decide. Write when. Nothing new here.

Dear Dawid, I am very much interested in whether my other brother⁴⁶ can be notified about our family's plans. Has anybody told him about this? But this is not so important after all. The most important thing is that you concern yourself about us and help us.

39 That is, to Warsaw, where Dawid Lewi lived.

40 Gucia (Gołda) Tabaczyńska; she stayed in Krośniewice for a short while and from there managed to reach the Warsaw ghetto.

41 Probably Bronia Lajzer, see letter (10).

42 The question mark added by the copyist.

43 (Hebrew) miracle.

44 The question mark added by the copyist.

45 Reference to a plan to bring Chaimek, probably a son of Sura (Surcia, perhaps Róza's sister), into the Warsaw ghetto.

46 Probably a reference to a brother living abroad or, metaphorically, to a Jewish community abroad.

Dear Hela, write how you are feeling, we know that it is very cold where you are, whereas here it is warm and cosy, but so what?

Today we sent Father a parcel. Hela, your cherries, bread, 300 grams of *hema* [butter],⁴⁷ challahs, plum preserve, and for [my] brother-in-law 2 oranges, 10 apples, and a small packet of snuff. Mynia also sent a parcel to Father. If they only are there [still alive], we are going to send them parcels often. Our *gmina* just does not cause obstacles to sending parcels. I think that Balcia and Uszer⁴⁸ are going to visit you soon.

Be well. Kisses,

Rózia

(10)

Krośniewice, 18 February 1942

My dear,

I have received your postcard. As for Sala Trauman, she has no such plans because she has no *kesef*.⁴⁹ It is difficult for us too on this account but we must get down to it because otherwise it will only get worse.

Surcia wants me and Chaimek to go to uncle W[olf] Dawid.⁵⁰ Can you not speak with Krysia? Ask Uszer⁵¹ who she is. We are going to wait at Arje's.⁵² May God keep you healthy.

As for Mela, she has not been here. Bronia Lajzer⁵³ told us that she headed for Gostynin. This is everything I can write you about her.

47 The explanation in brackets added by the copyist.

48 Uszer Taube and his family were already in Warsaw at that time. On 8 February 1942, *Der Veker*, the Bundist underground paper, published a note based on Taube's testimony about Chełmno. See Ferenc, "*Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie.*", p. 327.

49 (Hebrew) money. A reference to the expenses connected with crossing to the Warsaw ghetto.

50 Wolf Dawid Lewi in the Warsaw ghetto.

51 Uszer Taube crossed from Krośniewice to Warsaw with the help of a Polish guide nicknamed Krysia.

52 According to Sakowska, this may be Arje (Aron) Rachwalski (1901–2002), who lived in Kłodawa before the war; see *Listy o Zagładzie*, Doc. 22. In 1942, he managed to escape from the ghetto; he survived the war and settled in Israel.

53 Perhaps same person as Bracha Lajzer.

What's new with you? Are you well? Father has notified us that the entire *lager* had been deported, but we still do not know where to.

Kisses,

Rózia

I took 25 marks from Mrs Birenbaum for M. Jachimowicz, Izbica on the River Wieprz, Krasnystaw County, c/o Fingerhut.

(11)

Krośniewice, 20 February 1942

My dear ones,

Today I received Hela's postcard. You are worried because you have not heard from Mela. My dear, I know nothing about them except what Mrs Lajzer told me.

I would really like to make you less worried about us, but unfortunately, the symptoms of the disease are the same as at the Neuhauses.⁵⁴ People here suffer from the same disease. I do not know whether we will be able to do what Balcia did.

It might be too late. And now, dear Dawid, talk with P. Tabaczyński,⁵⁵ because Chaimek and I intend to go to Arje's tomorrow. Should we have too little money – ask them to lend it. We have been paying *Rosh*⁵⁶ tax there, and so has Arje. Come what may, either we will see Uszer⁵⁷ or not. The worst thing is this waiting.

Be well. Kisses,

Rózia

The Geislars are asking you to intervene with [?]⁵⁸ her brother and ask him to do something. Believe me that I do not know what I am writing.

54 Coded reference to the deportation to death, probably from nearby Kłodawa.

55 Pinkas Tabaczyński, uncle of Gucia (Gołda) Tabaczyńska; he lived in the Warsaw ghetto with his family.

56 (Hebrew) head; reference to a head tax of 8 marks, see Introduction.

57 Most probably a reference to Uszer Taube, which would suggest that she planned to escape to Warsaw.

58 Question mark added by the copyist.

(12)

To Mr R. Gelbart
Nowolipie Street 28, flat 18

Krośniewice, 20 February 1942

My dear Szmul! I have recently resolved not to write such letters as last time, because at first I thought that Warsaw would help me, but I can see that all those people around you with whom you talk⁵⁹ are as important as I am. Therefore, it makes no sense for me to write such alarming letters. It would have been a surprise for us too. I initially thought that those who got out of there were our saviours, but nobody pays us any mind. Nothing has changed. The machine keeps thrashing.

It is true that one should not lose one's spirit, but it is a miracle that I have not gone mad yet.

Yesterday commenced the first dance from Kłodawa. Eight marks per head⁶⁰ by Saturday, which amounts to over seven thousand from our poor ghetto. It is unfeasible so I do not know what will happen, and you already know what awaits us later. I do not know what to do. To go – there is frost, not to go – it's a loss. What to do? Would you not say that this letter is better? Forgive me but I cannot. Forgive me. Hoping that we will see each other again.

Kisses,

Różia

(13)

Krośniewice, 22 February 1942

My dears, I have received your letter. Chaimek and I⁶¹ are very happy. Act quickly so that it is not too late, remember that we are living in uncertainty here! I was to be at Arje's⁶² with my child, but it has become impossible for me, too.

59 Probably a reference to conversations with important Warsaw ghetto figures about Chełmno, which Szmuel may have had; in earlier letters, Róża repeatedly appealed to her husband to alert the widest possible circle of ghetto activists about what was happening in Wartheland.

60 See footnote 57.

61 It pertains to the plan to get the child out of Krośniewice.

62 Probably Aron Rachwalski.

Even if I never get there, I would like somebody to tell you about what we have been through. I gather that Balcia is having a hard time adjusting because their situation was good until the end.

That letter made Surcia very happy, may all be well.

I could not get down to writing because I did not want to write to you how sad we have been after the payment. Uszer still had somewhere to go, we unfortunately do not.

Be sure to not forget about the child. Be well,
Rózia

ARG I 828 (Ring. I/573/1) and ARG I 829 (Ring. I/573/2)

Description: ARG I 828 contains letters (1), (2), (8), (9), (10), (11), (13); ARG I 829 contains letters (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (12). Their order in the document is chronological, based on dates of writing; in addition, there are postmarks dates (P) and stamps of the ghetto post office (G): (1) P/G 14/16 January; (2) P/G 21/25 January; (3) P/G 21/25 January; (4) P/G 22/26 January; (5) P/G illegible/28 January; (6) P/G 28/30 January; (7) P/G illegible/2 February; (8) P/G 5/9 February; (9) P/G 10/12 February; (10) P/G 19/22 February; (11) P/G 21/23 February; (12) P/G 20/23 February; (13) P/G 23/26 February 1942.

Letters (1), (8), (9), (10), (11), (13) are duplicates (letter (10) in 2 copies), handwritten (H*), Polish, pencil, 118–190×98–180 mm, 7 sheets, 14 pages; with information in Yiddish on postmark dates from Krośniewice post office and the *Judenrat* in Warsaw; letters (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (12) are original, handwritten by Róža Kapłan on postcards, with postmarks from Krośniewice post office and the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, ink, 147×104 mm, Polish, German, 7 sheets, 14 pages; letters (3), (4), (5), (6), (7) have typewritten duplicates (2 copies), Polish, 208×295 mm, 4 sheets, 4 pages. Attached is a note by Hersh Wasser in Yiddish: “Letters from Krośniewice to Warsaw written by Rózia Kapłan to her husband Szmuel Kapłan, Bund activist from Kalisz, in Warsaw – distinguished associate of the Central Commission for Refugees. His wife with three sons moved from Warsaw to Krośniewice for material reasons.”

26 January 1942, Krośniewice. Kopel Geisler, letter to Wolf Dawid Lewi.

K. Geisler⁶³
Krośniewice
Kutno County

To W.D. Lewi
Warsaw
Leszno Street 60, flat 25

26 January [1942]

Dear Dawid,

We can't wait to hear from you. We are counting every minute spent waiting for your reply. So do not wait any longer and write back at once.

We have been well, but nobody knows what tomorrow will bring. I have one favour to ask of you. Do write back immediately. Remember that our *chaim*⁶⁴ is at stake.

So we wait.

Be well. Kisses,
Kopel

ARG I 832 (Ring. I/573/5)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 26 January [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 2 February [19]42, Polish, 147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

63 The Geislars were friends of Róża Kapłan, see Doc. 2. Kopel Geisler (1902–1942) was a Zionist activist in Krośniewice. A. Radzicki, in his testimony recorded by Bluma Wasser in 1946, accounts for Geisler's last days: during the *Aktion* in Krośniewice, on 2–3 March 1942, Geisler, a paramedic, and Jakimiec, a Polish doctor, distributed medicine to the deportees. At the sight of people being pushed into trucks and trampled by German police, Geisler lost his mind; see AŻIH, 301/4490.

64 (Hebrew) life.

22 and 23 January 1942, Krośniewice. Fela Mazierska, letters (1) and (2) to Szymon Szymcio.

(1)

Mazierska
Krośniewice

To Szymon Szymcio⁶⁵
in Warsaw
Miła Street 2, flat 3

Krośniewice, 22 January 1942

My dears,

In this letter I report to you that Estera Kotowska⁶⁶ and those around her as well as Hanka Ickowicz (daughter of Jakub Ickowicz) and those around her have left. All that is left of them is *kaddish*.⁶⁷ Therefore, my aunt, uncle, and I must go to Szwajs.⁶⁸ Regina and Tobcia must do everything that is possible to that end.

Do tell Mr Winter⁶⁹ from Włocławek and Bornstein⁷⁰ immediately about the horrible thing that happened to Kotowska and Rojewska,⁷¹ née Ickowicz.

65 Szymon (Leyb Jehuda) Szymcio (Shimsio) (1898–1942), a merchant from Kowal (Włocławek County); member of Mizrachi; during the war in the Warsaw ghetto; see YVD, 1655500; Tomasz Kowski, *Gminy żydowskie pogranicza Wielkopolski, Mazowsza i Pomorza w latach 1918–1942*, Toruń 2007, p. 96.

66 Estera Kotowska (née Czerniak) came from Izbica Kujawska; see YVD, 7921534. Perhaps this is coded information about the *Aktion* in that location: it took place on 14–15 January 1942.

67 Coded reference to the extermination of Jews in nearby Kłodawa; see footnote 3.

68 It may stand for Switzerland, or it is (as Sakowska suggested) the name or nickname of an acquaintance in the Warsaw ghetto; see *Listy o Zagładzie*, Doc. 4. It might also mean a labour camp: *shvays* is sweat in Yiddish.

69 Shmuel Winter (1891–1943), a native of Włocławek, ran a large trading company before the war, a member of the leadership of the Jewish Merchants Association, a co-founder of YIVO and a researcher of Jewish folklore and literature. During the war, he was an employee of the JDC in Warsaw. In the ghetto he was head of the Supplies Department at the *Judenrat*. Supporter of the Oyneg Shabes, after the great deportation he helped its members to go into hiding. He financed the ŻOB. Author of a diary written in late 1942 and early 1943, a small fragment of which was found in a shed at Świętojerska Street 34.

After all, the poor souls are relatives of the above who must learn about everything.

I urge you once more to immediately notify Messrs Winter and Bornstein about Kotowska and Rojewska.

But what [x]⁷² about my and my aunt's and my uncle's going to Szwajs? Do write back at once.

(2)

Fela
Krośniewice

To Szymon Szysio
in Warsaw
Miła Street 2, flat 3

Krośniewice, 23 January [1942]

My dears,

You should have already received my previous postcard. It must have surprised you. Unfortunately, today I can tell you nothing new. Only that. All that is left of our loved ones is [to recite] *kaddish*. A *kaddish* to be recited *eser alufim*⁷³ or even more times. As for us, the same shall happen to us if we do not prevent that in time, that is if we do not go to Szwajs. So, we want Regina to help us in this regard. Either through Dzigański⁷⁴ or in a different way. I believe that Regina can do anything she wants. Why, you know that she is the best at this.

See Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?*, pp. 152–155; *Oyneg Shabes. People and Works*, p. XXIX, XCVI; Ber Mark, “Shmuel Vinters Togbuch,” *Bleter far Geshikhte* no. 1–2 (1950), pp. 29–48; Aleksandra Bańkowska, “Tajemnica dziennika Szmuela Wintera,” *KHŻ/JHQ* no. 1/269 (2019), pp. 60–76.

70 Izaak Bornstein (Borensztajn, Borenstein) (1884 or 1899–1943), statistician and economist, a secretary of the JDC branch in Poland from 1921, one of the directors of JDC in Warsaw and Kraków during the war, perished in Będzin ghetto.

71 This may be Chana Próchnik (née Rojewska), a native of Włocławek. During the war she stayed in Kutno; see YVD, 1926372.

72 [x] going to Szwajs.

73 (Hebrew) ten thousand; reference to the number of people murdered.

74 Perhaps it refers to the Joint, JDC.

Now, what is new with you? [x]⁷⁵ You must be wondering why Boruch Gerszt has not received any letters from his loved ones. This is because his friends are going to Estera Kotowska and Hanka Ickowicz day in, day out, and one does not send letters from there.⁷⁶ So do tell him about that or (better still) notify Mr Winter from Włocławek. He might well already know what happened to Boruch Gerszt's friends, because they wrote about that to Mr Lewin, address: Leszno Street 60, flat 25.⁷⁷ So go there immediately and ask him whether he has already received a postcard from his sister⁷⁸ and what he is going to do about this.

One more thing. I have heard that those who are with aunt Ita are to leave too. I will let you know. No matter what the situation is, even if she has trouble feeding herself, she should not leave. Do know this: if she leaves now in this frost (or you do because I have heard that you are to move, too), you can be sure that we will not see each other again. So stay where you are. Do not change your accommodation now, in this frost.

As for me, my aunt and my uncle, I believe that Regina will do anything she can to help us go to Szwajs.

ARG I 830 (Ring. I/573/3)

Description: original (handwritten on postcards, postmarks (1) 22 January [19]42, (2) 23 January [19]42 and stamps of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw (1) and (2) 26 January [19]42, ink, Polish, 146×104 mm), 2 sheets, 4 pages; duplicate (2 copies, typewritten, 212×280, 212×290 mm) Polish, 2 sheets, 2 pages. The duplicate includes letters (1) and (2), as well as Fela's letter of 27 January, see Doc. 5.

75 [x] Do you know that.

76 Coded reference to the extermination of Jews in Izbica Kujawska.

77 I.e. to Wolf Dawid Lewi.

78 Róża Kapłan.

After 27 January 1942, Kutno. Fela [Mazierska?],⁷⁹ letter to an unknown addressee.

Kutno, 27 January 1942

My dears,

I have already sent you a postcard about the fate that befell us. We were deported to Chełmno and gassed. As many as 25,000 Jews are buried there already. The massacre continues. Take pity on us, would you? I, Natan, the child, and [my?] mother survived,⁸⁰ but we are the only ones. What shall happen to us? I do not know. I no longer have the strength to live. Should aunt Bronia write to you, tell her about everything.

Kind regards,

Fela

ARG I 831 (Ring. I/573/4)

Description: duplicate (2 copies, typewritten, 212×280, 212×290 mm), Polish, 2 sheets, 2 pages; see also description of Doc. 4.

79 Although the letter is copied together with two letters written by Fela Mazierska, it is only assumed that this is the same person; she might have moved from Krośniewice to Kutno.

80 Fela's letter, written in Kutno, does not refer to the *Aktion* in that ghetto. The sender probably escaped from a different town, perhaps Kłodawa, see footnote 3. The text was published on 3 February 1942 in the *Morgn-frayhayt*, underground periodical issued in the Warsaw ghetto; see Ferenc, "Každy pyta, co z nami będzie.", p. 333.

[21 January 1942], Grabów near Łęczyca.⁸¹ [Rabbi Jacob Shulman], letter to various Jewish communities.⁸²

With God's help.

Grabów, 3rd day of Shvat [5]702⁸³

To my beloved dear relatives,

We very much wonder why you haven't written to us for a long time already. How are you? How are the children of Milshtein, Khanele Kenigsberg and others?

Now we can let you know of very terrible occurrences that happened near our town. Up until now it had been a secret. Namely 4 weeks ago everyone without exception was taken out – Jews from Koło, men, women and children and driven in cars to an unknown place.⁸⁴ Then the same in Dąbie, Kłodawa, Izbica, and all the towns in the county. Despite all efforts, we had absolutely no news about what became of them. But this week a few survivors who escaped told that they were all, spare us, killed.⁸⁵ They were gassed and buried 50–60 people at a time in a pit. Fresh victims are constantly being

81 Grabów (Łęczyca County).

82 The letter, one of a few sent by Rabbi Shulman from Grabów, is not signed; his identity is not fully established; see Adam Sitarek, “‘Nie myśl, że to pisze obłąkany.’ Listy rabina z Grabowa i jego misja informowania o Zagładzie,” *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* no. 15 (2019), pp. 492–513.

83 21 January 1942.

84 The Chełmno killing centre operated in two stages: from 8 December 1941 to 7 April 1943, and in June–July 1944. The precise number of victims is not known but it is accepted that the figure ranges from 152,000 (from German sources) to 225,000. See Patrick Montague, *Chełmno and the Holocaust. The History of Hitler's First Death Camp* (Chapel Hill, NC 2012).

85 On 19, 20, and 21 January 1942 three escapees from Chełmno contacted Rabbi Shulman. Szlama Winer, one of the six escapees from Chełmno, was the only one to reach the Warsaw ghetto, where he gave testimony to the Oyneg Shabes group; see *The Last Stage of Resettlement is Death*, Doc. 10. According to Sakowska, *Listy o Zagładzie*, Doc. 1, he might have been the one to smuggle Shulman's letter to Warsaw. The rabbi had also sent a letter to the Łódź ghetto; it was one of the most important sources of knowledge about the beginnings of extermination of Łódź Jews.

brought in and the danger continues. This understandably evoked terrible panic among us and indescribable distress. We declared a fast for today, the third day of *Shevat*, collected special charity, and so on. But you have to know that what has been silenced until now must be made known everywhere. You must sound the alarm. You may not rest, think up ways and remedies to rescue the few that remain from the threatening terrible decree, Heaven forbid. You dare not sit with folded arms. You may not be silent. You must find a way to save the lives of thousands of brothers. This very minute counts. You are a force, may you live, of the largest Jewish community. Also ask the great Jewish sages if the relatives of the fallen should sit *shiva*⁸⁶ and what we need to do about this. And may the Blessed Name have mercy on all the Jews and save us from all evil, Heaven forbid, and send us the right help, may we be worthy to hear and announce glad tidings. Please respond right away.

And what is new with you? With us, besides this, no news. Very heartfelt regards for all. Expecting an immediate answer.

ARG I 748b (Ring. I/549)

Description: original (handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 144×210 mm, minor damage and losses of text); translation and partial Latin transliteration (3 copies, type-written, Polish, 212×166 mm), 4 sheets, 5 pages.

7

[20] January 1942, Grabów near Łęczyca. A. Zontag, letter to M. Zontag.

To M. Zontag
Warsaw
Zamenhofa Street 10 flat 74

Dear parents, I received your postcard. Write me who wrote this postcard, if it was M.M. who wrote it, I am not surprised because I know he's always been a big fool, and if it was dear mother who wrote it, I don't know what to think about it. I wish for you to have as much to eat as I have.

86 (Hebrew) mourning.

Did I write you that I don't have anything to eat that you write such things to me? God save me! Still, you write to me as if I were on the street, don't you know that I'm at Uncle Icze's? Write to me how dear mother is, and how are the rabbi and M.M. and Itke, and how is Behale? Now, my dears, I can report to you that from Aunt Rochnie's entire county they took *anuszim*, *nuszim wutaf*⁸⁷ and they were sent to my father's.⁸⁸ Here it's still quiet but this can happen to us too at any moment. Do everything you can to survive this. No other news. I send you regards, your son

A. Zontag

Remember what I wrote, I can't write more.⁸⁹

From me, your son, who has never been forgotten and wishes you all the best.

A. Zontag

Regards from Uncle Icze. Regards to all, stay well. Who knows, may dear God help us. Dear Mother, it can't be helped, all is lost. Move heaven and earth to ensure that this does not happen to you.⁹⁰

ARG I 748a (Ring. I/549)

Description: original (handwritten on a postcard, postmark 21 January [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 25 January [19]42, Yiddish in Latin transliteration); translation (3 copies, typewritten, Polish, 213×115 mm), 4 sheets, 5 pages.

87 (Hebrew/Yiddish) men, women and children; all people; spelling as in the original.

88 Coded reference to the deportation to death.

89 Allusion to censorship restrictions.

90 Many thanks to Agnieszka Żółkiewska for consulting on the translation of the last postscript.

22 January 1942, Grabów near Łęczyca. Mirl Jachimiak, letter to her brother A. Jachimiak.

Mirl Jachimiak
Grabów
Łęczyca County

Mr A. Jachimiak
Warsaw
Dzika Street 19 (shelter)⁹¹

Grabów, 22 January [19]42

Dear Brother,

I'm surprised that I still have no answer from you if you have received the money, 15 marks, that I sent to Szlamowicz.⁹² Now, dear brother, I can't write you any good report for we are in a ^Htime of troubles.^H In several cities they've carried out the fate that ^HHaman^{H93} wanted to carry out to all ^Htowns^H; the place where my mother-in-law has lived and 20 more to the west [so] all our brothers and sisters are no longer in their homes; they already live where our mother lives today for us it's been ^H*Yom Kippur*^H and the same thing threatens us, who knows if we will ever see each other again, dear brother don't be weak because of this go also see the Strykower rabbi⁹⁴ so he can let the community know of our fate which can go further and so end the hard suffering of our exile that is with death, can you imagine what we look [like], maybe my children will come home some day and we won't be able to see them and [if] you have the opportunity to see them you must let them know what happened to us.

91 In the original, *punkt*.

92 Probably Izrael Szlamowicz from Koluszki, the sender of the letter to Szlama Winer, see Doc. 23.

93 According to the Book of Esther, Haman, an official of the Achaemenid Empire, demanded that King Ahasuerus kill all his Jewish subjects, but his wife, Queen Esther, a beautiful Jewish woman, saved her people. Jews celebrate the Purim festival to commemorate that event. Hitler was called Haman as that name had become synonymous with cruelty to Jews.

94 Jakub Itzik Landau (1882–1943?), *tzaddik* from Stryków, Hasidic rabbi. During the war he was in the Warsaw ghetto; probably during the uprising he was deported to Trawniki labour camp where he perished.

I can't write anymore may dear God allow us still to be able to write to each other we send regards to you and your children, also regards for dear Father, please answer.

Mirl

ARG I 748c (Ring. I/549)

Description: original (handwritten on a postcard, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 148×104 mm), postmark 22 January [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 26 January [19]42; translation (3 copies, typewritten, Polish, 207×293 mm), 4 sheets, 5 pages. On p. 1 (translation, 2nd copy) notation by Hersch Wasser in Polish: "Trans[lated] from Yiddish."

9

After 17 February 1942, Gasten (Gostynin). [Mrs] M. Habergryc, letter to I. Kraut, Frania and other relatives or friends.

M. Habergryc
Gostynin

To I. Kraut
Warsaw
Śliska Street 24, flat 29

Duplicate

Dear children,

Although my letter will bring you no joy, I cannot hide everything from you. Bad things have been happening in our town. Various pieces of news have been giving us a headache since Saturday.⁹⁵ We cannot sleep at night. My dear, you must have heard about what happened in various towns.⁹⁶ The same is going to happen to us. Imagine that we cannot do anything about this.

95 The Saturday preceding 17 February 1942 fell on 14 February. That was probably when the the head tax was imposed on the Jews of Gostynin, as a harbinger of the nearing deportation to Chełmno, which happened two months later, in mid-April.

96 After the escape of three Jews from Chełmno, the news about that killing centre quickly spread across towns in Wartheland; see Docs. 22–29; Adam Sitarek, "Zaprowiantowanie obozu jest podobno wzorowe...' Wiedza więźniów getta łódzkiego na temat ośrodka zagłady w Chełmnie nad Nerem," *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* no. 13 (2017), p. 325–341.

We have to wait and ask God to listen to our prayers and take pity on us and our children, because they have not done anything wrong.

Dear Frania, I am happy today that you are there. At least you do not have to worry and we know about everything. Plead on our behalf, do what you can and God will help everybody. Will we see one another again? I already miss you so much. I would like to see and hug you.

Do reply. We are healthy, the children too, they are happy, as they are ignorant. Daddy is healthy, and so is Mummy. Do reply. I urge you. We must harbour hope in our hearts and ignore everything.

Kind regards and kisses to everybody. Do reply at once and do write to us. We pay the head tax, which is why we are afraid. I will write a better letter next time.

Write back, please. (No signature)

ARG I 745 (Ring. I/570)

Description: duplicate (including imitation of a postmark 17 February [19]42), in form of a postcard, handwritten, ink, Polish, 152×107 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

10

19 February 1942, Kalisz. M[oniek] Gross, letter to B[ronek] Lustig and Natan [Lustig].

M. Gross
Kalisz
Wienerstr[asse]⁹⁷ 13

To Mr B. Lustig
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 38, flat 7

Kaliasz, 19 February 1942

Dear Bronek and Natan,

Do not hold it against me that I have not been writing back at all. I have been so depressed by the misfortune that befell me a while back that it is really difficult for me to write.

97 German name for the POW Street in Kalisz.

My beloved parents have been sent to a place from which they shall never return. They were deported with a thousand [?] other poor souls [x].⁹⁸ The same happened last year,⁹⁹ but this time the scale is larger. The wave is rolling through city after city, either leaving no survivors or just a handful here and there. I do not know whether you know about everything in detail, whether you are able to comprehend everything, and finally, whether you realise how acutely our nation is suffering.

Any good news from you? A lot must have changed over all this time. You know what is new with us. There are 150 of us left. It is quiet for now. I have long been making upper parts of footwear in our workshops. I have already learned how to stitch boots' tops on my own.

Best regards,

[...], Moniek

Write back soon.

ARG I 790 (Ring. I/557/1)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 20 February [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 23 February [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

98 [x] to a place where.

99 It is not clear to what events the sender referred, as in January 1940 the number of Jews in Kalisz was slightly over 600.

21 February 1942, Zduńska Wola.¹⁰⁰ I. Gutfreund, letter to I.M. Heber.

Se Psiru¹⁰¹
Zd[uińska] Wola

To Mr I.M. Heber
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 20 flat 39

Zd[uińska] Wola, 21 Febr[uary] [1942]

Friend Heber,

In as much as our brother Israel is deathly ill, truly only a few minutes left, therefore you should not rest and seek a way out, consult with sympathetic neighbors, maybe with the doctor in Switzerland¹⁰² or another doctor. Don't rest, raise an alarm, don't let him perish in the dark. May God have mercy on us, I'm writing to Mr Rogowy,¹⁰³ go see him and seek ^Hways out,^H tell Uncle Alter.¹⁰⁴ I don't have words to describe for you the *nygmar hadin*¹⁰⁵ suffering [of those] from many places, above all our brothers from the town of many chimneys.¹⁰⁶ Understand what to do, I have to end my writing, I greet you all very sincerely, may we hear good tidings from each other.

Your I. Gutfreund¹⁰⁷

100 Zduńska Wola (Sieradz County).

101 (Hebrew/Yiddish) *se* is acronym for *sod emuk*, deepest secret; *psiru* (from *b'sura*) – news.

102 The International Red Cross and Jewish organisations in Switzerland.

103 Abraham Mordekhai Rogowy (1898?–1942), journalist, before the war associated with the newspaper *Togblat* published by Agudath Israel, social and religious activist. During the war he was a columnist for *Gazeta Żydowska*, in the Warsaw ghetto he co-founded (with Joel Unger) and headed the soup kitchen No 139 at Karmelicka Street 15; he died in Treblinka with his wife and eleven children in the summer of 1942.

104 The list of rabbis in the Warsaw ghetto includes, among other: Moshe Betsalel Alter, a brother of the *tzaddik* from Góra Kalwaria; Meir Alter, the latter's son; Abraham Mordekhai Alter, rabbi from Żychlin, and Mendel Alter, pre-war chairman of the Union of Polish Rabbis; probably the latter is the one referred to in this letter; see ARG II 312 (Ring. II/210).

105 (Hebrew) final judgment.

106 A reference to Łódź, a factory town; 10,000 Jews from the Łódź ghetto were deported to Chełmno 16–29 January 1942.

107 Short for *guter fraynd* (Yiddish for 'good friend'), probably a pseudonym of the sender.

ARG I 1062 (Ring. I/571)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 21 February [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 24 February [19]42, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

12

24 February 1942, Żychlin.¹⁰⁸ *Sender unknown, letter to an unknown addressee.*

Żychlin, 24 February [1942]

Dear Friends,

Yoysef's wife asks me to write to you, especially to [his] father, that he is sick and Alter from Żychlin is also sick. It is the same illness as Yoysef the Righteous suffered for twelve years.¹⁰⁹ They need mercy. The whole community also needs great mercy. I have already said goodbye to you many times, may God help us. This morning Yoysef Printz died lightning quick, shot in the face. Sunday Itsik Kubitz's daughter-in-law died in the street. Avreml Rozenberg's sister also died of the same sickness. How are you? Be well and live to see redemption.

Now about us. We know that our days are numbered. There are no guards or judges.¹¹⁰ We are abandoned. Now my dear ones, you know my name. If I stay alive, that's good, and if not, you'll also have to pray for my soul. The book of commentary¹¹¹ is in the cellar, by the southern wall. May you all receive our regards and be well. My family sends regards. I am not broken, thank God, for everything is from the beloved Creator. May I not ponder until the final minute.

¹⁰⁸ Żychlin (Kutno County).

¹⁰⁹ The sender refers to the imprisonment and maltreatment of the biblical Joseph, son of Jacob.

¹¹⁰ I.e., authorities, leadership.

¹¹¹ Probably a reference to the manuscript of the sender.

I ask you all for forgiveness.
Your friend who greets each one of you in your family.
I ask for a reply.

ARG I 1072b (Ring. I/572).

Description: duplicate [?], handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 144×195 mm, 1 sheet,
2 pages.

13

February 1942, Żychlin. Lilka Opatowska, letters (1)–(4) to Gucia (Golda) Tabaczyńska.

(1)

W. Opatowski
Żychlin

To L. Ejznerowicz
Warsaw
Dzielna Street 20, flat 25

Żychlin, 22 February 1942.

Dear Sir,

As a few postcards sent to Mrs Tabaczyńska¹¹² have not reached her, I am writing to you hoping that you will kindly hand this postcard to her.

Dear Gucia, it has been frantic for the last two days here.¹¹³ You probably know the state we are in. The tempo is very fast here. It is unheard of.

We are going through a lot. Chilek and his family and the rest are near you. I think that you understand, my dear, what I must ask of you. We have not heard from M.¹¹⁴ for almost a week now. Chamek is on his way to you.

112 Golda (Gucia) Tabaczyńska.

113 Probably after 19 February when the head tax of 8 marks was introduced in Żychlin.

114 Guide Marek (Dr Marek), who undertook to escort Chamek (probably a son of the sender) to the Warsaw ghetto. He escorted many Jews, including Gołda Tabaczyńska's friends and family, from Wartheland to the GG and the Warsaw ghetto. See following letters (2), (3) and (4), and also Docs. 52, 53.

Have you heard from them? Gucia, do remember what you promised. I wait, wait, and wait.

Yours, Lilka

(2)

B. Opatowski
Żychlin

To E. Kadysz
Warsaw
Dzielna Street 18, flat 5

Żychlin 22 February 1942

Dear Gucia,¹¹⁵

I really do not know why my letters are not reaching you. It must simply be a case of bad luck.

Guciuś dear, yesterday, or actually two days ago, it unexpectedly got crowded here. We have already paid 8 Rm each.¹¹⁶ The situation is very tense. [It feels] cramped and stuffy. We have not heard from Marek yet. It has been almost a week since he left.

Guciuś, remember what you promised. Filled with dread, I wait. He is not in danger. He just has to keep his presence a secret. I think it would be best if he took care of that here directly. Gucia, remember that every day is a day too long. Do what you can.

Kisses,
Lilka

Miss Gucia, I have been seriously ill for a few days. My entire family and the Opatowskis have contracted the disease. I do not know if we will survive. I am certain that we will not. Our only chance is your being so kind as to tell Dr Marek to give us the best medicine. Do not wait, tell him about us at once.

Bulcio¹¹⁷

115 Golda (Gucia) Tabaczyńska.

116 See footnote 113 and Introduction.

117 Last paragraph and signature in different handwriting.

(3)

Opatowski
Żychlin

To E. Tabaczyńska
Warsaw
Dzielna Street 18, flat 5

Żychlin, 22 February 1942

Dear Gucia,

The two postcards will probably reach you at the same time. I am writing because I want to make sure that they have finally reached you.

Do remember, my dear, that I am turning to you with an urgent request to take care of an urgent matter. We have already paid 8 Rm each. The pace is unusually fast. We go through so much every hour that it would be enough to fill a very eventful day. We feel like lunatics.

Gucia, do remember that you are our only hope, do what you can. I cannot write any more.

Kisses,
Lilka

Miss Gucia, sweet Lilcia¹¹⁸ is very sick and so are we. Dr Marek is the only person who can help us. Do not wait and notify him immediately. Kind regards to you and [your] brother.

Yours, Bulcio¹¹⁹

(4)

L. Opatowska
Żychlin

To E. Kadysz
Warsaw
Dzielna Street 18, flat 5

Żychlin, 26 February 1942

Dear Gucia,

Just think that it has been a week since Chamek left us and we have not heard from him. Marek has returned but he does not take his role of a carer

118 Lilcia is a diminutive of Lilka mentioned above.

119 Last paragraph and signature in different handwriting.

too seriously. He left them near the town closest to us and did not think twice about what would happen to them later. I doubt whether I would find the words to describe my despair if I tried to. Each day brings a new tragedy and it is difficult to focus even for a minute, but the thought that we have not heard from Chamek is killing us.

It began here as late as on Thursday with the payment,¹²⁰ and there have been as many as 4 victims in just the 4 days. We are filled with resignation and pain. All witnesses of our suffering claim that they have not seen anything like what we are going through.

My dearest, Marek is going to see you. Convince him to find even the slightest trace of Chamek. I simply cannot think about this anymore!

All I know is that according to some people, he has been deprived of his belongings. What now? Tell Marek to be a little bit more responsible because people are completely losing their trust. As for what he intends to do, he will tell you in person.

Remember, my dear, to count us in. Regards from Bronka and Jakub.

Regards to yours,

Lilka

Bulcio sends regards. Be sure to write at length. For the time being parcels cannot be sent.

ARG I 1072a (Ring. I/572)

Description: original, handwritten on postcards (two handwritings), postmarks

(1)–(3) 24 February, (4) 26 February [19]42 and stamps of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw

(1)–(3) 27 February, (4) 1 March [19]42; ink, German, Polish, 147×104 mm, 4 sheets, 8 pages.

120 The letter is dated 26 February, but the figure 6 is superimposed over another, so it might have been written a few days earlier. The Thursday mentioned in the letter was probably 19 February, when the head tax of 8 Rm was introduced in Żychlin, see footnote 113.

28 February–3 March 1942, Gąbin.¹²¹ Róża¹²² and Lusia¹²³ [Gips], letters (1) and (2) to Avrom Leyb Gips.

(1)

To Mr A. Gips¹²⁴

Warsaw

Pawia Street 41, flat 4

Gąbin, 28 February 1942

My dears, my beloved,

Have you received my two postcards dated 17 and 21 February? I am very surprised that I have not heard back from you. The Taffets have already received replies. Abram Sztolcman¹²⁵ knows more about everything already. He is probably making official efforts in Kraków for his sister.

Dear Daddy, do obtain detailed information. [Mrs] Markowa is boasting about his making efforts for her and Dziunia. She is serious about this.

My dears, there is some lessening of tension, but I do not know for how long. Imagine that I also had to pay 8 [R]m per person.¹²⁶ Only Lusia was

¹²¹ Gąbin (Gostynin County).

¹²² Róża (Roza) Gips (?–1942?), daughter of Abram Gips. During the war she stayed in Gąbin; was sent to Dachau and died there. See YVD, 303093.

¹²³ Lusia (Lea) Gips (1922–1942?), daughter of Avrom Gips. During the war she stayed in Gąbin; was sent to Dachau and died there. See YVD, 303091.

¹²⁴ Avrom Leyb Gips, former chairman of the *Judenrat* in Gąbin, delegate of the Gąbin *landsmanshaft* in the Warsaw ghetto, co-worker with Hersh Wasser.

¹²⁵ Abram (Adolf) Sztolcman (1890–1943), engineer, merchant, chairman of the Headquarters of the Merchants' Union, belonged to the first Warsaw *Judenrat*, in the Social Welfare Committee and Hospitality Committee; member of the *Judenrat*'s Economic Council, shareholder of the *TODOS* (*Towarzystwo Dostaw Wyrobów Przemysłu Żydowskiego*, Jewish Industry Supply Society; one of the few official Jewish companies in the ghetto), from September 1940 to February 1941 member of the *ŻKOM*. After 15 August 1942, chairman of the Economic Department and the Strict Welfare Department of the *Judenrat*. Executed on 23 April 1943, together with other members of the *Judenrat*.

¹²⁶ See footnote 113.

exempted. I am up to my ears in debt, and it is difficult for me to get out of it. Just think how the situation here has changed since our arrival. It would be impossible to get by on our salary. It is barely enough for breakfast and supper. Lusia sometimes [earns] 10 marks, once every two weeks. This is not enough. This is why we are grateful to those who give us midday meal because this is crucial. Poor Lusia is faring worse than I am, she eats irregularly, on Fridays and in the evenings the poor thing sometimes goes hungry. She is very sensitive; I understand that she feels sorry for herself. She is there because of Holcman. He is your true, real friend. I have become very close to them. They are kind people and help everybody.

Dear Mummy, I have a favour to ask of you. Buy me a thick small comb of good quality. You can send it in a letter. This is how Lichtenstein and Tadeusz have sent some. We need one. I work in such horrible, unsanitary conditions that I must have it.

I have not recovered even though I have lost some weight and I look normal again. I would like all of you to write to me. Do answer my questions. Kind regards to everybody.

Lots of kisses,
Roza

My dears! I am very surprised that you have not replied to our last two postcards. We worry that you take so little interest in us. I would like to see you as soon as possible and discuss everything in person.

Kisses,
Lusia

(2)

To Mr A. Gips
Warsaw
Pawia Street 41, flat 4

3 March 1942

My dears,

Today I received your postcard and I am writing back right away. My dears, the disease has not gone away, it remains unknown whether

the medication is effective. Horrible things happened to our friend Żychliński.¹²⁷ I think that you have heard about all that. Come what may, my dearest ones, I beg of you: do not worry, take care of your health. A miracle might happen and save your children.

Take care of yourself and write often. Why does dearest Daddy write so little? Anka and Aron¹²⁸ do not write at all. Your postcards are a real consolation to us.

My dears, what we know cannot help here. This cannot be helped.

Miss Helenka often hears from her brother who has been making efforts on her account.¹²⁹ Do seek his advice even though he too disbelieves that anything can be done about it.

My dears, we miss you so much today. Last year we celebrated the holiday modestly but at least we were together.

Dear Mummy, do not fret. Do not reproach yourself. Maybe this is the way it had to be. Hope everything ends well. Do write back what is new with you. What are the Klajnbarbs doing? How are they faring?

Kind regards to everybody and from all our friends. Lots of kisses.

Missing you, Roza

My dearest beloved!

Your postcard made us very happy. We are very anxious, and we worry a lot¹³⁰ and on top of that we are far away from you. Tough luck. Nothing can be done about this. I believe in destiny. What is new with you? Why do Anka and Aron not write their postscripts? You cannot imagine what this direct word from you means to us. We miss you a lot and we are yearning for family warmth and a kind word, which one so rarely hears from strangers, and even when one does, it is all pretend.

I am at Mrs Wyrobek's. It is eleven o'clock in the evening. Our dear cousins, who are so kind to us, are here too. I work a little, but we have had

127 Coded reference to the deportation to death of the Jews of Żychlin, 3 March 1942.

128 Aron Gips, probably a brother of the senders. See the lyrics he recorded in the labour camp, *Forced Labour Camps* (forthcoming).

129 A reference to the efforts to bring the relatives to the Warsaw ghetto.

130 Because of the head tax already introduced in Gašin; see footnote 113.

expenses. What is new with the Klajnbarbs? And what has Alinka been up to?

Hugs and kisses,
Lusia

ARG I 737 (Ring. I/554)

Description: original, handwritten on postcards (two handwritings), postmarks

(1) 1 March and (2) 4 March [19]42 and stamps of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw (1) 4

March and (2) 8 March [19]42, ink, Polish, 148×104 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

15

January–March 1942, Gąbin. Sender unknown, letters (1)–(3) to Tauba Różana.

(1)

[Mrs] Tauba Różana
Warsaw
Dzielna Street 1

[21 January 1942]

[...] we see [...] that you [...] five marks [...] we shall transfer [...] you have received [...] postcard, which my [...] son-in-law Idele wrote to you. Owing to him you can use that occasion to claim these five marks in Warsaw. Dear Grandpa is to write a letter to me from [...].

(2)

Mrs Tauba Róż[ana]
Warsaw
Dzielna Street [1]

[6 March 1942]

^HWith God's help^H

[...] had yours [...] 18 March [...] I do not know any other addresses I can write to but to Grandmother. Please tell my grandparents to pray sincerely with

great faith [for] imminent mercy for the world [?]. Woes [...] wagon [?] [...] sick [?] [...]

(3)

M[rs] Tau[ba Różana]

[...] write good news, we send you all best regards [...] we [...] journey [...] [...] 18 marks [...] 30/47. I ask [...] should see [?] each other [...] they should change [...] should register [?] [...] for the ill [...] the doctor [...] register [...]

Description:

(1) ARG I 734 (Ring. I/599/67); (2) ARG I 735 (Ring. I/599/67a); (3) ARG I 736 (Ring. I/599/67b)

(1) original, handwritten (NG*) on the postcard, postmark illegible and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 23 January [19]42, pencil, ink, German, 95×100 mm, major damage and fragments missing, 1 sheet, 2 pages; (2) original, handwritten (NG*) on the postcard, postmark 6 March [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 9 March [19]42, pencil, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 113×105 mm, major damage and fragments missing, 1 sheet, 2 pages. (3) original, handwritten (NG*) on the postcard, postmark missing and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw damaged, pencil, German and Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 108×100 mm, major damage and fragments missing, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

16

11 March 1942, Włocławek. Bronka Głowińska, letter to her husband [?] and to Gołda Tabaczyńska.

B. Głowińska
Leslau¹³¹

Mrs E. Tabaczyńska
Warsaw
Dzielna Street 18, flat 5

[...] We have received your postcard. Due to [...] I had postponed my reply [...] heartfelt wishes on your new start [...] Not an hour goes by without my

131 German name for Włocławek.

thinking about you. Write what you are doing – write about everything and often, even if you do not receive our reply. What things do you need? Jakub has bedding only, and this does not [...] Write whether you need it; basically, write a lot about yourself to us.

I have found out from rumours that Daddy had to change his address. I do not know the new one yet. If you know something about it, write to us at once. I am terribly worried on this account. Write when we shall see each other. I really want to find out how you have settled down. Any chance of a job? Our situation has not changed. It is relatively difficult at times, but we manage. [...] Beloved! If only you could see Celina. How she calls me 'mame' and a lamp 'amp.' She has four small teeth up and two down. She is a sweet girl. When we walk down the street people turn their heads to look at us. But it is a pity that winter is dragging on. Do write back at once. Hugs and kisses! [...] Yours, Bronka.

Dear Gucia! [...]. Celina is the only ray of sunshine. Write [...] Hugs, Bronka. [...]

Dear brother! Do not write to Daddy – write often to us, even if you do not hear back from us. Write to Fela.¹³²

ARG I 1053 (Ring. I/565).

Description: original, handwritten (two handwritings) on the postcard, postmark 11 March [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 13 March [19]42, German, Polish, 148×104 mm, illegible fragments, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

132 The last line written along the margin.

After 11 March 1942, Aleksandrów Kujawski.¹³³ Sala (surname unknown), letter to her sister Luteczka (Luta).

Duplicate of a letter delivered in mid-March from Aleksandrów Kujawski. The sender is writing to her sister.¹³⁴

Aleks[andrów Kujawski], 11 March 1942

My dearest Luteczka!

Yesterday I received your postcard dated 5 March. The one where you said that you were happy to get some good news from me. But what of that, as everything is temporary. I want to emphasise just one thing, my dear ones. Do remember one thing: what you know about my suffering is nothing at all compared to what I have really been through and what awaits me. We might never see each another again. I have only one request: do not forget about my only child [the sender's adolescent son who is in a labour camp]. Let me quote B.P. Moryto:¹³⁵ one is just a man and does not know what awaits him tomorrow!!!

My only child's wandering began yesterday. I know that they left but I do not know where to. As soon as I get some news I will write to you, my one and only. God only knows what I have been going through since yesterday, all I can feel is that my heart is melting from sorrow.

I had a few words from Heniek, [The sender's husband was in a labour camp too] he wrote that he was doing better, that he was already working, but would not get a leave. Abram came here on leave, and he extended it by a week. I was hoping that he would come and that something could be done.

My beloved Sister and Brothers, we have faced a very unfortunate fate. I am trying to shake this off, but it is very hard. I don't know why it is that Miss Sied has not been receiving what Dudkiewicz sent her.

Luteczka, please, do find out what this means. Perhaps he did not get it done at all? He has not been at Hauptman's, he might come in the upcoming days. Dear Lutuś, old Landsman's people were here, they pleaded with me to tell you to send it to the following address: Jakób Kac, Siedliszcze

133 Aleksandrów Kujawski (Ciechocinek County).

134 The copyist's remark; also below, in square brackets.

135 The surname is probably distorted; perhaps a reference to Proverbs 27:1.

on the River Wieprz, Chełm County. They gave me 10 marks for his grandson who is in hospital with typhus. If it is not a problem for you, please send the money. I took it for now, but if [you] don't send it, I will return it.

Why have you not answered my questions? There are rumours that you are to go to the Lublin region. Is it true? Are all of you well at least? Why did Ignac stop writing to me? I am going to drop you a few lines tomorrow again. Be well. Lots of kisses. The only thing I crave from the bottom of my heart is to see you, along with Heniek and Abramek.

Yours, Sala.

I beg of you, do write to me. This might be just a scarecrow. I hope to God that this is the case.

Lutuś, my only child and you are everything to me in this world. I am going to [my] parents and Izuś first thing in the morning. [The sender's parents, same as her son Izuś, are long dead].

ARG I 685 (Ring. I/566, Ring. I/599/94)

Description: Ring. I/599/94: duplicate, handwritten (FLIG*), ink, Polish, 206×295 mm, serious damage and losses of text, text illegible in places, 1 sheet, 1 page; Ring. I/566: duplicate based on the handwritten one (with clarifications by the copyist), 2 copies, typewritten, Polish, 202×224 mm, damage and losses of text, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

Before 25 January [1942], Ozorków.¹³⁶ E[stera] Prusinowska,¹³⁷ letter to K. Poznański.

E[stera] Prusinowska
Ozorków

K. Poznański¹³⁸
Dzielna Street 11, flat 4

Ozorków, 25 [?] January [1942]

I am very surprised that you have not received my letter with the enclosures [...] I do not recall the exact date but [it was?] around [...] six weeks [...] Now [...] would it not be better [...] than [...] Yes [...] I have sent [...] that I wrote twice. Why [...] A lot of bad things [have happened to?] Pinkus [...]

Lutek¹³⁹

ARG I 948 (Ring. I/573/6)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, pencil, ink, postmark 25 [?] January [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 29 January [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×104 mm, illegible sections, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Note in Yiddish on p. 1 (ink): “Oyzer [?]”.

136 Ozorków (Łęczyca County).

137 Estera Prusinowska (1908–1988), née Poznańska, was born in Osięciny. She and her son Sewek (Samuel) (1936–2011) survived the war. Estera settled in Israel, while Sewek settled in the United States. See Piotr Głuchowski, “Zrobiłoby się remont, ale jak Żydzi przyjdą i zechcą odebrać? Wtedy papier na nic”. Mienie pożydowskie w Polsce, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 31.07.2021, <https://wyborcza.pl/magazyn/7,124059,27384667,zrobiloby-sie-remont-ale-jak-zydzi-przyjda-i-zechca-odebrac.html> [access: May 26, 2023].

138 Kopel Poznański (1900–1942), brother of Estera Prusinowska, owner of a mill. He was born in Osięciny. During the war he lived and perished in the Warsaw ghetto with his wife and daughter.

139 Possibly Luzer Prusinowski (1910–1942) from Ozorków.

March 1942, Ozorków. Ita Aronowicz, Eda (Edzia) Kadysz and her mother, letters (1) and (2) to M. Kadysz.

(1)

I[ta] Aronowicz
Ozorków
Feldstr[asse]¹⁴⁰ 15

To M. Kadysz
Warsaw
Szczęśliwa Street 15, flat 20

Dear children,

Let me report to you that we are well. Aunt Tabaczyńska's¹⁴¹ health is deteriorating. We live together in the ghetto at Ita Aronowicz's. I wrote a postcard to you this week, plus the address: Feldstrasse 15, Ozorków. I have been writing to you more often. We would like to see Gucia, but we have no stuff.¹⁴² Do write more often and we are going to write to you too. We have received Ewunia's postcard, which made us very happy. The most important thing is that we are healthy, which I wish for you too. Kisses.

Yours, Mum

Regards to the entire family. Regards to Edzia. Separate kisses for Estusia and Ewa.

My dears, I use this opportunity to send kind regards,

Ita.¹⁴³

My dears, we are terribly worried about aunt Dwojra's illness. We are trying to cope, but we do not know if we will manage. I cannot gather my thoughts to write more to you. Kind regards to my beloved children,

Edzia.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ German name for Polna Street, at north border of the ghetto in Ozorków.

¹⁴¹ Coded reference to the nearing deportation to death. Aunt Tabaczyńska probably died in Kłodawa, see footnote 41.

¹⁴² Lack of money.

¹⁴³ Last two lines and the signature in different handwriting.

¹⁴⁴ In still another handwriting.

(2)

Edzia Kadysz
Ozorków
Feldstrasse 15
c/o Mr Landau

To M. Kadysz
Warsaw
Szczęśliwa Street 15, flat 20

Ozorków, 20 March 1942

My dears,

Until now I have been unable to write. I simply could not gather my thoughts. Mum was dangerously ill. Same as aunt Tabaczyńska. Thank God, all this is over.

As for [...] I do not know. We live in the ghetto, our address is Feldstr[asse] 15, at Mr Landau's. We see Estusia¹⁴⁵ every day. She does not know what to do either. Do write every day because I want to hear from you daily. We are planning to see the Rachwalskis.¹⁴⁶ What do you say to this? I work, which is a great advantage, but Mum [...]! How are [the] sweet children doing? Give us some advice.

Kisses, Edzia.

I send my kind regards and kisses to my children. Yours, loving Mum, who wishes to see you. Do write more often. Write back, please.¹⁴⁷

ARG I 947 (Ring. I/569)

Description: original, handwritten (three handwritings) on postcards, postmarks (1) 13 March and (2) 20 March [19]42 and stamps of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw (1) 16 March and (2) 24 March [19]42, ink, German, Polish, 146×104 mm, text illegible in places, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

145 Probably reference to Estera Prusinowska.

146 It probably means the place which the sender considered safe; see also footnote 15.

147 In different handwriting.

[8 June]¹⁴⁸ 1942, Sosnowiec/Sosnowitz.¹⁴⁹ Janina Szylska, letter to Ludwik Hirsberg.¹⁵⁰

Janina Szylska
Sosnowiec
Oderstrasse¹⁵² 11

Mr Ludwig [sic] Hirsberg
Warsaw 41¹⁵¹
[x]¹⁵³ Ogrodowa Street 11
8 June

Sosnowitz, 27 May [1942]

Dear Mr and Mrs Hirsberg,

I have taken the liberty of dropping you a line because a radical change has taken place here, because my Mr and Mrs Cukier have been deported, I do not know where to, they were put in our *lager* on Saturday and they have just been deported and they have disappeared without a trace,¹⁵⁴ the child is with me for now because [my] mistress did not let it be handed over to them because they did not know the direction [they were to be deported in] or more importantly where to. So I turn to you for advice on what I should do about

148 The letter was dated and postmarked in Sosnowiec on 27 May, but due to the wrong address and subsequent corrections could only be delivered on or after 8 June 1942.

149 Sosnowiec was home to about 28,000 Jews in 1939; it was a quarter of the town's population. Deportations to Auschwitz began on 12 May 1942, with a transport of about 5,000 people.

150 Ludwik (Eliezer) Hirsberg (1901–1944), member of the *Judenrat* in Włocławek, from December 1939 in Warsaw, organiser and active member of the Włocławek *landsmanshaft* in Warsaw, member of the CKU, later an activist of the commission for the care of refugee shelters of the CKU. He hid outside the ghetto together with Stanisław Gombiński and was killed during the general Warsaw uprising. See Katarzyna Person, “‘Nie śmiać się, nie płakać, tylko rozumieć.’ List Hersza Wassera do Ludwika (Eliezera) Hirsberga,” *KHŻ/JHQ*, no. 4/256 (2015), pp. 684–690; Stanisław Gombiński, *Wspomnienia policjanta z warszawskiego getta*, ed. Marta Janczewska (Warszawa 2010); Przemysław Nowicki, “Hirsberg Ludwik,” in *Włocławski Słownik Biograficzny*, Vol. 9 (Włocławek 2021), pp. 74–77.

151 See Introduction.

152 German name for Ignacego Mościckiego Street.

153 [x] Leśna, then Leszno Street 37.

154 The Cukiers were taken away on Saturday, 23 May 1942, and deported on Wednesday, 27 May, that is, during or immediately after the first *Aktion* in Sosnowiec.

the child. What should I do now? For I received an order to go to Germany back when my mistress and master were still here. So I do not know what will happen. The child will not get any affection here, because you can image what the remaining family is like. I will write more in the next letter. I cannot write any more today.

Kind regards to everybody,

Jania

Kind regards from Atuš. Everybody has left. Atuš is going to go to school.

Atuš Cukier¹⁵⁵

ARG I 1017 (Ring. I/579)

Description: original, handwritten (two handwritings) on a postcard, postmark and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, ink, German, Polish, 148×104 mm, minor damage and losses of text, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

21

8 June 1942, Mława/Mielau. *Noyekh [Romaner], letter to M. Romaner.*

Mława

Mielau

Gęsia Street 7, flat 12

Mr M. Romaner

Warsaw

[Monday 8 June [19]42]¹⁵⁶

Dear Only Brother!

|| Out of five brothers we are alas the only two remaining. Our dear and beloved Moyshl and Leybl left us forever on Thursday afternoon along with a whole group. Also those who were still sick in hospital. All were buried together in the old cemetery Friday 7:30 in the evening. ||¹⁵⁷

Take care of our dear parents. May God give them the strength to endure the awful sorrows which have suddenly poured out on us.¹⁵⁸

155 Last line and signature in a child's handwriting.

156 Date moved from the bottom of the letter.

157 Paragraph marked by vertical double lines.

158 On 4 June 1942 the Nazis murdered fifteen Jews in the ghetto in Mława. Thirteen men were hanged, and two women were shot.

Please write to us when the *bris*¹⁵⁹ will be for Khanele's baby who will –
I believe – bear the name Moyshe Leyb after our dear brothers,
Noyekh

ARG I 930 (Ring. I/580)

Description: [1] original, handwritten on a postcard, German, postmark 9 June
[19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible; [2] duplicate [?] glued
to the original postcard, ink, Yiddish, 144×103 mm, minor damage and losses
of text, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

b) Letters to and from Szlama Winer (Szlamek), escapee from Chełmno

22

11 February 1942, Zamość. [Fela] Bajler, letters (1) and (2) to Szlamek [Winer]
and to Hersh¹⁶⁰ and Bluma¹⁶¹ Wasser.

(1)

Zamość, 11 February 1942

Dear Szlamek,

I have received your letter, and reading it I too cried over our fate, but
there is nothing we can do about it.

159 Ritual circumcision.

160 Hersh (Hirsh, Hersz, Hirsz, Herman, Henryk, Heniek) Wasser (1912–1981), economist, worked as a bookkeeper; member of Left Poalei Tsiyon, director of the party's library in Łódź. From December 1939 in Warsaw, activist of ŻSS, secretary of the CKU. He became one of Emanuel Ringelblum's closest colleagues, a secretary of Oyneg Shabes; he was also author of many documents written for the Archive. One of the only three surviving members of the group, he was the only one who knew where the Archive was buried. He joined the Central Jewish Historical Commission in order to organise the searches. After the first part was retrieved in September 1946, he helped to identify the authorship of documents. In 1950 he left Poland together with his wife Bluma and settled in Israel. He founded the Emanuel Ringelblum Institute in Tel Aviv.

161 Bluma Wasser, née Kirszenfeld (1912–1990), Hersh Wasser's wife, in the Warsaw ghetto she worked for the Oyneg Shabes, mostly as a copyist. She survived the war and settled in Israel.

Szlamek, I gather that staying at some strangers' when you were sick must have been unpleasant for you, but thank God you are well again and then that you came across such good people. Szlamek, it is possible that you met such people because you did not forget about me. God might be rewarding you for that.

As for the registration, dear Szlamek, they will not register you before you arrive, and I do not know whether they will register you the way you want them to, but I will find out about this. Szlamek, I advise you to postpone your arrival for a while, until I write you to come, though every moment spent without seeing you is a moment too long, but it has to be so.

My dear, write in detail about what happened with [my?] parents and Mojsze, I would really like to know, and do write whether the rest of the family is alive or not. Do you visit Mrs Reichenbach often, does she own a pharmacy, how has she been doing? I have received 50 zlotys from Mrs Reichenbach.

As for us, we are healthy, thank God, and we make ends meet. Hope to God that it does not get worse.

You asked me whether I have any address *fun a goy*,¹⁶² so no, I do not, and secondly, do not even think about this because it is impossible.

Apart from that there is nothing new with us. Lots of kisses from everybody,

Fela.

Do not wait to answer so that I do not need to worry about you.

(2)

Dear Mr and Mrs Wasser,

You do not know the woman who is writing to you, but you must have got to know me a little from what my brother-in-law has told you about me.

I would like to thank you for the hospitality you showed my brother-in-law and for taking care of him.

May God help you for that, may nothing bad happen to you ever and I also hope that we will return the favour in fair circumstances. Why, we are humans.

162 (Yiddish) of a non-Jew; here, perhaps, of somebody living outside the ghetto.

This is all for now, heartfelt regards,
Yours sincerely,
Bajlerowa¹⁶³

ARG I 1481a (Ring. I/596)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, 115×194 mm, Polish, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

23

17 February 1942, Koluszki.¹⁶⁴ Izrael Szlamowicz, letter to Szlamek [Winer], at Dwojra Sztatman's.¹⁶⁵

I. Szlamowicz
Koluszki
11 Listopada Street 60

Miss Dwojra Sztatman
Warsaw
[x]¹⁶⁶ Wołyńska Street 9, flat 1
to Sz[]lamek

Koluszki, 17 February 1942

Dear Sir,

We have received your postcard and I would like to inform you that your friend¹⁶⁷ sold the jacket and took the money and said that he would send it to you.

A letter from your sister-in-law¹⁶⁸ has arrived from Zamość. She is asking you to come to her and her door is wide open for you.

163 Meaning Fela Bajler. Lit. Mrs Bajler.

164 Koluszki (Tomaszów Mazowiecki County).

165 The letters to Szlamek were addressed to D. Sztatman for the purpose of maintaining secrecy. Winer might have lived there when he was sick. Dwojra (Dora) Sztatman, who was friends with the Wassers, was Ringelblum's student at the Yehudia high school. See also ARG I 409 (Ring. I/177).

166 [x] Nowolipki.

167 Abram Roy, who escaped from Chełmno on 18 January 1942, the day before Szlama Winer.

168 Fela Bajlerowa.

That letter is in your friend's possession, and we read it. Your friend left for Wierzbnik a week ago.

There is nothing new with us. Kind regards to you,

Izrael Szlamowicz¹⁶⁹

P.S. When you get there, to Zamość, do write to us.

ARG I 1481b (Ring. I/596)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 19 February [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 22 February [19]42, ink, Polish, 148×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

24

20 February 1942, Wierzbnik.¹⁷⁰ Abram [Roj], at [Helena] Aurbach's, letter to Szlamek [Winer].

From H. Aurbach
Wierzbnik
Kolejowa Street 71

To Dewojra [sic] Sztatman
Warsaw
Wołyńska Street 9 flat 1

Wie[r]zbni, 20 February 1942

Dear Slamek, I can write you that I am at Helcias. Im well, which is also what I wish for you from the botom of my heart, dear Slamek, I can write you that Ive received a letter from your sister-in-law from Zamość. She wrote that you should come over and that she would be a mother to you. This is what she wrote to me, shes very worried about you. Shed like to contact you. Dear Slamek, Ive also recived a postcard from Mr Herber and from Grabów. Theyre still there. They send their regards. Dear Slamek, I regret a lot that we have parted ways. I am at Helcias. Im in a very bad situation because Helcias in a very bad situation. She cannot help me at all. I am worse off than

169 Perhaps the same person mentioned in Doc. 8.

170 Wierzbnik (Starachowice County); in the letter, the name is Wierzbni, perhaps a local variant.

in Koluszki. You can imagine what Im going through. Ive got no money, I dont know what to do. It would be better if I had not lived to see this [x]¹⁷¹

Regards from me, your tru friend,

Abram

Kind regards to you

Helena with family¹⁷²

ARG I 1481c (Ring. I/596)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 20 February [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 23 February [19]42, ink, Polish, 148×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

25

[Before 20 February 1942], Radziejów.¹⁷³ Hinda (surname unknown), letter to Szlamek [Winer].

Juda Radziejowski¹⁷⁴
Radziejów
Hermannsbad¹⁷⁵ County

To Mrs Dwojra Sztatman
Warsaw
Wołyńska Street 9, flat 1

Dear Szlamek,

Imagine how happy we were when we saw your postcard. I thought that you would not write to us even though we knew about your *lekh*.¹⁷⁶ The guys were looking for you in the nearby town of Osięciny,¹⁷⁷ but they could do nothing. So the ones left from our family are: Mum, Smajuś, Dawid, me –

171 [x] perhaps if I.

172 The last line and signature in different handwriting.

173 Radziejów Kujawski (Ciechocinek County).

174 Probably a relative of Kalman Radziejowski (1910–1942), Szlamek's fellow inmate from Chełmno. See *The Last Stage of Resettlement is Death*, Doc. 10.

175 German name for Ciechocinek.

176 (Hebrew/Yiddish) escape.

177 The police were looking for escapees from Chełmno.

Hinda, uncle Majer alone, and Rafał with family, you know best where the rest of the family has gone to...

Imagine how devastated we are, we are very happy that you have at least written to us, we were so happy that we cried. Uncle Majer and Rafał have already left in the direction of Piotrków Trybunalski, Dawid and I have a pass to go in the direction of Częstochowa.

Give us some advice as to what we should do, should we come to you? We could make our passes over, should we take Mum, will she not die of hunger? It has been quiet here for now. There are the same taxes here as where you were, it was wise of you to have left, we do not know what will happen here. I will send you our cousin's address, go to him and seek his advice, I will write [him] too. I do not know what to do. Write us a long letter about everything. Go to [our] cousin, he is from Kalisz, seek his advice.¹⁷⁸ It is possible to go from Częstochowa in any direction.

Ch. Lewi, Warsaw, Nalewki Street 18, flat 18 or Nowolipki Street 18, flat 18 – I do not remember exactly.¹⁷⁹ I bid you farewell.

Your loving Hinda

Regards to Dawid and R., Mum, and Śmajuś. Write about everything.

ARG I 1481d (Ring. I/596)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 20 February [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 24 February [19]42, ink, Polish, 146×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

178 The sender might have meant Szymuel Kapłan.

179 Most probably Wolf Dawid Lewi at Rywen Gelbart's, Nowolipie Street 28 flat 18, see Doc. 2.

[Before 7 March 1942], Przyglów.¹⁸⁰ [Miss or Mrs] M. Rokman, letter to Grojnowski (Szlama Winer).

M. Rokman
Przyglów

To Heniek Wasser
Warsaw
Muranowska Street 6, flat 15
for Grojnowski

7 March¹⁸¹ 1942

Dear Mr Grojnowski,

We are happy that you came across decent people who take care of you. It would be tragic if that were not the case. Thank God my brother Sz. J. is in Warsaw. He wrote to us. We almost thought him dead, may he live and be well. His Sabinka will at least have a father.

Izbicki and his family plus Mmes Bibrowski have visited us. Majer Łaski from Zelów has written to us that he wanted to come over and that he was sending his regards, we expect them this week. What do you do for a living? Thank God, the situation here is not bad, we hope it stays so.

We send greetings to you. Regards to the people with whom you are staying.

Yours, a well-wishing stranger

Rokman

ARG I 1481e (Ring. I/596)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 9 March [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 13 March [19]42, ink, Polish, 148×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

180 Przyglów (Piotrków Trybunalski County).

181 In the original, February.

18 March 1942, Zamość. Fela Bajler, letter to Szlamek [Winer].

Fela Bajler
Zamość
Lublin District
Św. Piątka Street 21

Mr H. Wasser
Warsaw
Muranowska Street 6, flat 15

Zamość, 18 March 1942

Dear Szlamek,

I have received your postcard, which made me happy because I learned that you were well, thank God. My dear, as for your arrival, every moment that I do not see you drags on, but I urge you, Szlamek, to postpone your arrival a little, wait until I write to you, you certainly understand that this is for your own good.¹⁸²

Yesterday I received a postcard from Grabiński and Majer, they are in Zelów in Łask County. Rafał is with his family and Majer is alone, they thought that you were already at my place. It has been long since I received the postcard from Hania where she asked me where [her?] parents were. I wrote her that I did not know where they and Mojsze were and that you were in Warsaw, but I have not heard back from her since then.

Apart from that there is nothing new with us. Everybody sends their kind regards,

Fela.

Szlamek, I urge you to go to the Radzyمیńskis and find out how they are doing, their address is Pawia Street 41, flat 28, Puttermilch.

Szlamek, visit Ula Bore, Nowolipki Street 7, flat 9.

ARG I 1481ab (Ring. I/596).

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark destroyed, stamps of *Judenräte* in Zamość and Warsaw, the latter 22 March [19]42, ink, 148×106 mm, Polish, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

182 By the time Fela Bajler sent the letter, Szlamek was probably already on his way to Zamość. On 17 March the Oyneg Shabes group gave him money; a photograph given by Szlamek to the Wassers, signed "as a token of remembrance," bears the date of 18 March. See Ferenc, "Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie.", p. 324.

(1)

Fela Bajler
Zamość
Św. Piątka Street 21

To Heniek Wasser
Warsaw
Muranowska Street 6, flat 15

Zamość, 21 March 1942

Dear Mr and Mrs Wasser,

I can report to you that I am well, thank God, I wish to hear only good news from you, same as you want to hear only good news from me. My dears, I can report to you now that I have recovered, I got out of bed on Friday evening at 7:30 and my sister-in-law is feeding me like a convalescent, now I can tell you about Knopmacher, theres a lot to say, I didnt think that Mr Zysman¹⁸³ knew such bad people, he has a receipt for 25 zlotys, please, dont pay it out to him. Whats new with you, Id like very much to see Mr Kohn,¹⁸⁴ because hes a good friend, thats all for now, regards to all of you, yours

Szlamek

Kind regards to Mr Kohn and Mr Zysman, for Mr Rubinsztein and all my friends, *es ist tsouris!*¹⁸⁵

Have you received a telegram from Groj[nowski?]¹⁸⁶

183 Wolf Zysman, co-worker of the Ringelblum Archive; see ARG I 1 (Ring. I/1152); a certain Knopmacher failed to give money to Szlamek in return for the money which the Oyneg Shabes people gave to the man's relatives in the Warsaw ghetto.

184 Menakhem Mendel Kohn (Kon) (1881–1943), wealthy merchant from Ostrołęka; Zionist; in the ghetto he served as a social worker and was in charge of finances for Oyneg Shabes. He cared for many of the members of Oyneg Shabes and their families when they became ill. After the *Grossaktion* of 1942 he was an activist of ŻKN and supporter of ŻOB. He died during the April Warsaw ghetto uprising.

185 (Yiddish) there are problems, worries.

186 Not clear what this refers to.

Dear Mr Wasser,

I can report to the two of you that I am well, thank God, I wish to hear only good news from you too, as for me, I am in a dire situation, I dont know what to do, I would like to see Mr Kohn, its all I wish for.

Dear Mr Wasser, the *gmina* doesnt want to help me at all, so would you be so kind as to write at once, as for me, at present I dont have a job or even a grosz. I kindly ask you, Sir, to send me a few zlotys so that I can save my life. I got regards from my cousin from Lublin and my family also sent their regards from Izbica Lub[elska], and so on, all my relatives have been writing me that all had gone to *oylem emes*¹⁸⁸ in the same manner as in [C]hełmno, imagine my despair, Ive run out of tears, Im sure that this is the last letter Im writing to you and that I will go to the same place where my parents had gone to and in the same manner too.

Dear Mr Wasser, please, advise me what I should do to see Mr Kohn, should this be impossible, I wont ever see you again, but I would like to see you and tell you what I went through and about everything else. *Das bays o[y]lem ist in Bełżyc*,¹⁸⁹ it is the same story as in [C]hełmno, I got regards from a cousin of mine, whom I havent seen for a while, she was in Rawa Ruska but now she has gone to *o[y]lem emes* too, my grandpa has just died too in Biłgoraj, so I have no more family left, imagine my despair and what I have been going through, I am not the only one who thinks that I too am going to see Mr Chaim Rywen Izbicki¹⁹⁰

187 No date in the original. Sakowska assumed that letter (2) was the last one sent by Szlama Winer before the deportation from Zamość to Bełżec, so she dated it as 5–11 April; see *Listy o Zagładzie*, Doc. 58. In fact, the last one that Winer sent to the Wassers from Zamość was that of 5 April, i.e., letter (3). The letter (2) with the information about Bełżec should be dated between 21 March, which is the date of the letter (1), and late March, when the information was published in *Wiadomości*; the precise date remains unknown but as the subsequent bulletin is dated 3 April, a few days must have passed between this and the preceding issue. As the erroneous news regarding the deportations from Biłgoraj was repeated, the information included in *Wiadomości* must have come from Szlamek's letter. See Ferenc, "Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie.", pp. 348–349.

188 (Yiddish) cemetery.

189 (Yiddish) cemetery is in Bełżyc, i.e., Bełżec.

190 Szlamek's fellow inmate and friend, who perished at Chełmno. See *The Last Stage of Resettlement is Death*, Doc. 10.

soon, I would prefer to see you instead. Whats new with you? What has your wife been up to? And so on. Whats new with all my friends, kisses to all of you.

Yours,

Szlamek

Regards from all friends. Yours sincerely,

He freezes in the same manner as at Chełmno, our turn is coming! The cemetery is in Beżyc, it has already frozen shtetls which I listed in the letter. Thats all for now, kisses to all of you,

Szlamek

(3)

Fela Bajler

Zamość

Lublin District

Św. Piątka Street 21

To Heniek Wasser

Warsaw

Muranowska Street 6, flat 15

Zamość, 5 April 1942

Dear Mr and Mrs Wasser,

First of all, I can thank you for the sum I received from you, I am very grateful to you for that, you literally kept me alive, I received 190 zlotys.

Now Mr Wasser, I did not eat on the first two days of the holiday, I didnt eat bread, I wanted to celebrate the entire holiday in the manner every Jew should!¹⁹¹ But it was impossible, Mr Wasser, why have I not received any letter from you, I dont know myself what to think. Have you received two letters and a postcard from me? And have you received a postcard from Rejowiec,¹⁹²

191 In 1942, the first days of the Passover holiday fell on 2 and 3 April. On that holiday, religious Jews must eat *matzo* instead of bread. *Matzo* was either unavailable in the ghetto or the Bajlers could not afford it.

192 Rejowiec (Chełm County). At the beginning of April 1942, the Germans gathered about 2,000 residents in the market square, shot some on the spot on their way to the train station, and sent the rest to the Sobibór killing centre. Jews from Rejowiec were the first victims. Szlamek must have heard about the deportation from Rejowiec; see Robert Kuwałek, *Z Lublina do Beżca. Ślady obecności i zagłady Żydów na południowo-wschodniej Lubelszczyźnie* (Lublin 2007), p. 14.

do write to me about everything, Im very curious as to how youre doing and what your young wife is up to and whats new in Warsaw, are all of you well, I have been having *tsouris*¹⁹³, regards to Mr Kohn and all friends.

Grojnowski

Mr Wasser, I beg of you to write to me about everything, I would like to see you, it is my wish because if I dont, then I will go to *oylem eymes* from here, give me some advice as to what I should do.

Im finishing my letter, regards from my sister-in-law Fela and regards from the children.

Yours, Praszker¹⁹⁴

ARG I 1481f (Ring. I/596)

Description: original, handwritten, letters (1) and (3) on postcards, postmarks (1) 24 March [19]42, (3) illegible and stamps of the *Judenräte* in Zamość (no date) and Warsaw (1) 26 March [19]42, (3) 10 April [19]42, Polish, 145×105 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages; letter (2) original, handwritten, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 90×110 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

193 See footnote 185.

194 Gershon Praszker was Szlamek's fellow inmate and friend, who perished at Chełmno. See *The Last Stage of Resettlement is Death*, Doc. 10.

24 April 1942, Zamość. Abram Bajler, letter to Hersch Wasser.

A. Bajler¹⁹⁵

Zamość¹⁹⁶

Św. Piątka Street 21

Lublin District

Mr H. Wasser

Warsaw

Muranowska Street 16, flat [...]¹⁹⁷

check Mur[anowska Street] 6, flat 15¹⁹⁸

Zamość, 24 April 1942

Dear Mr Wasser,

Having received your postcard, I hurry to write you back. Uncle will not come over anymore, because he is no longer in Zamość.

It has been two weeks since he left Zamość with our entire family. For now we do not know where they are. My younger brother and I remained because we were at work.

You can imagine our situation – I, a 14-year-old boy, have no guardian despite my young age and, making matters worse, I have to take care of my younger brother, but we are getting by. Tough luck. One has to accept things as they are.

There is nothing new with us for now, so let me finish this letter. Regards to you, Sir,

Abram

ARG I 1481g (Ring. I/596)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark illegible and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 27 April [19]42, minor damage and losses of text, Polish, 148×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

195 Abram Bajler was Fela's son and Szlamek's nephew.

196 In the first days of the *Aktion* in Zamość, approximately 3,000 Jews were deported, including Fela Bajler and Szlama Winer.

197 Incorrect house number; the edge of the postcard with the flat number is missing.

198 Post office clerk's handwritten annotation correcting the mistake in the address.

c) Letters from Pacht (Czachulec)¹⁹⁹

30

7 October 1941, Pacht near Turek. Bronka Górna, letter to her family.

Bronka Górna
Village Pacht 11
Post Tokary
Turek County
Juden-Kolonie

To Maks Górny²⁰⁰
Warsaw
Miła Street 69, flat 29

Pacht, 7 October 1941

My dears,

As you can see, I did not lie last time. On Thursday we joined the inhabitants of Brudzew, Turek, Władysławów, Tuliszków, Dobra, and Uniejów.

199 Pacht (Turek County) was one of sixteen small villages that comprised the *Juden-kolonie Heidemühle* rural ghetto, which was established in late September 1941. The *Judenrat* was seated in the village of Czachulec. The Germans conducted the first *Aktion* during the period 6–12 December 1941. 1,100 people were crammed into a church in Dobra; from there they were deported to Chełmno. Between the first and the second *Aktion*, a few groups of men and women were deported to forced labour camps in the Stadium complex in Poznań. The rest of the Jewish residents of the rural ghetto died at Chełmno in late July 1942. See *Świadectwa Zagłady. Obóz w Chełmnie nad Nerem. Getto wiejskie Czachulec*, ed. Łucja Pawlicka-Nowak and Jolanta Adamska (Gdańsk 2014), pp. 363–404.

200 The Górny family came from Kalisz. The addressee of nine of the twelve surviving letters from Pacht was Maks Górny, father of Ada Górna and husband of Bronka Górna. Maks, Yekhiel and Hela Waksztok (and Pola Sadorkiewicz?) were siblings. Hela lived in Brudzew near Turek. In late August 1939 Maks sent his wife Bronka to stay with Hela. After the Germans entered Kalisz, Maks reunited with his family. After the death of his relative, Tobiasz Najdat, who was executed by the Nazis by the wall of the rectory in Brudzew, Maks, who witnessed the execution and miraculously survived, fled to Kalisz, where he became a director of the Labour Battalion of the *Judenrat*. It remains unknown when Maks was sent to the labour camp (to Poznań?) or since when he had been in the Warsaw ghetto (if at all). Bronka addressed her letters to Miła Street 69, because her mother-in-law lived there. Maks's fate remains unknown. Yekhiel Górny (1908–1943), pre-war member of Left Poalei Tsiyon, arrived in Warsaw probably in November 1939. He soon became an important co-worker of Oyneg Shabes, as copyist and author of a diary. After the *Grossaktion* he was assigned to the OBW workshop in the court building on Leszno Street. During the uprising in the ghetto, he fought in the ŻOB. He died on 10 May 1943 in the sewers while trying to leave the ghetto with a group of fighters. He was about 35 years old.

The colony consists of several villages, inhabited by about 7,000 people.²⁰¹

Over 100 people live in our village. Najdat²⁰² and I have two flats. Our farm is the largest because it covers almost 26 morgen.²⁰³ The land is to be divided into plots. It remains unknown how much land everybody will get.

It is potato harvest time. I do not know what will be here. Do not worry about us, we are all together and we will get by.

Ada is feeling great in the countryside. The neighbourhood is nice, some 28 kilometres from Turek. I will let you know as soon as I learn something concrete.

Is it true that a change is coming your way? At least this is what people are saying. Where will you be then? Write back in detail. If I do not reply right away, do write anyway because I am busy on the farm. We have already heard from Maks after he reached his destination.²⁰⁴ He is doing fine, he works on a landed property.

What is new with you? Do you earn any money? Pola Sadorkiewicz and Mosze²⁰⁵ and old Herczyk live in the village. They have a small flat. We are getting by.

I am so exhausted that I fall asleep while sitting. Lots of kisses for everybody, yours,

Bronka

ARG I 949aa (Ring. I/585)

Description: original, handwritten (BG*) on a postcard, postmark and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, ink, Polish, German, 146×103 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

The siblings' mother was shot dead during the *Grossaktion* on 7 August 1942; Yekhiel Górny's wife and child probably also perished then and there, too. Bronka Górna, her daughter Ada, and other senders of the letters from Pacht died at Chełmno in July 1942. See *Diaries from the Warsaw Ghetto*, Doc. 9, entry of 7 August 1942; S. Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?*, p. 180.

201 There were approximately 4,000 Jews in the Heidemühle rural ghetto; see *Świadectwa Zagłady. Obóz w Chełmnie nad Nerem. Getto wiejskie Czachulec*, pp. 372–374.

202 Bronka Najdat, see Doc. 37.

203 Approximately 36 acres.

204 A labour camp, place unknown.

205 See Doc. 35.

[20 December 1941],²⁰⁶ Pacht near Turek. B[ronka] Gór[na], letter to her family.

B. Górna
Post Pacht
Juden-Kolonie

Maks Górny
Warsaw
Miła Street 69, flat 29

[...] since. [...] we [went though? survived?]. [...] but [...] [all of us?/ everything?] [...] reply. As a matter of fact [...]. I was [...]. [...] we were of course [...]. We believe [...] you are [...] but I [...] one day [...] you [...] so many [...] but I [...] to you [...] that it is difficult for you to write [...]. Throughout the entire [...] us [...] no food [...] in comparison to [...] we are to live to. Hope that you [...] bread [...] less but [...] does not feel at all. He looks [...] because he is growing [up?] fast. She is a fine-looking [...] bring her up so that [...] [give away?]. I have recently been thinking that [...] Thank God this [...] filled with [...] she has already understood the situation she is in. [...] child [...] she still [...]. When [...] to annotate [...] but you [...] something [...]? How is [...] doing? [...] surely now [...].²⁰⁷

ARG I 135 (Ring. I/599/95)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw – both illegible, ink, Polish, 105×148 mm, serious damage and losses of text, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

206 The date based on the list of letters, No 128, see ARG I 71 (Ring. I/542).

207 Sakowska assumed that Bronka Górna's letter of 24 December 1941, which she thought lost, reported the first *Aktion* of 6–12 December; see *Listy o Zagładzie*, Doc. 76. This might be the document, but this cannot be proved beyond doubt due to the letter's condition and the barely legible handwriting.

32

8 January 1942, Pacht near Turek. Bronka Górna, letter to her family.

B[ronka] Górna
Pacht 11,
Juden[Kolonie]
Post Turek

[Maks Górny]
Warsaw
[Miła Street 69, flat 29]

8 January 1942.

[...] a letter from [...] for so long [...] a long letter and [...] answer [...] As for [...] he didn't write [...] your parcel. Perhaps if you [...] write about everything. Ada [...] is feeling fine [...] children [...] toboggans. [...] Kisses [...] Regards and kisses,

ARG I 950 (Ring. I/599/13)

Description: original, handwritten (BG*) on a postcard, postmark 10 January [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 12 January [1942], ink, Polish, 146×103 mm, damages and missing fragments, illegible fragments, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

33

9 February 1942, Pacht near Turek. [Bronka Górna, letter to her family.]

[...] I have received the postcard. I was very happy that [...] I really don't know why [...] suffer hunger [...] Unfortunately, I [...] We are [...] What will [...] We are waiting for your [...] see each other again. I would be [...] calmer if only things were a little different with you. Be that as it may. What will happen with everything [...] from Maks [...] we had [...] postcard. Estera writes often too. Before that [...] we had not received [...]

ARG I 951 (Ring. I/599/14)

Description: original, handwritten (BG*) on a postcard. Postmark destroyed. Stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw "12 February [19]42", ink, pencil, Polish, 146×103 mm, major damages and missing pieces, illegible parts, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

[Before 11 March 1942], Pacht near Turek. Bronka Górna, letter to her family.

B. Górna
Village Pacht 11
Juden-Kolonie

To Maks Górny
Warsaw
Miła Street 69, flat 29

[...] a few words [...] unfortunately, your postcard cost me a lot of health and worry, but what can one do, I cannot help you, we are barely getting by ourselves. If only things would stay here the way they are, we would get by. The worst thing is that there are various rumours going round. I am very glad that Oleś is growing up well. I do not even remember his date of birth. Has he already tried to walk? I believe that this is the only entertainment in this harsh life. If only you could eat your full. We, at least, have never gone to bed hungry. Ada, may no evil eye hurt her, is a young lady now, but I do not have the patience to teach her. Spring is coming so I believe that your life will be easier, at least as far as fuel is concerned. How is dear Mum feeling? And you, Edzio, the most important thing is not to worry and take life as it comes. Good that you have gained some weight, was soup all you ate? One does not put on weight as things go. I have been feeling a little [...]. All I want is to survive to see you, my dears [...] Has Heniek [...] never [...] from the Bessers, Ada does not [...]. Regards to everybody. Kisses [...] and Ada [...] everybody.

Regards, [...]

ARG I 949ab (Ring. I/585)

Description: original, handwritten (BG*) on a postcard, postmark 11 March [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, ink, Polish, 146×103 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

7 April 1942, Pacht near Turek. Mosze Sadorkiewicz,²⁰⁸ letter to Abram Diament.

M. Sadorkiewicz
Pacht
Post Kr[eis] Turek

A. Diament
Warsaw
Elektoralna Street 14, flat 127

Pacht, 7 April [19]42

Dear Abram!

Your important postcard²⁰⁹ has been received. I am very glad that [...] you have returned from the Pinkiert business.²¹⁰ I would like to believe that you will recover quickly. If I had the opportunity [...], I would come to your aid to help you recover more quickly, but unfortunately Are you asking if we will see each other again? This remains in great doubt, because Pinkiert has opened a wholesale business for himself here with us, not naturally, but by law.²¹¹ So it is [...] perhaps still [...] to you once again [...], much not [...] that I know exactly what the situation is. In any case, do not put off answering. My sincere greetings to you, greetings to your wife and daughter, greetings to all my friends,

M. S.

ARG I 949d (Ring. I/585)

Description: original, handwritten (BG*) on a postcard, postmark 10 April [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 14 April [19]42, ink, Polish, 146×103 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

208 Maks Górny's brother-in-law.

209 In the original, the abbreviation w.p.k., for German *wichtige Postkarte*.

210 Pinkiert was the owner of the biggest funeral parlour in the Warsaw ghetto; his name became synonymous with death. Here the allusion is to forced labour camps, from which the labourers returned either sick or maimed.

211 Coded reference to the killing centre in Chełmno.

Bronka Górna
Village Pacht
Post Turek

To Max Górny
Warsaw
Miła Street 69, flat 29

Pacht, 9 April 1942

Dear Maksio,

I do not know what to think any more, I have not heard from you for a long time. All this various news from you is killing me. I beg you in the name of our dearest daughter, do write at least a few words.

People are saying that 10 [thousand] people leave Warsaw every day. Here it is not much fun either. We are like a bubble on the surface of water. We sit and wait.

I beg of you, write a few words on a postcard. I will write more next time.

Kisses, Bronka and Ada.

Kind regards to everybody [...].

ARG I 949ab. Ring. I/585

Description: original, handwritten (BG*) on postcard, postmark 6 May [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 8 May [19]42, ink, Polish, 146×103 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

28 April 1942, Pacht near Turek. Bronka Najdat [and Bronka Górna], letter to Jakub Langnas.

B. Najdat
Village Pacht No 11
Kreis u[nd] Post Turek

To Jakób Langnas
Warsaw
Zamenhofa Street 9, flat 15

Pacht, 28 April 1942

My dears,

I have read your postcard, I was very happy to learn that al of you are well, praise be, hope to God that I receiv only good news from you, as for us, we have been through a relatively difficult period because Hela was seriously il but now she is wel again and gets out of bed, though she is stil week, which is normal after an illness, the worst is over. Your wish worried me, I would like to thank you for thinking about us but I am unable to do that for a number of reasons, do not worry about us, its quiet here for now, hope to God that it stays so.

Our colony has many inhabitants, whatever happens to them will happen to us. A week ago they needed 20 labourers to work on the landed property so Moniek, Dosia and I were [...], apart from that I am pretty vigilant.

I pity you a lot that you have to suffer want due to the high prices, thank God we have not suffered hunger, hope to God that we remain here until the end and that we manage to persevere and see you as soon as possible.

Do you have any good news? Do write at once because your messages are my only consolation. That is it for now, kisses from your devoted Bronia, who misses you a lot.

Kisses from R., Moniek, and Dosia, as well as Hela, Ewunia, and Adaś. Maks cannot write to you, he can write to Hela only one postcard a month, we receive letters from the boys from Poznań.²¹²

ARG I 949ba (Ring. I/585)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 28 April [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, ink, Polish, 146×103 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

212 Prisoners of the Stadium complex of forced labour camps in Poznań.

[Before 15 May 1942], *Pacht* near *Turek*. *Hela Waksztok*, letter to *Jakub Langnas*.

Hela Waksztok
Village *Pacht* 11,
Turek County
Juden-Kolonie

To *Jakub Langnas*
Warsaw
Zamenhofa Street 9, flat 15

Pacht, [...]

My dears,

I am sorry for not writing for so long. I am completely devastated physically and morally.

All my hope is lost. I not only have no means of subsistence (though this does not matter at all today), but also I was seriously ill for several weeks. I had to see a doctor and buy medications. I had a kidney and bladder disease. Thank God, I am already on my feet and feeling well. But it does not matter because we are to set out on a journey. We still do not know where to.²¹³ We are supposed to register.

Adaś (‘may he live and be healthy’) is my worst frustration. *Ewunia* can already pass for a 12-year-old, because she can work and she might set off with me on the same journey as *Maks* did, if only we could set off together, all of us [...], but should we, God forbid, become separated, then I would rather die with the children. Come what may...

If only we could get ^yto you^y but it is impossible, but we do not know – ^ywhat else awaits you in this world? Here they say that uncle is due to arrive soon.^{y214} Do you believe that? ^yHere everyone says that you will certainly survive this.^y Do not be angry with *Maks*. He can write only to me, and only once a month at that. This month he also managed to write to *Bronia*, but he must have done that illegally.

213 The sender had a premonition of imminent death, although she considered the possibility of being sent to a labour camp.

214 An allusion to the hope of liberation.

Yes, my dears, he wrote asking for bread, but parcels are not being sent from here because people acted like swine and put ham, butter, and bread inside the parcels, even though only bread and jam were allowed. Now because of those scoundrels one cannot send anything anymore. Hundreds of parcels a week were sent back and now those in the camps have to go hungry.

If it were not for the new ordinances, one would manage to get by here. We have made friends here, ^ythey have^y [...], but all to no avail. It is over for us. Tough luck. I am neither the first nor the last. Come what may. [...] they sowed a vegetable garden, they planted potatoes and kept hens [...] for whom?

Do not be cross with me for writing at length about everything, but what can one do when one fills up to the brim? Why, one wants to ^yspeak out from the depths of a heart filled with bitterness^y to his loved ones.

Regards and kisses from your loving

Hela

ARG I 949c (Ring. I/585)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark illegible and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 15 May 1942, ink, Polish, 146×103 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

39

7 June 1942, *Pacht* near *Turek*. B. Najdat and Bronka Górna, letter to Jakub Langnas.

B. Najdat
Pacht 11
Turek county

To Jakub Langnas
Warsaw
Zamenhofa Street 9, flat 15

Pacht, 7 June 1942

My dears,

I am not waiting for your reply and write to you again. What is new with you, is everybody well, because I worry a lot. I hear that you have the same fun as here, that the weather is not good. Hope to God that it improves soon and that the sun shines again.

As for us, on Thursday, that is on 4 June, we had a fun time, we had a christening party.²¹⁵ My newborn Maniek is feeling well, I was also gravely ill when I gave birth, but I quickly recovered, forgive me for not having written immediately on Thursday, it took me all that time to write because I could not gather my thoughts after what I went through, hope to God that nothing changes, we will have another celebration. Hela, Mrs Górna and the rest of the siblings are well, thank God, and there is no more news.

Do not worry about us. Hope to God that we see one another as soon as possible ^yin a good mood.^y Lots of kisses,

Bronka. Kisses from the children

My very dear I'm using this opportunity to add a few lines. From the arms of ^hthe evil ones^h I am ^yapparently saved^y for the moment, may he in heaven continue to help us. Next time I'll write more. I send regards and kiss each one of you individually.

I remain your true sister-in-law and Aunt Hela.²¹⁶

Regards, B. Górna

ARG I 949b (Ring. I/585)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (JG*), pencil, Polish with inserts in Yiddish and Hebrew in Latin transliteration, German, 146×103 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

Copyist's rendering of the postmark in Yiddish: "Sent from Wartbrücken"²¹⁷
8/6 1942."

40

[Before 9 June 1942], *Pacht near Turek*. Bronka Górna, letter to Maks Górny.

[illegible document]

215 In early June 1942, men and women were sent from the Juden-kolonie Heidemühle to labour camps. On 11 June 1942 Yekhiel Górny wrote in his diary: "...children up to the age of 10 are being removed from their parents, for what purpose is not yet known." See *Diaries from the Warsaw Ghetto*, Doc. 13.

216 The last paragraph and signature by Hela Waksztok.

217 German name for the county town of Koło.

ARG I 952 (Ring. I/599/15)

Description: original, handwritten (BG*) on a postcard, postmark 9 June [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 11 June [19]42, ink, Polish, 146×103 mm, minor damages and missing pieces, illegible parts, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

41

14 June 1942, Pacht near Turek. Bronka Górna, letter to Maks Górny.

B. Górna
Village Pacht, Post Turek
Judenlager

To Max Górny
Warsaw
Miła Street 69, flat 29

[...] Kisses [...]
Ada

ARG I 949ac (Ring. I/585)

Description: original, handwritten (BG*) on postcards, postmark 15 June [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 19 June [19]42, ink, Polish, 146×103 mm, text legible in places, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Enclosed is Hersh Wasser's note in Polish and Yiddish: "The period of murders in the Turek area, 1942. The last letter of Yekhiel Górny's wife." He most probably meant Maks Górny's wife.

d) Last letters of the Jews deported from Płońsk

42

*After 14 December 1942, Płońsk. Sala and Dyna, letters (1)–(4) to their sister Rózia.*²¹⁸

(1)

Plöhnen (Płońsk), 13 December 1942

Our dearest Rózieńka,

Unfortunately, I do not know whether we will be able to do something to see you, our one and only. First of all, dough plays a big role here. One has to have it. Secondly, we do not have anybody. Some Jews were already on their way, but they had to return.²¹⁹ Now Szpig. and others have probably sent them somebody from you, and they are probably going to try to do that in that manner. Many people are making efforts in this regard but without success. All of us were to leave here on Tuesday.²²⁰ But it has been postponed until Friday. We do not know whether it is true. You will have proof when you hear from us again.

Róziuchna, your advice to hide cannot be followed here. Here it all looks completely different. As for Maryśka,²²¹ put it out of your head. Now nobody here wants to give you the time of day and the place where she is is also cursed for us. It is out of the question. Thus, we must accept what comes. Unfortunately, we know pretty well what awaits us. But we might be among the lucky ones who will be sent to work. Why, one does not have to lose hope. We must see one another again. I hope that God will not take such a cruel revenge on us. He has already taken from us what we held dearest and most precious, why should he take that last resort from us too? No, no way – no. We must see one another at least once more in our life. God, how we yearn

218 The addressee was probably Rózia (Róża) Kirszenbaum (?–1943), relative of Menachem Kirszenbaum (?–1943), Zionist activist, member of the representation of political parties at the ŻSS, JDC employee, also active in the Tkuma organisation, representative of General Zionists at the ŻKN, victim of the Hotel Polski affair; he perished in Pawiak prison. Róża died in the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto.

219 Probably trying to reach the Warsaw ghetto.

220 15 December 1942.

221 Probably a forced labourer in the Reich.

for that! Farewell, our dearest, our one and only. I send you hugs and kisses and I press you against my longing heart.

Loving, Sala

(2)

Our dearest Rózieńka,

Unfortunately, your advice and guidelines are no good. You cannot imagine how things are here, what great difficulties and obstacles stand in the way of our carrying out such a plan. So many people are making efforts, we are obviously among them, but so far their efforts have brought no result.

Everybody still [doesn't] know [?]. Our dear Rózieńka, we might achieve something by chance. Let us trust that all of the bad things will pass us by and spare us. Today we are making the last preparations because most probably we are to depart tomorrow, and if not tomorrow then on Friday. Szpig. and Heniek have sent someone, they wonder whether he will make it in time and whether anything can be done.

Our dearest little sister, be strong and resilient, let's trust that we will live and that after some time we will reunite with you, our one and only. Do not despair and stay calm, why, you can see that it is but an ironic twist of fate which determines everything. Nothing can be done about that. We urge you to have faith in our reunion and patiently wait for a word from us. Trust me, my heart is not burdened at all and hope is keeping our spirits up.

Be well, our dearest, our one and only.

[x]²²²

(3)

Plöhnen (Płońsk), 14 December 1942

My dearest Rózieńka,

You see, we thought that we would stay here until Friday,²²³ but unfortunately this evening is already our last. All attempts to come to you have failed and now is not the time for this. We have to accept this state of affairs and take

222 [x] Sala. Perhaps crossed out by the copyist. The letter was written by Dyna.

223 18 December 1942.

all this at face value. Yes, our one and only, God only knows whether we will see one another again. We live in the hope that we will. Tomorrow, we depart into the unknown, perfectly aware of this and calm. Should our fate be to live, then we will be happy, if not – tough luck. We have already lost what was dearest and most precious to us, so we have nothing to cry about. Our only wish was to see you, our one and only, our dearest. Farewell, our dearest. I know that it will be difficult for you to accept the thought that you have already lost us, but what can we do? This is what fate wants and this is how it has to be. Farewell, I press you close to my heart. Hope that we see one another again.

Loving you with all my heart and missing you,

Sala

Try to stay only at Józef's. I hear that an epidemic is beginning around you too. So I think that it will be safer at his place. Our thoughts go to you all the time, our one and only, dearest little sister. Regards to Józef and Mr and Mrs Kirszenbaum.

(4)

Our dearest Rózieńka!

We suspect that this is our last postcard. We are departing on Wednesday²²⁴ at five in the morning. Our small luggage is lying in front of us all packed and freight cars are waiting for us at the railway station. I am very sad to think that this is the last night at home and that tomorrow we are to start our wandering. Who knows where fate will take us. It is difficult to imagine our life and what awaits us and what will happen. Yes, our dearest Rózieńka, we bid you fond farewell. Do not despair and stay calm.

Wherever we go our thoughts will always be with you, our dearest. Rózieńka, if only we could see you, our dearest, our one and only, at least once more. For what else is there for us to hope for after the loss of our loved ones. Be well, our one and only. We trust that we will live and see one another again.

Warm kisses. I press you close to my heart.

Lovingly, Dyna

ARG II 357 (Ring. II/238)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (RA*), ink, Polish, 150×191 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

224 16 December 1942.

43

After 16 December 1942, Płońsk, railway station.²²⁵ Sender unknown, letter to an unknown addressee.

Sender's address

Please, drop this postcard
into the nearest letterbox

address²²⁶

Płońsk 16 December [19]42

It is morning. We are in a freight car with our entire family. We are to leave with the last group. Płońsk has been cleared.²²⁷

Please, stop by the Bams, Niska Street 6, and give them our regards.

Yours

ARG II 358 (Ring. II/274/1)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (LP*), ink, Polish, 170×93 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

44

[After 16 December 1942], Legionowo, railway station. Dawid [from Płońsk], letter to an unknown female addressee.

Please be so kind
as to drop this letter
into a letterbox

extra fee 18 groszes (Legionowo)

Warsaw
Nalewki Street 47, flat 19

225 The route of the transport of Jews from Płońsk to Auschwitz-Birkenau went through Legionowo, Warszawa Praga and Częstochowa.

226 Not clear why the copyist replaced the addresses with his notes.

227 After the *Aktionen* German policemen used the terms *Judenfrei* or *Judenrein* in their reports. That terminology was adopted by ghetto residents.

We left Płońsk today. Our entire family and all the Jews have left. Pay attention because we are going to a wedding.²²⁸

Farewell,

Dawid

ARG II 359 (Ring. II/274/2)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (LP*), ink, Polish, 148×90 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

45

After 16 December 1942, Praga/Warsaw, railway station. Laja [from Płońsk?], letter to L. Przygoda.

Please be so kind
as to drop this letter into
letterbox

extra fee 18 groszes
L. Przygoda
Warsaw
Miła Street 46

16 December, Wednesday

We have stopped at the Praga railway station, where I am writing these couple of words to you. We do not know where they are taking us.

Be well,

Laja

ARG II 360 (Ring. II/274/3)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (LP*), ink, Polish, 216×76 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

228 Coded reference to the deportation to death.

46

After 17 December 1942, Częstochowa, railway station. Gitla [from Płońsk?], letter to an unknown addressee.

[Częstochowa]

Muranowska Street 40, flat 35

[...]

17 December 1942

My dears,

We are passing through Częstochowa, so I am dropping you a line. We also passed through Warsaw. We are going to work. Stay positive. I cannot give you the new address because I do not have it yet.

Farewell. Kisses, your

Gitla.

This is already the second day of our journey.

ARG II 361 (Ring. II/274/4)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (LP*), ink, Polish, 216×94 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. In the corner, Hersh Wasser's notation in Polish (ink): "[number?] [crossed out?]"

47

[17 December 1942], Częstochowa. Guta Fuks,²²⁹ letter to P. Rotblat.

Mr Rogozek

Warsaw

Zamenhofa Street 19²³⁰

To Mr Rotblat

229 Perhaps a relative of Szlomo Fuks from Płońsk, see *The Last Stage of Resettlement is Death*, Docs. 4 and 8.

230 On the postal service in the ghetto, see Introduction.

My dears,
Our whole family is passing through Częstochowa. We do not know
where we are headed.

Goodbye. Kisses,
Guta Fuks

ARG II 339 (Ring. II/274/5)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 17 December
[19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, 19 December [19]42, pencil, Polish,
147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

48

*[Before 17 December 1942?], Częstochowa, railway station. Marek [of Płońsk?],
letter to A. Bogaty.*

Marek

To A. Bogaty
Warsaw
Leszno Street 70,
at Tebens' [sic]²³¹

Thursday²³²

My dears!

We have been travelling since yesterday morning. Yesterday we spent
a few hours in the train in Praga.²³³ I am, we are, at a railway station
in Częstochowa. We are supposedly headed for a labour camp in Tarnowskie

231 The addressee was assigned to W. C. Toebebens' workshop.

232 17 or 24 December 1942? The postcard was probably taken (from Płońsk?), written, and
thrown out of the train at a railway station in Częstochowa, found and posted several
days later by a railwayman or passenger.

233 Quarter of Warsaw, on the right side of Vistula.

Góry or Oświęcim. My heart pains me due to what happened with Lonia and Henio. Will I ever see them again?

Feeling very lonesome,

Marek

Railway station

ARG II 340 (Ring. II/274/6)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 29 December [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 2 January [19]43, ink, Polish, 147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

Part II

Letters from the Eastern territories occupied by the Germans after June 1941

February–April 1942, Vilna ghetto. Zelig Kalmanovich,²³⁴ letters (1)–(4) to Yitzkhak Giterman.²³⁵

(1)

Di[rector of the] [Joint]
Gitermanowski
W[arsza]wa
unpaid

Vilna, 16 February [19]42

Dear Friend Yitzkhak,

Thank God that I can write you a few lines. What we've lived through until now we'll tell one another in happier times. We must have faith that

²³⁴ Zelig Hersch Kalmanovich (1881–1944), philologist, writer, translator, editor, member of the YIVO leadership. One of the heads of the “paper brigade,” see footnote 235. He died in a forced labour camp in Narwa.

²³⁵ Yitzkhak (Yitskhok) Giterman (1889–1943), a scion of two great Hasidic dynasties, the Twerskis and the Szejersons, director of the JDC in Poland from 1921. In the Warsaw ghetto, ŻSS and YIKOR activist, Oyneg Shabes member; after the establishment of the ŻOB engaged in collection of funds for arms.

the merits of our fathers and sons that have helped until now will serve further. We are both,²³⁶ thank God, well and look forward to salvation and solace. I am confident that with you things are also well. The bearer of this letter²³⁷ will certainly tell you fully about what has happened with us. This is a trustworthy person in all respects. Friend Herman²³⁸ testifies to this. It will be a great joy for us to hear from you and other good friends, for example, Menakhem²³⁹ and his wife. We have heard here that even this summer you had the opportunity to correspond with Max,²⁴⁰ Yankev²⁴¹ and Eliahu.²⁴² Here we don't know exactly for the time being, at least I don't know, what happened to the inheritance that they left.²⁴³ It is said that a portion has already

236 Kalmanovich's wife Rywka née Lurie died with her husband in Estonia; their only son Shalom immigrated to Palestine before the war.

237 Since late 1941, messengers of Jewish youth underground organisations from Vilna and Warsaw maintained constant contact between those ghettos. With their help, Giterman transferred to Vilna letters and money allotted for aid to the intelligentsia and the purchase of weapons.

238 Herman Kruk (1897–1944), Bund activist, refugee from Warsaw, initiator of numerous cultural enterprises in the Vilna ghetto: he organised a library, reading room, archive, and museum; he also dealt with ghetto statistics. Together with Kalmanovich, Kruk led the “paper brigade,” see footnote 235. He perished in Estonia, in the Klooga forced labour camp. His diary spans the period from 24 June 1941 to 14 July 1943.

239 Menakhem Linder (1911–1942), lawyer, YIVO researcher in Vilna and Warsaw. Yiddish language and literature activist. During the German occupation, active in the ŻSS and OyNEG Shabes, founder of YIKOR, author of statistical studies prepared for the ŻSS; he kept a diary, which was destroyed by his wife after he was murdered on 17 April 1942.

240 Max Weinreich (1894–1969), expert in Jewish languages and literatures, long-time director of YIVO, author of, among other works, a treatise on the history of the Jewish language. Regina Weinreich née Szabad was his wife. They both immigrated to United States in 1940.

241 Jacob (Yankev, Yakov) Leszczyński (Lestshinski) (1876–1966), statistician, demographer, and historian. He was a member of the Board of Directors of YIVO; headed the economic-statistical section and edited the journal *Di yidishe ekonomik*. He moved to New York in 1938 and to Israel in 1958.

242 Elias (Eliyahu) Tcherikower (1881–1943), historian of Russian Jewish history. One of the founders of YIVO, where he headed the history section. In September 1940, he arrived in New York from France with the help of the New York branch of YIVO.

243 In February 1942, Dr Johannes Pohl, a member of the so-called Rosenberg Operations Staff at the *Institut zur Forschung der Judenfrage* in Frankfurt, arrived in Vilna. The staff was in charge of searching for and confiscating the most valuable Jewish cultural property in occupied Europe. On Pohl's orders, the Vilna *Judenrat* appointed a group of twelve

been taken by the masters. It is possible that in the coming days I will have more precise information. I would like to believe that Max is in good health and prospering and that we will still live to derive delight from each other. Zalmen²⁴⁴ I have not seen unfortunately at least since the middle of July of last year. I will not write at length. I would certainly rather be with you, we hear that a Jewish life is blossoming where you are despite and in contempt of all misfortunes. But to ask for this would be a useless prayer. What would indeed be a *mitzvah*²⁴⁵ is if you could send us some relief, or a free loan to the account of my relatives with whom Max is in contact. Up to now we've made it. Time passes though. And everything is narrowing. Perhaps this opportunity is actually a miracle.

Stay well and be strong.

Your Kalman

Jews under the direction of Zelig Kalmanovich, and Herman Kruk to sort out, under the direction of the Germans, confiscated Jewish books and documents. The most valuable ones were to be sent to Frankfurt, the rest – about 70 per cent – were destined for wastepaper. The group of Jewish employees, who initially worked in the building of Stefan Batory University, was soon moved to the pre-war YIVO building at Wiwulskiego Street 18. Kalmanovich, Kruk and their closest associates (poet and partisan Shmerke Katcherginski, artist Uma Olkenicka, and others), called “the paper brigade,” tried to save at least some part of the YIVO collection. From March 1942 to September 1943, tens of thousands of books and documents were smuggled into the ghetto and hidden on site. Great courage and ingenuity was shown by Avrom Sutzkever, then a young poet, member of the United Partisan Organisation, who managed to save, among other things, the letters and manuscripts of Sholem Aleichem, the diary of Theodor Herzl, and the drawings of Marc Chagall. Part of the collection was taken out by Polish and Lithuanian friends who, during the Germans’ absence, came to Wiwulskiego Street.

244 Zalmen Reyzen (1888–1941), linguist, historian of Jewish literature, lexicographer, translator, publicist, co-founder and member of the leadership of YIVO, long-time editor-in-chief of the daily *Vilner Tog*. Arrested in the late autumn of 1939 by the NKVD (Russian, *Narodnyy Komissariat Vnutrennykh Del*, National Committee of Internal Affairs), he died during the evacuation of the prison in the summer of 1941. His wife Miriam died in Estonia. The bibliography of Reyzen’s works consists of 348 items. Among the most important is the four-volume *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur, prese un filologie*.

245 (Hebrew) good deed.

(2)

19 February 1942

My dear friend Yitzkhak,

A few days ago I sent just such a note with a messenger. Today I received the greeting from you and other good friends. My joy, our joy, is immeasurable. It really came true: whoever enters Adar²⁴⁶... You surely won't expect me to describe our odyssey, against which Homer's is, in comparison, a little sponge-cake – for this, let's hope, there'll be time yet. What we are doing these days, the bearer of this message will surely inform you. Regarding our current request, it has already been fulfilled, as it seems, and you will surely continue to keep us in mind. If you have a chance, let Max and Regina²⁴⁷ know that their mother lives with us in one room and is doing well and hopes. I hope we will now hear from you often. Regards to all good friends.

Yours, Kalman

(3)

23 March [1942]

Beloved, dear friend Yitzkhak. A great thanks to you, your household and all our good friends! You can easily imagine our joy when we saw your handwriting. It was like one sixtieth part of salvation.²⁴⁸ Imagine how I was full, like a pomegranate.²⁴⁹ I could almost have said: if all the seas were ink and all the trees of the forest quills, etc.²⁵⁰ I would have spoken with a thousand mouths. But after all I have only one mouth and it is muzzled as long

246 Month in the Jewish calendar (February/March). Reference to the upcoming Purim holiday, which commemorates the saving of Jews and the defeat of their tormentors. In 1942 it fell on 3 March.

247 Regina's mother, Stefania Szabad, perished in the Holocaust.

248 Reference to the Talmud, Berakhot 75b; one sixtieth can be interpreted here as a tiny, yet meaningful, step in the direction of salvation. Many thanks to Yale Reisner for help with the translation and explanation of this paragraph – see also four following footnotes.

249 Reference to the Talmud, Berakhot 57a; a pomegranate is generally seen as an ideal of fullness.

250 Reference to the Midrash Rabba on the Song of Songs 1:3; originally it is about writing the Torah.

as, etc.²⁵¹ We must be certain that the miracle that has thus far occurred will persist until we live to be able to say to each other: He who gives life, gives sustenance.²⁵²

Herman and I have already written a little about our home and the little green garden²⁵³ at the edge of the city. Now I have the good fortune of being there every day. Something is still there, how much is hard to know, a half, a third, maybe more. We are now putting it in order, according to the commands of the masters. The Lord must all the more be a father. Concerning us personally: thank God. Your greetings were received. It gives us strength with which to hope and wait. Thank you to the young people, they are good and our hearts are full of them. You understood well what we need. I want to ask you now also to keep Herman in mind. You should deal with him like with a somebody. He is embarrassed to write himself. That he is trustworthy, you know. You know after all that we are together with Regina's mother, she really wants to know if they know about us and about her. Well, I'll close. Give Menakhem and Mira our love, and all our good friends greetings and wishes for our festive day of freedom.²⁵⁴ We await further greetings from you.

Yours, Kalman

Heartfelt regards and thank you.

(4)

21 April 1942

My dear friend Yitzkhak,

Today I will try to write in greater detail and share some details of our life, a bit constructive, happy, not just because the sun shines and the world smells of spring. The opposite is possible, that the imprisoned feel it worse than winter. But one of us, who does something and has the illusion that he is accomplishing something, is pleased and thanks God above for the miracle that was granted him and that he can now sit with a certain peace of mind and

251 Reference to Psalm 39:2 [I would keep my mouth] muzzled as long as [the wicked man stands before me], with the assumption that the addressee would know the rest of the sentence, here in square brackets.

252 Reference to the Talmud, Taanit 8b.

253 The pre-war YIVO building at 18 Wiwulskiego Street in Vilna.

254 First day of Passover fell on 2 April 1942.

write a little letter to his good friend. The impression is forming, that the soul is straightening itself out. People stayed, true only a small part of the whole²⁵⁵ and not the cream of the crop. But the grandchildren of our forefather Jacob have here once again shown great, truly superhuman strength to adapt and create such that the angel of evil will say, against his own will, amen.

The workshops accomplish remarkable feats. A kind of technical class for 25 young people was started (it is true 100 were excluded), and some 40 teachers are busy with primary school children in both Yiddish and Hebrew. There is a choir and an orchestra, concerts every week. People are eager to go to the Saturday night writers' union events. 200 would come but there is only space for half as many. The Hebrew Alliance also assembles an audience of about 100 people, mostly youth. Not to mention that people read a lot.

On Passover there were Seders, very meager but Seders nonetheless. Statistics are being collected. An archive is forming. There will be a museum. There are gymnastics. The job situation is worse. What little is left of household goods is starting to dwindle. Help is of inestimable importance. By the second instalment, the whole family sat. And there was complete amity. 25 benefitted: 5 to 100, and 20 to 50.²⁵⁶ We will now wait for the third instalment. I cannot know the means of the donor, but the receiver extends his hand, and stares with hope.

The messenger talked about fears that are supposedly hanging in the air. Let us consider this a false fear and that messengers embarked on good deeds are protected from danger. We pray, and the merits of the *she'erit hapletah*²⁵⁷ will protect. I have here 3–4 people who were once in *meshek*,²⁵⁸ especially 2. I could not include them in the count of 25. Maybe it would be possible to mention them favorably at the nearest opportunity.

We work at YIVO daily, about 20 people, put things in order and assemble Jewish treasures there. We found a lot of things. What the masters plan to do

255 There were approximately 57,000 Jews in Vilna in June 1941. By the end of this year, after ten *Aktionen*, there remained approximately 15,000 officially and in addition some 8,000 unofficially.

256 A reference to the distribution of the money sent from Warsaw by Yitzkhak Gitterman, which was to be issued as allowances to the artistic intelligentsia in the Vilna ghetto.

257 (Hebrew) handful of survivors, remnants; now usually in reference to the Holocaust survivors.

258 (Hebrew, lit.) household – i.e., YIVO.

with them, we do not yet know. They are, however, friendly and not rushing. If only we had a job, we would be holding up. We hope you will keep us personally in mind, like the first time. I want to remind you that Miriam is here, Zalmen's²⁵⁹ wife, and I'm sure that Zalmen's relatives would help her if they were only to be approached. The messenger will further complete the message *be al-pe*.²⁶⁰

Best regards and wishes to you and your loved ones, and Menakhem²⁶¹ and his family, and the other Yitskhak – Ignacy²⁶² of the Institute. Let us see each other on happy occasions, speedily, in our days. *Chazak ve'ematz*.

Yours, Kalman

[Good evening]

[To be remembered well]

ARG II 209 (Ring. II/165)

Description: original, handwritten, Yiddish, ink, 122×170, 144×223 mm, 4 sheets, 7 pages. On p. 2 of the letter (3) fragment of the address [?] in Polish (pencil):

"Giterman [. . .]."

259 Zalmen Reyzen.

260 (Hebrew) orally, by way of mouth; used most often to distinguish between written and oral Torah.

261 Menakhem Linder.

262 Ignacy (Yitzkhak, Isaac) Schipper (1884–1943), historian, one of the pioneers of modern Jewish historiography; associated with Poalei Tsiyon and later with the Zionist Organisation in Poland. Member of the Polish Parliament, assistant professor at the Institute of Judaic Studies. In the Warsaw ghetto, he was employed in the archives of the *Judenrat*. During the ghetto uprising, he was deported to Majdanek, where he perished.

[22 April 1942], Rohatyn.²⁶³ Sender unknown, letter to Mania (surname unknown).

Rohatyn, the 2nd day *kholemoyed* Passover²⁶⁴ [...]

Dear Mania!

You probably [...] our letter to [you] [...] received. It is already over more as [...] has not yet calmed down. Happened [...] winter, the 2nd of *Nissan*²⁶⁵ [...] 9 [...] happened, the *Landkommissar*²⁶⁶ [...] in the *Judenrat* of [...] [to] [...] dig pits [...] what the pits were for [...] they did not say. There were various] hypothes-
ses [...] said that they are making a [brickyard]. Another, a [...] but instinct [...] many [...] were graves for Jews. The [...] The *Landkommissar* [...] gave soup and bread and [to everyone] [...] layers of 60 people were buried [...] long, 9 meters wide and 2 meters deep[.] When the [...] were almost ready, it was ordered [...] in this way they dug for 9 days [...] a group of 60 people [...] and between were a [...] [with 8] [...] cars and people[.] Cars on [...] [and was] put aside [...] [text] [...] trucks were [...] help [...] rifles [...] 8 [...] [they] [...] the Christian quarter [they] [...] remained standing they shot after [...] were [...] Jewish quarter [...] and they [...] [ages] and sexes lead [to] [...] the market where those that were met [...] [not] dressed were taken out naked, who [...] did not [...] were shot in bed and the [...] the men thought they meant only [male] hid themselves mainly in [...] women and children and elderly [...] [time was] [...] and from [...] they mainly [...] it was so sudden [...] that [...] time to [find out] what [...] still in the beds [...] and the [*Aktion* started] [...] 5 [meters] from my windows [stand] 12–15 people, mainly women with [children that] [...] also young people. The people already [...] and when 2 people [remained] [...] the [...] went into the houses [...] [a few] [...] to run away. One was successful. [A second] [...] and fell. This we, with our own [...] there was just a few seconds time to [...] in the attic, the [attic] is [...] less safe and we went down and [...] [...] [taken out]

263 Rohatyn (Brzeżany County). The first *Aktion* there took place in March 1942. Between 2,000 and 3,000 local Jews were shot by *Einsatzkommando*.

264 5 April 1942; the second intermediate day of Passover (from Hebrew *chol ha-moed*).

265 20 March 1942.

266 (German) county governor.

from the houses [...] couldn't [go.] [...] [wagon] was [driven] [...] [then] [...] [frozen snow lay] [...] [driven] and [torn] [...] met [...] or with pots [...] a [...] was [...] small, they [...] the head so [...] [market is] [...] the pot is after all [...] some people were barefoot and [...] and they were [...] beaten for a long time until they were [...] some gathered [...] the cars to go and they [...] threw [...] in the cars first the children[.] They [...] the hair or by the throat and threw like [...] in the cars, and then on [...] in the cesspits 20 per cent which was [...] quarter a portion of the last were [robbed] [...] by the village population and a portion [...] by the Ukrainians in the hands of the SS [...] from the rows leading them to the point of collection [...] from the car to the pit and those that [...] [living] [...] wounded [...] [with the] [...] bullets [from] all [...] and the [mill] [...] the doctors [...] were taken out and after [some] [...] or [...] most of the families [...] whom [...] I wrote, lack [...] The Bahn family, who [waited] near [...] The family Mauer who also [...] there [...] there lived 89 Jews. There were [...] [I] do not know who were [your] acquaintances. When will you [...] me [...] we sit [...] [eat] from those [...] when we were on the street we [...] field. Hundreds of Jews were laying on the streets [...] work was to [collect bodies of?] the murdered. [...] to lead them to the graves [...] with their [daughter] were found from behind [...] [she] lay [...] the daughter [...] from the streets and beds in houses to [...] to the grave. We saw what our eyes should [...] see. They [waited.] That the Jews [were] [...] to [...] [take] [...] from the fields which they [...] [threw in] in the grave [...] still living people but they [...] taken together to [...] in the morning [there came] [...] [victims] [they] [...] [they] [gave] something [...] they already [...] the [women] at night [...] nobody would [...] cry [...] the same every day [...] they are [...] Many were alive with the dead [...] in this way [...] saved themselves, the [...] in this manner was saved. It [...] feet because before the execution they [...] undressed. In this way it lasted [...] who worked that [...] day [...] what is taking place in the city and [...] the first group [...] remained around 21 [...] ran [...] fell to one side [...] because there [...] entire and not [...] children or parents to the closed point [...] 6 [...] last salvo and were shot [...] around 2,000 Jews died *al kiddush ha-Shem*²⁶⁷ [...] [also of] 1,600 Jews [...] all the houses [...] were left 2 houses which [...] a side. The remaining were [...] adults [...] the cars drove [...] the graves are on a [hill] [...] the train roughly on a little hill. The cars [...]

267 (Hebrew) sanctification of [God's] name; choosing martyrdom rather than denying one's faith or failing to fulfil the commandments.

roughly a half kilometre before the graves [...] from the car and stood there [...] the Jews [...] that tried to run away [...] the same were left [...] or to [...] [taken out from] [...] young men, among them Shloyme Tsuker [...] was from the people [...] valuable things [...] better coat or a better suit of clothing or [...] boots and shoes were [lent] to him [...] and then on the edge of the grave were shot so that [...] fell into the grave. [...] when one mostly [...] -in [...] there were some who [...] in the grave before the bullet hit them. [...] not to show [...] from [God] [...] who [...] us [...] punished, only let this [...] for you with your child with your [...] [brother] and sister and [...] [Jews] [...]

Write to me on [...] address [...]

ARG I 988a (Ring. I/559)

Description: original or duplicate, handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 132×195, 147×118 mm, serious damage and losses of text, 6 sheets (two glued together), 11 pages.

51

After 20 March 1942, Rohatyn. Sender unknown, letter to Edzio (Edward?) [surname unknown].

Duplicate of a letter.

Rohatyn, 20 March 1942

Dear Friend,

Unfortunately, there is nobody I could buy a birthday present for. Two days before our little sunshine's birthday we lost our Dearest Parents, Sweet Pepka, and Sweetest Imeczek. Dudek and I remain. Alone in our pain and despair. There is no consolation for us.

We are 'alive.' What for? For whom? We have lost four of our dearest souls. How horrible their death was. They died along with 2,000 of our brothers and sisters. In a common grave. That *shechita* was unprecedented. They spared neither pregnant women, nor little children, nor the elderly. It was a blood-bath. Genia²⁶⁸ arrived unexpectedly in the morning, surrounded the quarter

268 Coded reference to the Gestapo.

and ran rampant until the evening along with the autochthons.²⁶⁹ If only they had let Imieczek go, that wonderful child, we would have something to live for and something to hold on to. Our pain and despair are growing with every passing day. No matter how hard I try I cannot accept the thought that They are gone. I close my eyes and see Them before me. I can still hear Imieczek's tinkling laughter.

Edzio, you simply cannot imagine what a wonderful child he was, how beautiful and well-rounded his development was. You, who were with us during those difficult moments, understand this and can comprehend who we lost. Every mother is the best in her children's opinion, but has there been a more loving, devoted, dedicated, and understanding mother than My Mum? She never hurt anybody. Why, she never even raised her voice. Always quiet, she accumulated other people's sadness in her, always with a smile on her lips and living solely for her children. Or take Father. He toiled away his entire life, never complaining, always happy with his children's happiness and joy. He did not express that in words, but his devotion and faithfulness beamed off him.

Or take Pepka, who was totally dedicated and devoted, and happy to be able to do something for another person. Why, she did not live a happy day in her life. The child was everything to Her, the essence of her life. And she had to see the death of her sonny with her own eyes. With their arms around my mother's neck, the two of them fell into the grave. Can there be a more awful tragedy, a worse crime... I no longer believe in anything, in a Providence that could allow such pure and innocent souls to walk like sheep to the slaughter. What now? We are left as if on water. The worst thing is this awareness of helplessness. Man is like cattle, he needs to wash, clothe, and feed himself.

No, there is no consolation for me. Man does not have a heart in him but a stone because otherwise the heart would have burst long ago. At times I try to convince myself that I must endure this misery like a man to take revenge at the right moment but these are just empty words. There is just this void. Nothing can bring back My Dearest Ones to me.

Be well, my friend and do not hold against me my sharing my pain with you. You knew them so intimately that I had to write to you about them. They all died [...] our names on their lips. Their final thoughts, words, breath [...] us.

269 Coded reference to the Ukrainian formations.

Be well and remember that the most important and essential [...] for you and your mother is to prepare [...] a shelter in your apartment.

I am shaking your hand,²⁷⁰

ARG I 988b (Ring. I/559)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), typewritten, Polish, 190×245 mm, minor damage and losses of text, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

270 No signature.

Part III

Letters from
the ghettos in the
General Government

20 February [1942],²⁷¹ Łowicz. Laiwe (Leiwe) Wołkowicz,²⁷² letter to Hinda Strykowska.

M[iss] Hinda Strykowska
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 47, flat 95

Hinda!

I was caught yesterday in Łowicz and today I am to be shot. You should tell everybody all this about Marek, because he sent us at night and the wagoner left us standing in the middle of the street at night, so we were chased

271 The date 21 February is added on p. [2] in the right margin.

272 Laiwe (Leiwe) Wołkowicz (1902–1942?) of Dąbie, Zionist activist, was sent as a volunteer by the local *Judenrat* to investigate the fate of the deported Jews of Koło. He had spent several weeks in Grabów, where he had met escapees from Chełmno. He arrived in the Warsaw ghetto on 21 February and on the 26th he gave to Oyneg Shabes his testimony on the murder of the Jews at Chełmno; see *The Last Stage of Resettlement is Death*, Doc. 17; see also Ferenc, “Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie.”, pp. 324–325, 335; and Przemysław Nowicki, “Dąbianin Lajwe Wołkowicz i jego relacja pt. „Dąbie” z Archiwum Getta Warszawy (tzw. Archiwum Ringelbluma),” *Polonia Maior Orientalis*, no. 10 (2023), (forthcoming).

and only I was caught, probably such is my fate. Be healthy and strong and farewell. From me, Laiwe.

Write about this to Jojne²⁷³ and know that I fall victim through Marek.²⁷⁴

Laiwe

ARG I 879 (Ring. I/564/1)

Description: original, handwritten, postcard, postmark 22 February 1942, stamp of the Warsaw *Judenrat* 24 February 1942, ink, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 148×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

53

After 5 March 1942, Józefów near Biłgoraj. Wolf Wołkowicz,²⁷⁵ D. Bajla [?], Harry [?] G., letter to Laiwe (Laiwe) Wołkowicz.

W[olf] Wołkowicz
Józefów near Biłgoraj

M[iss] H. Strykowska
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 47, flat 95

Dear Laiwe!

Józefów, 27 February

The postcard we received yesterday bewildered us so much that I am still unable to gather my thoughts and write to you, so [our] sister is writing in my stead. But today's postcard has somehow invigorated us and cheered us up. We are trying to imagine what you have been through. You **ave** had your fair share of fear, have you not? But thank God you are alive, and you are already at Hinda's. How are you doing now [...] you must write

273 Lajwe's younger brother (1908–?).

274 A name or nickname of a guide hired by Wartheland residents for crossing the border of the GG, see Doc. 13.

275 Jakob Wolf(1893–?), Laiwe's oldest brother; he was deported from Konin to the Lublin District on 10 March 1941; see P. Nowicki, "Dąbianin Lajwe Wołkowicz," (forthcoming).

to us in detail about everything. Are you planning to visit us? But as only a couple of days have passed, you surely do not know about that yourself. Now you can write more frequently, so we shall see. The most important thing is that you are alive and well. We have had our ups and downs here too. We have been through a lot these last couple of weeks. Regards to Miss Hinda.

D. Bajla [?].

I was very happy when I received the second postcard [...] good news. Let us hope for merciful God's help. For now, I hope that you will stay there. With regards to Miss Hinda, I remain

Harry [?] G.

ARG I 782 (Ring. I/564/2)

Description: original, handwritten (two handwritings) on a postcard, postmark 28 February [19]42 and the Warsaw *Judenrat* stamp 5 March [19]42, ink, Polish, 148×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

54

24 March 1942, Lublin. Sender unknown, letter to an unknown addressee.

Lublin, 24 March [19]42

...I find myself writing these few words today during days which will remain the darkest²⁷⁶ in the history of Jewish Lublin. We are standing in the middle of a bloody devilish dance. This [...], in blood and tears. Jewish belongings [...]. Over 10 thousand Jews were already expelled²⁷⁷ [...] 3–4 small streets. Hundreds of dead [...] [abandoned] apartments [...]. The orphanage and the old-age home²⁷⁸ [...] are sent [...] don't return. Oh, what [...] ...In the course

276 The letter was written during the first wave of deportations to the Bełżec killing centre (17–31 March 1942).

277 See footnote 279.

278 See *Accounts from the General Government*, Docs. 19–24.

of [...] wander [...] with another [...] The [...] broken. More I can't [...] But [?] scream out to you! 'Help [us]' [...] and the dead in shrouds [...] despair [...]

ARG I 854 (Ring. I/599/85)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (LEG*), ink, Yiddish, 150×190 mm, major damage and fragments missing, text illegible in places, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

55

After 3 April 1942, Lublin.²⁷⁹ Daniel (surname unknown), letter to his sister.

Duplicate.

Date from postmark of the Jewish post in Warsaw – 3 April 1942²⁸⁰

Lublin. 29 March 1942. Sunday

“Dear Sister,

Answering your two letters is hard for me. Because you’ve certainly heard about the Lublin expulsion which has been going on for a full 14 days and when it will end no one knows. 15 thousand have already been sent out – fathers, mothers without children, children without parents, naked and bare-foot. I went out naked too, left everything behind. Nowhere to lay [it] down, nowhere to take [it]. About 1,000 dead, may you be spared, perished tragically. I’m still in Lublin hiding in a dark cellar, 14 days without a ray of light. Today, Sunday, I was out on the street. Went to the post office. Perhaps money came for me. I was left without a grosz. In the cellar I lived with my cousin on bread and water that a person provided.²⁸¹

279 Lublin had 43,000 Jewish inhabitants before World War II. The ghetto in Lublin was established on 24 March 1941. Between 17 March and 14 April 1942, about 30,000 people from the Lublin ghetto were killed in Bełżec. Many were killed on the spot. About 4,000 Jews, mostly craftsmen, were detained in the rump ghetto established in the Majdan Tatarski (quarter of Lublin). They were all killed at Majdanek between September and 5 November 1943.

280 I.e., the Warsaw *Judenrat* stamp; copyist’s note.

281 Most probably a reference to a non-Jewish helper.

I got nothing today. We don't know when it will stop. Lublin is entirely dead. M. Z. and M., all the children with N. were caught and sent off we don't know where. The things that happened in Lublin can't be described. If I'm caught, I don't have 50 zlotys to take with me. You have to go to F.²⁸² and see with him about sending something for me right away so I'll have a bit of money ready to take with me. I should only be certain of my life. In Lublin they say it all was brought about by B-k,²⁸³ and through him this calamity happened.

I can't write anymore. I look from hunger just as if I was dead. And what I've saved will certainly be lost, because no one is sure of the day. The patients from the Jewish hospital and the patients from the contagious disease hospital have been taken away we don't know where, and the hospitals have been closed. Terrible things are happening in Lublin. Remember what I'm facing. It's possible that this will be the last help for me, because I'm not certain of my life. No one in Lublin is certain. Go straight to F. and show him this letter. Tell him that in Lublin a fire is burning on the remnants of those remaining. Help me so long as I'm still alive. For the moment I'm very careful. If only this works. I haven't received the 100 zlotys for Lublin sent through that opportunity, and doubtless won't receive because he won't find me. I also don't know who you sent it with. Send money to this address:²⁸⁴ I greet you all sincerely, kiss you from the depths of my heart. May I only be able to see you and correspond with you.

Daniel"

ARG I 856 (Ring. I/552/4)

Description: duplicate, typewritten, Yiddish, 210×293 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

Quotation marks probably added by the copyist.

282 Can be also read as P., also below in this letter.

283 Probably a reference – unfounded – to the chairman of the *Judenrat*, Henryk Bekker (1886–1942), construction engineer, before the war an activist of ORT and TOZ, leader of the Jewish People's Party (Folkspartei), Lublin Councillor during 1927–1934, Jewish Community chairman 1936–1939; murdered in Bełżec.

284 The address replaced with dots by the copyist.

Duplicate

Date of the postmark "Lublin, 8 April 1942."

Postmark from the Jewish post in Warsaw: 10 April 1942.

Lublin, 8 April 1942.

My dear loved ones. Of my family no one is left except for me and Sorele. Leale and Pole and Leybl were also sent away from Lublin. So they say. I hid for 20 days in a cellar barely surviving on bread and water. The worms bit us alive. Everything that I still had with me and with others was taken away, either stolen or burned. I don't own more than what I carry on my body: 2 shirts, 2 pairs of underpants. The same for my child. I am crazy from sorrow. 25–26 thousand people were sent away, men taken away from wives, children separately. All of Lublin is a pile of rubble, unrecognisable. 2,000 dead. Everyone is hungry, poor, and no one is sure about tomorrow. Without a home, I am always in another place. It is impossible to set down in writing what they have done to us. And this was led by Bolek Tenenbaum,²⁸⁵ who already yesterday got his judgment, lying on top of a typhus [?]. They searched him and found much gold and silver. And they got rid of him... That's what they said today in Lublin. And it would be proper, because of all Lublin lies on his conscience.

My loved ones, know that I am not safe as we are not yet sure what will happen to the people who remain. There are about 500.²⁸⁶ The worst is that I have absolutely no money. I simply starve. For my child I go around to sympathetic people and beg for a little food. There are few such sympathetic people. I now rely entirely on you and you must see to it that I stay alive. Believe me, it would have been much simpler, for me and [my] child to be among

285 Bolesław (Bolek) Tenenbaum, member of the "Thirteen" in the Warsaw ghetto, from the winter of 1941, head of the Sanitary Commission in the Lublin ghetto, participated in deportations carried out by the Germans. Executed by the Germans on 8 April 1942. See *Accounts from the General Government*, Doc. 21.

286 Officially it was approximately 3,300, in fact closer to 7,000. See *ibidem*, Doc. 22.

the 2,000 murdered. It would have been much easier for me than to stretch out my hand. Now I must come to you and request that you see to my survival. Because my family, Leale and Leybl, I believe, are no longer alive. So what use is my life? And what will become of my child, since, when the misfortune should befall me it will be the best for me. I don't want to be anyone's burden. We cannot go into the street, in case we should be caught. I have nothing to eat, no change of clothes. Is this not worse than death? And for how long can one starve? This is how I consider my fate. Warsaw will not accept calls from Lublin, as I wired to you. Have pity on us. I write to you with blood. It is possible, let us hope, you will still be able to see us. Because it is not yet quiet on the streets. It is not possible to hide because you need money to buy yourself food. They see that I have nothing with which to buy. I've become completely poor. Everyone is completely ruined because we were allowed to take only 15 kilos, the rest was abandoned. Now they are looting everything from the homes. It was uncertain whether one ought to hide or move things, since this misfortune affected all the streets of Lublin. A deluge, an upheaval, spasms of crying. One had to see it and hear it oneself.

It would be better to send something for me care of the *gmina*. And to write my name *wyrażnie*.²⁸⁷ They won't find me. I will find out myself if something came for me. I received nothing from Flamenboym. You must now see to it to help me. I request that of him. These days no one is sure about the future. What had happened here in Lublin can happen elsewhere, God forbid. He must remember that I became poor. I don't even have a pillow under my head. I sleep in a house whose residents were sent away. We ate the food that they left. There are enough items of value, but we cannot sell them. There is no one to sell them to. Because we are confined to 2 streets, Lubartowska to Kowalska. And Grodzka. We lie fenced in in these two streets.

Remember, I extend my hands to you, save me today... quickly, quickly. Every minute is wasted. Those with families get tremendous help. But unfortunately, the people are no longer here. But I remain. Alas, in this dismal world. I send my love and kisses. Hopefully this won't be the last letter.

287 (Polish) clearly.

I must send this letter from outside the ghetto, because nothing is operating within. We don't receive anything here.

I am not including a *nadawca*,²⁸⁸ because I am scared.

HWC 18

Description: duplicate, typewritten, Yiddish, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

57

[29 March] 1942, *Opole Lubelskie*.²⁸⁹ *Peysekh Goldbaum, letter to his brother Josel (Josek) Goldbaum.*

P. Goldbaum
Opole Lub[elskie]

Mr Josek Goldbaum
Warsaw
Zamenhofa 27

Dear brother Yosl Goldbaum,

You should know that we will soon be leaving because they've sent us out of Kazimierz²⁹⁰ to Opole, the whole town. The prices are very high, one kilo of potatoes costs 3 zlotys and one kilo of bread costs 12 zlotys. You also can't get it at all for money because there are now about 15,000 people in Opole. There are 2,500 people here from Vienna and all of Puławy and all of Wąwolnica²⁹¹ [and] also all of Kazimierz now [is] driven here to Opole. Imagine how we'll be able to endure such a thing, and they've closed the ghetto, we can't bring anything in. No Christian dares to bring anything

288 (Polish) sender.

289 Opole (Puławy County). The first transport to Bełżec, conducted on 31 March 1942, included the Jews who had been brought to Opole from Kazimierz Dolny immediately before the deportation. The second *Aktion* was conducted in May 1942. The last Jews of Opole perished in October 1942.

290 Kazimierz Dolny (Puławy County). The sender uses a version of a Jewish name of the town, Kazmir.

291 Wąwolnica (Puławy County).

in, because of that the prices are so high. This month there are holidays. We lie in the barracks. It's very bad and it's also very cold. And so, my dear brother, don't take this lightly, save me and my children. We fast for whole days, we're already swollen with hunger and cold, we have no bedding either because I couldn't afford a wagon, one wagon cost 200 zlotys, so we went on foot to Opole.

Dear brother, imagine our situation, how miserable we are. I go around naked and barefoot. Dear brother, send me a jacket and a pair of pants. I go around in a very shameful state. You are my flesh and blood after all. I have no one to turn to, only to God and to you. You must save us. I'm now writing to your son Yoel and his dear wife whom I don't know, that they may be helpful for what I ask. If they can provide something to Opole to my address Goldbaum send money, so you can save me. I passed along my Polish letter to Moyshe Velvl's grandchild, that is, Leybl Markovitsh's daughter, and she won't see us anymore in Kazimierz. We left Kazimierz on Thursday and today is Sunday.²⁹² Thursday is already a holiday.²⁹³ We thank you in advance and send you heartfelt greetings and we wish you a happy holiday. We send special regards to Yoel's wife whom I don't know

Sincerely from me
Peysekh Goldbaum

Please answer quickly. May it not be burdensome for you to write a letter.

ARG I 943b (Ring. I/587)

Description: original, handwritten, envelope (postmark missing, stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 6 April 1942), pencil, ink, Yiddish, 110×176, 143×120 mm, 4 sheets, 6 pages.

292 Reference to Thursday 26 March 1942; Sunday was 29 March, hence the assumed date of this letter.

293 In 1942 the first day of Passover fell on Thursday, 2 April. This means that the family of the sender probably did not live to the holiday.

Chełm Lub[elski]

[^H4 April 1942^H]²⁹⁵

Dearest Friend,

I received the money for which I send you deepest thanks from the whole household. You made us all ^Hrejoice,^H we had enough for potatoes, at least to keep us alive. We will always remember you for this. Passover is here with great fear and confusion. The nights and days that we have gone through from the ^Heve of Passover^H can't be described, every second one isn't certain. The kinsman of the ^HAngel of Death^H is in the streets, and we need to have Great Mercy [...] from L. in Rejowiec.²⁹⁶ ^HMay the Blessed Name^H say 'enough' already to the Angel of Death, and may we merit redemption, if not...^Hwho knows^H [...] is already near Chełm ^HGod forbid^H pray for us and ^Hawaken your mercy^H for us, save us [...] as much as you are able always to help us for these deeds may you be helped and blessed with all ^Hglad tidings!^H

ARG I 710 (Ring. I/568/1)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (H*), ink, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, Hebrew inserts, 96×125 mm, damage and losses of text, 1 sheet, 2 pages; according to copyist, stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 13 April 1942.

294 The first *Aktion* in Chełm took place in late May 1942. 4,000 Jews, including 2,000 from Slovakia, who had been brought to Chełm, were killed in Sobibór. The sender uses a Jewish name for the town, Kloym.

295 According to the Hebrew abbreviation: first day of *chol ha-moed* Passover; thanks to Yale Reisner for the explanation.

296 The news about the *Aktion* in Rejowiec in early April 1942 caused panic in Chełm. The sender uses a Jewish name for the town, Reyvits.

14–17 April 1942, *Szczebrzeszyn*.²⁹⁷ *Fiszel Fryd and Sara Wulf, letters (1)–(3) to Mojsze Wulf.*

(1)

F. Fryd
Szczebrzeszyn
Biłgoraj County

Mr M. Wulf
Warsaw
Smocza Street 1 flat 39a

14 April 1942

Dear mother-in-law and brother-in-law, I'm writing with Latin letters. We are, thank God, all well but death hangs before our eyes. We need a great mercy, [if] we live through a day, it's a prize for us. Food can't be gotten here because everything is closed, you can't get food for any price, may the Lord take pity on us, especially on our children who still haven't sinned at all. We sent 2 telegrams to you, one express and we've received no answer. You can't imagine our condition. Sure and Joel²⁹⁸ are with me since Shabbes and we're all together, we say [to each other] only that whatever happens, may we all be together. Write to me if Laybyl Wajngartyn wrote something to you, because I wrote to him and received no answer. Sure received it²⁹⁹ for Szymen, but it came at a bad time. She didn't receive any money from him. No more news, stay well, may God help us all to see one another soon, that is our only

297 *Szczebrzeszyn* (Biłgoraj County) had 3,000 Jewish inhabitants before World War II. Jews from Łódź and Włocławek, also from Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania were brought to the local ghetto. As a result of two *Aktionen* in August and October 1942, approximately 2,000 of the Jews were killed at Bełżec, over 2,000 in the local Jewish cemetery. See Alina Skibińska, "Biłgoraj County Before and After 1939: Parallel Worlds" in *Night without end: the fate of Jews in German-occupied Poland*, ed. Barbara Engelking, Jan Grabowski (Bloomington and Indianapolis 2022), p. 54–108. On 25 May 1942 the underground periodical *Yedies* published fragments of Fiszel Fryd's and Sara Wulf's letters dated 14 and 16 April 1942, see ARG I 1308 (Ring. I/690, Ring. I/975), No 4, p. [3].

298 A relative of the sender, Sara (Sure) Wulf and her son Joel fled from one of the ghettos in the Lublin District to avoid the *Aktion*; she arrived in *Szczebrzeszyn* on Saturday, 11 April 1942; see Doc. 59 (2).

299 Probably a reference to a valuable object or currency sent in by their family which they were unable to sell.

plea. We all greet and kiss all of you from afar, especially our dear mother and my dear mother-in-law.

Your Fiszal, Ester, Sure and grandchildren

Send me money. I am without a grosz.

(2)

S. Wulf
Szczecbrzeszyn
Biłgoraj County

Mr Moszek Wulf
Warsaw
Smocza Street 1 flat39a

16 April [1942], Thursday

Dear Mojsze and Mum and Mother-in-law. We are well, thank God, I received your letter of 7 April on 15 April, Jojlale and I are at Fiszal's, I am without a grosz and Fiszal also doesn't have any money. Imagine the bad situation in which we find ourselves in not having any money. Szymen took the news of our situation reluctantly, but he didn't give me any money, I'm surprised at you, that Fiszal wrote to you so many times that he has no money, and you also didn't find it necessary to send money, we thank God that we're still alive, that we're alive until today, we hope to keep living. Life is with much fear, you can't imagine, I didn't imagine that I would be able to write a letter to you, but praised be God therefore and we greet you cordially, as God helps us, that we will leave this paradise into your hell. Hanele, how are you, be well.

Beloved dear Mum, I kiss you from afar, may your prayers succeed in bringing us to be with you.

Ester³⁰⁰

We have just heard news that the Jewish train thank God has been called off

Your Fiszal³⁰¹

300 The line added by Ester, Fiszal Fryd's wife.

301 The line added by Fiszal Fryd.

(3)

F. Fryd
Szczepreszyn
(Biłgoraj County)

Mr Moszek Wulf
Warsaw
Smocza Street 1 flat 39a
Zamojska Street 25

17 April [1942]

Dear Mother-in-law and Brother-in-law, since Sure has no time, because she's gone to buy something, you get nothing here for any money, imagine that the *goyim* take money from us, but we don't have a grosz here. We received today your letter of 12 April, but it [was] opened. The previous letter was also opened. You [must] know what to write, we live here in terrible fear, if God helps and we will still see each other, it will be something to [write] down in history. About sending the children we hesitate although last week Sure had agreed with a Christian, [to send them] to you. By a miracle two women arrived and they [...] are already in paradise. You can inquire at Smocza 13. About Biłgoraj there's nothing to talk about, because we've already looked at this enough. Mojsze, I can only tell you that you philosophise too much about us. Can you not imagine our terrible situation, 8 days that we don't take off our clothes and don't sleep. I received the 222 zlotys but I'm already without one grosz, because I had debts, I ask you so many times to send me some money and you pretend not to hear. I will remember this, if we live, I have no one here to sell to. Sure wants you to send money.

Stay well

Sara, Fiszel

ARG I 1022 (Ring. I/545)

Description: (1) original (handwritten on a postcard, postmark 15 April [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 19 April [19]42, ink, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 148×104 mm, damage and losses of text); duplicate (2 copies, handwritten – LEG*, pencil, Yiddish, 150×190, 148×104 mm, extensive damage and losses of text), 5 sheets, 6 pages. (2) original (handwritten on a postcard (three handwritings), postmark 18 April [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 20 April [19]42, ink, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 148×104 mm, damage and losses of text); duplicate (2 copies, handwritten – LEG*, pencil, Yiddish, 150×190, 150×140 mm, extensive damage and losses of text), 5 sheets, 6 pages. (3) original (handwritten on a postcard, postmark 18 April [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat*

in Warsaw 20 April [19]42, ink, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 148×104 mm, damage and losses of text); duplicate (2 copies, handwritten – LEG*, pencil, Yiddish, 150×190, 148×105 mm, significant damage and losses of text), 5 sheets, 6 pages.

60

17 April 1942, Szczecbrzeszyn. Sender unknown, letter to cousins.

[Szcz]brzeszyn, 17 April [19]42

[...] Cousins!

[...] I report that the work here [...] thousands with no obstacles [...] we can continue [...] and laugh [...] a lot of vodka we drank [...] promise. ^hHaving taken an oath in my own sanctuary [...] he would have a permanent line of descendants^{h302} [...] see you in joy [...] it will be ^henough for difficult times^h [...]

We are alive. God help me to see [you].

Your well-wishing cousin, Nomcia

Please write back soon.

ARG I 1023 (Ring. I/599/56)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 18 April [19]42, pencil, Polish, Hebrew in Latin transliteration, 126×100 mm, serious damages and missing fragments, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Notation by Hersch Wasser in Yiddish (ink) in top right corner: "Chapter 8" פ"ח [81?] ב."

302 Psalms 89, 36, and 37 (excerpts).

61

21 March 1942, Hrubieszów. Icchak Pomaranc, telegram to Dror leadership [?].

934 Hrubieszów 1509
via Lublin

Luckily, the illness has passed³⁰³ = Icek Pomaranc.

ARG I 772 (Ring. I/552/2)

Description: original, printed form, typewritten, handwritten inserts, German, Polish, 207×143 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

62

After 30 April 1942, Ostrowiec.³⁰⁴ Zl. [?],³⁰⁵ letter to Dror leadership [?].

[duplicate]

Ostrowiec, 30 April [19]42

My Dears,

After such a long time of not writing to you, I've now finally begun to write. I was at home and now I'm already with the family [x],³⁰⁶ I was a little ill. I'm suffering a little with an eye, it needs an operation. I'll go just this week to the specialist who will open it for me. But amidst everything this is the smallest, there are much more important and serious things, that it's hard

303 Probably reference to some danger for the Dror organisation in Hrubieszów and/or its kibbutz in Werbkowice.

304 Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski (Opatów County).

305 "Zl." might be an abbreviation for the male name Zelman or the female name Zlata.

306 [x] *chevra*. here: Hehalutz organisation.

to bear. Also the same illness which took Shults away [on the slaughter-night 17th April in Warsaw].³⁰⁷ The same thing dropped in on us, two times ^h*chai*^h [36 dead]³⁰⁸ we gave away already and the illness is not yet over. Imagine our misery and suffering. Also about half a hundred sent off to the *moshav*³⁰⁹ [labour camp] where Leah and L[x]³¹⁰ were in winter. But this is still not certain and we live with great suffering and fear in order to be able to survive the day. So there's nothing new especially. We work in Starachowice a little with wood, the sisters [x]³¹¹ work at various things, so that we push when we can. For a week the brothers [x]³¹² in Starachowice didn't work, so that the situation was very difficult. We received the money. Despite all this we'll have Mr Iton³¹³ here, who is for us now very needed and important, we await him impatiently. As you see, it's a little difficult, but he will come. Nothing else special. [---]³¹⁴ We should also need to travel [for work], we will start trying for this. Because of the illness it's impossible for the time being, because Mr Rosh³¹⁵ [of the community] and the others of his family [Malkiel Lusternik] are dis-oriented.³¹⁶ [---]

Your Zl.

307 In square brackets, probably copyist's comments, also below.

308 The numerical value of *chai* is 18, the word also means "living," or here: life.

309 (Hebrew) colony, cooperative agricultural estate; here used as a coded reference.

310 [x] name crossed out probably by the copyist.

311 [x] *bachurot*.

312 [x] *chaveyrim*.

313 (Hebrew) newspaper; one of around 50 underground periodicals published in the Warsaw ghetto; they represented various political groups; they were distributed in the regional ghettos by couriers.

314 Fragment of the text omitted by the copyist, also at the end of the letter and of the postscript.

315 (Hebrew) head; here: chairman.

316 In November 1941 Yitzhak Zuckerman (see footnote 317) visited Ostrowiec and Opatów; see *Accounts from the General Government*, Doc. 71. He found a group of Hehalutz youth there, including a few dozen clandestine students of a Dror secondary school. The kibbutz in Ostrowiec was established despite the reservations of Malkiel Lusternik (a young Hebrew poet and chairman of the ŻSS branch in Opatów) and thanks to the help of Yitzhak Rubenstein, the chairman of the *Judenrat*. See *A Surplus of Memory*, p. 151.

Write back right away. We are very concerned about you. With us it's well for the moment. [---]

Your Zl.

ARG I 945 (Ring. I/553)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten – LEG*, pencil, Yiddish, 206×294 mm, minor damage and losses of text, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

63

After 2 May 1942, Opatów. Fela (surname unknown), letter to I.³¹⁷ [Dror leadership].

[duplicate]

Opatów, 2 May 1942

Dear I.,

Do not be surprised that I have not written all this time. I did not plan it. Dear I., I urge you to write whether all of you are well, I am very anxious. Write to me about what you have been up to. Has the epidemic which is spreading now [‘the 17 April – the carnage of Warsaw’]³¹⁸ not affected anybody from our family? You certainly know what happened there where Berele is [‘Ostrowiec’]. There were *shyshym korb[ones]*;³¹⁹ these are very funny things,

317 The addressee was probably Yitzhak Zuckerman (Icchak Cukierman) “Antek” (1914–1981), activist of Dror and Hehalutz Hatzair; husband of Zivia Lubetkin. In the Warsaw ghetto, he was one of the leaders of the underground movement, editor of the underground press and participant of clandestine education, co-founder of ŻOB. From 13 April 1943 he was a representative of ŻOB outside the ghetto and a liaison with the Home Army. During the Warsaw Uprising of 1944, as a leader of a ŻOB unit, he fought in the ranks of the People’s Army. In 1948 he immigrated to Palestine together with Zivia. They co-founded the Ghetto Fighters’ House.

318 Comments in square brackets, also below, added by a copyist. Reference to the night of 17/18 April 1942, see Engelking, Leociak, *Leociak, A Guide to the Perished City*, pp. 683–85.

319 (Hebrew/Yiddish) sixty victims.

it makes no sense to write about them. I urge you to reply soon. Kind regards to Pesia,

Fela

PS: Kind regards from Lejb.

ARG I 942 (Ring. I/567)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (H*), pencil, Polish, Yiddish, 205×158 mm, minor damage and losses of text, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

64

2 May [1942], Hrubieszów [?]. [Heno] Gutman,³²⁰ telegram to unknown addressee [Dror leadership].

Hrubieszów
via Lublin

I must immediately move out the family, telegraph me where to = Gutman 34/8³²¹

ARG I 771a (Ring. I/550)

Description: original, printed form, typewritten, German, Polish, 210×145 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page. Attached is a note by Hersh Wasser in Yiddish: "Telegram sent in May 1942 at the time of destruction."

-
- 320 Heno Gutman (1919–1943), born in Łódź, participated in the work of the Dror kibbutz in the Warsaw ghetto at Dzielna Street 34. Delegated by Dror to Hrubieszów, he participated in the establishment of the kibbutz in Werbkowice. During the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto, commanded one of the ŻOB detachments. He died with his 22-year-old girlfriend Fejczka Rabów.
- 321 Dzielna Street 34 flat 8 was the address of the headquarters of Dror movement in the Warsaw ghetto.

1 June 1942, Hrubieszów. Brocha (surname unknown), letter to unknown addressee [Dror leadership].

1 June 1942

My dears,

I write to you the last letter from Hrubieszów.³²² It's already decided that all Jews must leave Hrubieszów and also the surrounding small towns. The Jews have also been sent into the city from all villages and *placówki*. 800 people will remain in the city. Understandably, this good fortune will not extend to any of our comrades. What form the expulsion will take – we don't know. Where to – we also don't know. Rumours are going around that they're sending us to Białystok, but it seems unbelievable. It's very possible that the same fate awaits us as the Lubliners, Vilners, and other Jews.

The kibbutz in Werbkowice³²³ also had to move despite all interventions. At the time of its liquidation, Shaul³²⁴ was with them. We wanted them to come to Hrubieszów and from there, we thought, it would be easier to go somewhere else. But they had to go to Grabowiec. Now what awaits them is the same fate as ours and all other Jews around.

Peretz Piwnik still lies in hospital here. Also, Chaim Sidło is sick with typhus and is lying in Hrubieszów. What will happen with them I don't know.

322 Between 2 and 20 June 1942, 5,000, Jews from Hrubieszów and its vicinity were deported to Sobibór, while a few hundred were executed in the Jewish cemetery.

323 In mid-1941 an underground kibbutz of the Hehalutz and Dror organisations was established at a sawmill in Werbkowice (Hrubieszów County). It was to become a base of Jewish partisan units. It initially had 40 members, some of whom had been delegated from Warsaw – i.e., the group's leaders Mojsze Rubencyk, Shaul Dobuchna, and Hensch Gutman. During the *Aktion* in Hrubieszów County, the Hehalutz members from Werbkowice were driven on foot to Grabowiec. The Dror leadership tried to escort them out by sending two messengers, Frumka Płotnicka and Chawka Folman, from Warsaw. Owing to the sawmill manager's intervention, Dror members returned to Werbkowice, but they were executed in early September 1942 after the exposure of another group sent from Warsaw.

324 Shaul (Szaul) Dobuchna (1923–1942), one of the most important Dror activists in the Warsaw ghetto. Before the war he studied at the Poznański Jewish Teachers' Seminary. He edited a newspaper published by Hehalutz Hatzair and was an educator of young people. Dobuchna worked closely with Yitzhak Zuckerman and was very active in underground activities. He was one of the organisers of the Dror kibbutz in Werbkowice, and was killed during its liquidation, in September 1942.

Shaul doesn't write because he's working. We thought this was the solution – work. But this won't help either. If they let us live, we'll look for a contact. You from your end look out for the Werbkowice kibbutz, do your best.

Be well,

Brokhe³²⁵

ARG I 771b (Ring. I/550)

Description: original (handwritten, ink, 157×197 mm, minor damage and losses of text, text illegible in places); duplicate (2 copies, handwritten – LEG*, pencil, 148×205 mm), Yiddish 3 sheets, 4 pages.

66

4 June 1942, Grabowiec. Ita and [Icchak?], letter to Yitzhak Zuckerman.

Grobiec³²⁶

Chawa Szrojt³²⁷

Mr I. Cukierman

Warsaw

Dzielna Street 34, flat 8

Grabowiec 4 June [19]42

Dear Yitzhak,

Fortune has brought us to Grabowiec. We have sent a telegram to Cyla,³²⁸ asking her for help. We are supposed to stay here for 7 days. This is all we know for now...

325 Extensive excerpts from Brocha's letter were published in the Warsaw ghetto by the underground magazine *Yediyes* of 9 June 1942. About the letters from Hrubieszów, the editors wrote: "They are terrifying in their hopelessness and so sober in the face of the truth..." See ARG I 1308 (Ring. I/690). Perhaps in response to Brocha's letter, Dror's liaisons, Frumka Płotnicka and Chawka Folman, were sent to the town. See Ferenc, "Každy pyta, co z nami będzie.", pp. 364–365.

326 Intentional distortion of the town's name, to make it sound like: gravesite.

327 Chawa Szrojt (Szreit) (1922–1943?) was born in Grabowiec and lived there throughout the war; belonged to the Dror youth movement; was murdered in Sobibór. See YVD, 1670453.

328 Zivia (Celina, Cyla) Lubetkin (1914–1978), activist of Dror and Hehalutz Hatzair, delegate to the World Zionist Congress in Geneva (1939); wife of Yitzhak Zuckerman.

We have no financial means. We left all our baggage in Werbkowice, because we had to walk on foot. There were no horse-drawn wagons to rent. Do what you can.

We are sleeping at “Big Gefar’s.”³²⁹

Ita and Icchak

ARG I 747a (Ring. I/547)

Description: original (handwritten on a postcard, postmark 4 June [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 5 June [19]42, ink, Polish 148×104 mm); duplicate (2 copies, handwritten – H*, pencil, Polish, Yiddish, 150×195 mm.), 3 sheets, 4 pages. On the duplicate, information in Yiddish that the date is that of the postmark.

67

After 5 June 1942, Grabowiec. Icchak [Pomaranc], letter to Henocho [Gutman].

Grabowiec 5 June [19]42

Shalom, Henocho,

We should not be the first to write, but I refuse to pay this any mind, and here I am writing to you. We have not forgotten that you abandoned us and did not bother to come to us to say goodbye. But never mind.

Imagine that in this very difficult time we have to be alone. As you know, we were deported to Grabowiec, for which “Grobowiec”³³⁰ would be a more fitting name. Here we have looked death in the eye. An ordinance has been passed forbidding us from leaving town for 7 days. Imagine what is going on in our hearts, we are expecting horrible blows. Those could be a new wandering, a concentration camp, or death.

She co-founded ŻOB and fought in the Warsaw ghetto uprising. She left the ghetto through the sewers. In 1948 she immigrated to Palestine together with her husband. They co-founded the Ghetto Fighters’ House.

329 (Yiddish) great danger.

330 (Polish) tomb, sepulchre.

The atmosphere in town is like before the *akedah*.³³¹ Two weeks ago there was a great celebration of a ritual festival, which was attended by over 30 people.³³² On the day of the deportation Shaul³³³ visited us and we have not heard from him since. Our situation here is dire. We have no money or bread and should we be forced to go [somewhere], we would be lost.

Henoch, we have telegraphed and written to you asking for financial aid, do try to rescue us from here by obtaining passes for us, perhaps to Warsaw, or some of you could come over.

Apart from that there is no more news. Fiszel is still weak, but he is recuperating. But we have left Chaim Szydło in hospital because he is suffering from the same illness as Fiszel. Apart from that we are doing just fine except for the hunger as all we want is to save our lives. Our family is taking good care of us. They are doing their best. We left *mahsanym*³³⁴ and bedding in Werbkowice. All we have here is what we had on ourselves. Klewak³³⁵ has already intervened a few times with the authorities to get us out of here, but unfortunately it all came to nothing.

Henoch, would it be possible for someone to come over? Regards and hugs from me and the entire *chevra*.

Shalom,

Icchak

Important! Please, try to do something for us.

ARG I 747b (Ring. I/547)

Description: original (handwritten, ink, 154×94 mm); duplicate of the opening fragment of the original (2 copies, handwritten – H*, pencil, 205×147 mm, minor damage and losses of text), Polish, 3 sheets, 4 pages. On the duplicate, information in Yiddish that the date is that of the postmark.

331 (Hebrew) binding; reference to the sacrifice of Isaac, Genesis 22.

332 Coded reference to the executions.

333 Probably Shaul Dobuchna.

334 (Hebrew, *mahsanim*) stores, warehouses.

335 Probably sawmill manager.

May–June 1942, Dubienka,³³⁶ Chełm. Luba Rozenberg, letters (1)–(3) to Frania Zalcman.

(1)

W. Rozenberg
Dubienka, Hrubieszów County

Miss F. Zalcman
Warsaw
Elektoralna Street 14, flat 93

Dubienka 23 May 1942

Dear Frania,

Today I have received your postcard dated 18 [May?]. I do not know where you found the patience to sit down and scribble these couple of words. Yesterday Mr Kiszyniewski³³⁷ was here and another large group of people left for the city where my brother-in-law Mr Tenenbaum and Josef, Wolf's brother, are.³³⁸ We are well for now. The number of the deported is 10 times larger than the number of those who were sent away when the men I just mentioned were sent away, I would have a lot to write to you, but it defies description. If we ever see each other again we will talk about everything. Go to Mrs Tenenbaum and say that I have received the money but the *gmina* charges 2 percent so I had to pay 6 zlotys, she should give it to you. Give them my kind regards. They should be happy that they are not in Dubienka. Go to Mrs Kulberg, I do not have the patience to write to everybody separately. I will write about everything once things calm down here a little. I have just received your second postcard. Thank Cymerman for sending his regards. I am going to write more in a letter.

Hugs and kisses, your

Luba

I take this opportunity to send greetings [...] they are still alive.

336 Dubienka (Hrubieszów County) had a population of about 2,500 Jews before the war; on 2 June 1942, some 2,700 people, including Jewish deportees from Kraków and Mielec, were taken to Sobibór.

337 A reference to the pogrom of Jews in Kishinev in 1903; this is about the pogrom and deportation of a large number of Jews on 22 May 1942.

338 Wolf – Luba's husband; reference to people who are dead.

(2)

Miss F. Zalcman
Warsaw
Elektoralna Street 14, flat 93

Chełm, 1 June 1942

Dear Frania,

I am writing at a moment so horrible that my hands are shaking and my eyes cannot see because they are flooded over not with tears but with blood. Yesterday my children and I left our place of residence. Wolf stayed because he had no pass. My departure was not connected with pleasure and what is to happen now defies description. Everything that has happened thus far was just child's play. You write that it is good that Wolf and I have jobs, but unfortunately not a single person has survived. All workers from all *placówki* have been killed. From the one I worked in and all of the remaining ones, Elek and Hadasa have miraculously survived. They are home now. I was the only one who left because nobody else had a pass. I am in touch with Wolf, I get a phone call twice a day. I have left him with a guardian.³³⁹ Do not respond until you hear from us via telegram or telephone.³⁴⁰ I do not know whether you will understand anything from this. This letter is as chaotic as what is going on inside my head. Farewell.

Sending kisses and regards,

Luba

How are things with you? Is it quiet there?

We are in Chełm. Kisses and regards from Ezra. Regards and kisses from Hadasa.³⁴¹

339 Probably a reference to the Polish family which purportedly sheltered Wolf, Luba's husband.

340 See Justyna Gregorowicz, "Komunikacja telefoniczna w życiu społeczności getta warszawskiego," *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* no. 10 (2014), pp. 409–427.

341 Two additions by children.

(3)

W. Rozenberg
Dubienka, Hrubieszów County

F. Zalcman
Warsaw
Elektoralna Street 14, flat 93

4 June 1942

Dear Frania,

We are already back in Dubienka. We have survived again. Wolf, the children, and I, for how long? I do not know. Write what is new with you. Everybody has been deported but I do not know whether to the place where Józef is or elsewhere. Nobody knows anything. They have disappeared without a trace. Wolf's entire family has been deported. Write what I should do. Should I try to join you? Or should I send the children to you? Ptasznik's wife and daughter have been deported. And so have Lewin and his family, Mrs Rozenberg's mother, and everybody else. There are only some 200 people left. Those who had been issued special residence cards stayed. Do reply soon.

Regards,

Luba

ARG I 727 (Ring. I/568/2)

Description: original, handwritten on postcards, postmarks (1) 2 June, (2) 1 June, (3) 6 June [19]42 and stamps of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw (1) and (2) 4 June, (3) 8 June [19]42, ink, Polish, 146×104 mm, 3 sheets, 6 pages. Attached is a copy of a card dated 4 June, handwritten (H*), pencil, Polish, Yiddish, 206×147 mm (insignificant changes of text in relation to the original), 1 sheet, 1 page.

5 May 1942, Międzyrzec Podlaski.³⁴² Masza Altman, letter to Hela (surname unknown).

M. Altman
Międzyrzec Podl[aski]
Piłsudskiego 27

To Mr J. Perkal
Warsaw
Twarda Street 30 flat 10

^HWith God's help *Lag b'omer*^H
5 May [1942]³⁴³

Dear Hela,

In truth I should have replied right away, but well, sometimes one can't be responsible for a promised word, not only a thought. So we lived through some diversions ^Hnumberless victims^{H344} that it's hard to imagine and constant chatter about ^Yghetto,^{Y345} constantly various rumours still ^Yabout deportation^{Y346} that take away the desire to live. I wanted to comfort you a bit after the losses of your loved ones. So may you be comforted [among the] ^Hmourners of Zion and Jerusalem.^H May G-d³⁴⁷ grant that those who remain live to see better times and still know of life.

On Saturday ^Hthe first of the month of *Iyar*^{H348} a dozen or so people went to where your brother and father have settled, ^Ytwo rabbis and the town elders^Y

342 Międzyrzec (Radzyń Podlaski County).

343 The holiday of Lag b'omer fell on 5 May in 1942.

344 In the spring of 1942, the Gestapo staged executions of Jews in many towns in the GG. They were referred to as the April Slaughter; about the events in the Warsaw ghetto see footnote 318. Dozens of Jews were executed in Kielce, Częstochowa, Ostrowiec, and other towns. In Międzyrzec Podlaski, two rabbis, a butcher, and two members of the *Judenrat* were murdered; on 25 May 1942, *Yediyes* reported that the rabbis from Międzyrzec had been hanged on 18 April 1942, see ARG I 1308 (Ring. I/690).

345 The ghetto in Międzyrzec was established after the first *Aktion* in late August or early September 1942. In the rump ghetto established on 1 December 1942, Jews from Biała Podlaska and Radzyń Counties were detained.

346 Which meant sending people to death.

347 As a sign of respect, religious Jews avoid writing a full word meaning God, in any language. The custom comes from an interpretation of the commandment in Deuteronomy 12:3–4.

348 On 18 April 1942; see footnote 337.

for a rest, and who else will go we don't know. Today it would even be better there, with you, except that it is so hard to earn anything, even enough for one potato. Though here it's the same, can't make anything, maybe if you risk a lot.

I was thinking of sending you a package³⁴⁹ to share but I gave up on the idea when a friend of mine lost one and then another for ^Hthree thousand, ^Ha lot of dough, this after all she'd slaved at all winter, so no again, and you have to live a little at a time, you sell things, if there was a lot it would be good.

You write that life is torment, know that when midnight sounds it's everywhere. Why doesn't Ewa add something, and how is Fela, is she better on her feet? And how is Mum? Is your husband earning anything? Write more often, I want to hear something new and good from my close ones, though I don't have many left, the circle is gradually getting smaller.

Ach! I received a letter from Brysz, he was sick, thinks about his parents, G-d knows if they're alive. The Lewins' son is in Germany, in a camp near Frankfurt, he also writes to ask if I know anything about his parents.

Yes, my dears, life is hard, but we'll reach the good too.

Your Maszka

Ewa, write what you're up to, how you're feeling. Hang on!

Chazak ve-ematz!

ARG I 926 (Ring. I/558)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 8 May [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 11 May [19]42, Hebrew, German, Polish, Yiddish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

349 Food parcels and money were sent to the Warsaw ghetto to buy general merchandise which was then sent back. Due to the ban on accepting parcels from Jews introduced by the German post office in February 1941, such parcels were posted through the agency of Poles. The Nazis systematically confiscated parcels at the Warsaw ghetto post office. Sakowska, "Łączność pocztowa", p. 100.

[Before?] 1 June 1942, Włodawa.³⁵⁰ Sender unknown, letter to unknown addressee.

[A letter from Włodawa]

[duplicate 1 June [19]42]³⁵¹

We are well, God be blessed. We can't figure out what to do about staying at the doctor's.³⁵² We can't figure out alone what to do, despite the fact that we'd already decided to stay at the doctor's, because Uncle³⁵³ wants, God forbid, to have the wedding of his children also with you, God forbid, since he's renting a place near you,³⁵⁴ very close to you. It's possible that you know nothing about this.

Therefore, I write to you now and we specially send you the ^hbearer,^h so that you know. It's true that you should also rent new quarters ^houtside the city^h for all our ^hJewish brothers^h and he has already prepared for all new housing – the same that he had near us.³⁵⁵ It's possible you know nothing about this. Therefore, I'm writing especially to you so that you know, because Uncle wants to expel ^hAdam^{h356} and God forbid for you to be together with Shloyme Velvl, ^hmay he rest in peace.^h

We know this exactly, that Uncle has already nearly completed the housing near you. You must know this, maybe you have some idea of what to do. It must be generally known that Uncle wants, God forbid, to arrange a wedding for you soon. He's already prepared quarters close to you, very near.

Remember to stay home. Use all possibilities in order not to be with Shloyme Velvl, ^hmay he rest in peace,^h and during the sickness the best

350 Włodawa (Chełm County); from 18 to 23 May 1942, 1,300 local Jews were murdered in Sobibór.

351 Notes of the copyist.

352 Coded reference to the Warsaw ghetto, which had been regarded as safe.

353 Coded reference to the Nazi authorities.

354 A reference to the construction of the killing centre in Treblinka.

355 A reference to the killing centre in Sobibór.

356 In Hebrew the name Adam is also a noun denoting 'man.'

^hremedy^h is ^hsitting in secrecy.^h Remember well that we are ^hholy sacrifices and if anything remains of us until morning^h and so on.³⁵⁷

ARG I 1054 (Ring. I/563)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten – LEG*, pencil, Yiddish, 207×294 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

71

[Before 11 June 1942], Janów Podlaski.³⁵⁸ Sender unknown, letter to Berko Lejb Hir[sz]berg.

[...] Janów

Mr Berko Lejb Hir[sz]berg
Warsaw
Wołyńska Street 17, flat 8

Dear son and dear brother, [...] I urge you to not write to us now [...] you will get a letter from us because we are to move, and you will not know the address. Kind farewell for now. Thank you for everything.

From me, your mother and sister. Do not forget us. Regards from your sister, brother-in-law, and the kids.

ARG I 779 (Ring. I/578).

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 11 June [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 14 June [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×104 mm, extensive minor damage and losses of text, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Below the place for sender's address, notation in Polish and Yiddish: "Leszno 67/49, library 12-4."

357 A reference to Exodus 12:10; the addressee would know that the ending is: "you must burn it."

358 Janów Podlaski (Biała Podlaska County). The letter about the impending destruction was probably written under the influence of the news about the *Aktion* in the ghetto in Biała Podlaska on 8–11 June 1942. The Jews of Janów were resettled to Międzyrzec on 23 and 24 September 1942 and from there sent to Treblinka.

Josef Kirszenfeld
Biłgoraj Lub[elski]
Nadstawna Street 42

Mr Hersh Wasser
Warsaw
Nowolipki Street 29 flat 16

Biłgoraj 20 July [19]42

My dears,

Thank you for your hundred zlotys which we received for which we thank you very much. It is a great joy for us, we rejoice [that] with your help we can get food for a week, always scarce. We talk and think of you, that we have no one to turn to for help to save our lives but to you. I have already written to you, dear sister, to them and to Szaja Kesner, and they say they are worried why do they not write [...] They forgot about us, I tell you, my dears, that your help will save our lives. Chanele is a bit better but weak. Please do not forget about us. My dear son and I, we work in hard conditions, crushing stones, hard work and not earning [enough] for a kilogram of bread [...] as it cost 11 zlotys, potatoes 4 zlotys for a kilogram. Please don't be angry with us, we know that it's hard times for you too, [...] for help, but you have to forgive. God help us to survive and live til better morrow, kisses and wishes for all the best

your Chana, Josef

ARG II 529c (Ring. II/393)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 27 July [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 31 July [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

359 The ghetto in Biłgoraj was established in June 1940. Between April 1942 and January 1943, the Jews of Biłgoraj and others resettled from the surrounding towns and villages were deported to Bełżec.

360 Bluma Wasser's brother.

3 January 1943, Sandomierz.³⁶¹ *Moyshe Rozner and his niece Rachela, letter to Shulim.*

Sandomierz, 3 January [19]43

‖Dear brother-in-law Shulim,

Here with us in Sandomierz there's a voluntary registration for Erets Yisroel. Probably one has to submit [the name of] a family that will claim [us]. We have our cousin and in-law Alter Yekhiel Topel there. And Moyshe Shmukler has a sister there. My own opinion is that we should register. [But] there are people here who hold that, God forbid, evil can come of it at this time. And so we come to you with the question of what you think. You live after all amidst a large Jewish community. Moyshe Leyb and Perl went to Staszów last week. We don't know if they'll stay there. We all send regards to you.

Your brother-in-law Moyshe Rozner

We await a quick response.‖

‡My dears!

Uncle has already written about everything, [but] I can't miss the opportunity to write to you. Pola and her husband went by car to Staszów, where they are legalised, what this is worth and for how long it will last – we do not know. Since the 1st of January the gates, the exits have been tightly closed.

What will happen next we do not know, we live in fear of tomorrow. God willing our situation improves.

Mum sends her warm greetings. My children and my husband and I send our warmest greetings.

Your Rachela

Uncle, will you please respond regarding Palestinian emigration? What is your view on this? Do they not want to set a stone rolling?[‡]

‖Shulim. Maybe you can discover there and write to me [if] the registration is valid and whether I can register my children who are in Skarżysko.

361 Sandomierz (Opatów County).

We may have to [officially] get out of there. Officially you can leave, but the way is hazardous and [requires] 2 thousand zlotys.

Same^y

ARG II 363 (Ring. II/275/8)

Description: original, handwritten, pencil, Polish, Yiddish, 220×229 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

Part IV

Letters from labour camps

13 February 1942, Steineck (Krzyżowniki)³⁶² near Poznań. A. Łenczycki,³⁶³ letter to M. Gelernter.

Communal Camp 12
Steineck bei Posen
Post Office 15, for No 1580

To Mr M. Gelernter³⁶⁴
Warsaw
Dzika Street 10 flat 24

362 Gemeinschaftslager DAF-Steineck (in Krzyżowniki, now within Poznań borders) was one of the 13 sub-camps of the Poznań Stadium complex. It had over 300 prisoners who performed sewerage, road, and drainage work. It existed from 1940 to the autumn of 1943 and was one of the camps with the highest mortality rate. Those who died in the camp were buried in Poznań in the Górczyński cemetery.

363 The sender might be Wigdor (Awigdor) Łęczycki, one of the prisoners later executed at the Stadium camp; see Marian Świtoński, "Zbrodnie na Żydach z getta łódzkiego, osadzonych w obozach w Poznańskim," in *Materiały sesji naukowej „Getto łódzkie”* (Łódź 1984), p. 7.

364 Probably related to Rabbi Josef Lejb Gelernter (1908–1942) from Skępe. In the Warsaw ghetto he became engaged in the organisation of welfare for Orthodox refugees and deportees (he was the head of the religious section of CKU) and cooperated with the OyNEG Shabes group. According to Sakowska, probably the letter reached the Ringelblum Archive through Rabbi Gelernter. See Maria Ferenc, "Rabin Josef Lejb Gelernter ze Skępego i jego ślady w Archiwum Ringelbluma," *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały* no. 15 (2019), pp. 355–358.

Poznań, 13 February 1942, Friday

Dear sister and brother-in-law and kids [...],

We can let you know that we have been in the camp here for 5 months and we go to work every day, my son Luzer Manes and I, and that my family was sent away to Łódź and for 2 months I've had no news from them, now my dears, we are naked and without a grosz, we have no money and what [...] can we ask of [our] dear brother-in-law, that he write to his family in Belgium because packages with provisions come from there, it will be very useful for us, there is a lack of bread here and anything to spread on it, you can also send money here up to 5 marks in one letter, also now my dears perhaps you have friends or family here in the Reich that have [...] are able to help us, we also please ask that you write to them to send us packages with provisions, from Josef and from Haim we receive very little, 1 bread a month, it's nothing and [...] to Danziger³⁶⁶ and all [...] to survive and we write, thanks [...] please write right away, this will be our solace, because we don't receive from the [...] a word, please write to us immediately what's going on with you, what's happening with you and what's happening with the dear children, I beg you to do whatever you can do, so that we will still be able to see you in happier times and please write double cards, because we have no money we greet you all [...]

[Łenczycki]

ARG I 1137 (Ring. I/592/7)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark, stamps of camp and of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, pencil, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 146×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Attached is Hersh Wasser's note in Polish: "Letter from the labour camp in Poznań [Steineck]. February 1942."

365 Annotated at a post office in the ghetto. It is the same location; the occupation authorities changed the name of Zamenhofa Street back to its earlier name, Dzika Street (Wildstrasse).

366 Yitzhak Menachem Mendel Danziger (Dancigier, Dancygier) (1880–1942), *tzaddik* from Aleksandrów near Łódź. At the beginning of the war he hid in Łódź, then in Warsaw. His library in Aleksandrów was taken over by *Der Stürmer*. After the *Grossaktion* he worked as a shoemaker in Schultz's workshop; from there he was deported to Treblinka.

[Before 7 March 1942], *Obern timer (Oborniki near Poznań), labour camp*.³⁶⁷ *Female prisoners, letter to unknown addressee.*

[...] We turn to you with a request for a big favour. We find ourselves in a camp for almost 6 months. Our parents were resettled in an unknown direction, and the resettled have not been allowed [to send any parcels].³⁶⁸

Imagine our situation – being in the camp not knowing what happened to your parents. We turn to you as representatives of Jews to inform us where our loved ones were resettled from [...] Mühlental³⁶⁹ [...] and Wartbrücken.³⁷⁰

There are 97 of us girls here. We have no means of subsistence. Our situation has forced us to seek your help.

We have neither clothes nor money. Our parents had not managed to send us anything. We had reported for labour in our area but we were unexpectedly deported and the post office has not been taking in any parcels for us. So we ask you to please help us in any way [...].

Worried [...]

ARG I 1155 (Ring. I/555)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 7 March [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 15 March [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×103 mm, text is barely legible and in places is illegible, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

367 The forced labour camp in Oborniki, established in May 1940, was subordinate to the local mayor. On 4 January 1943 the female prisoners were moved to the Alt-Latzig landed estate (Laski Wałęckie, Wałcz County). They perished on 14 May 1943.

368 The prisoners were unaware that resettlement meant death.

369 German name for Izbica Kujawska. The local Jews were deported to Chełmno on 14 and 15 January 1942.

370 German name for Koło. The local Jews were deported to Chełmno between 8 and 11 December 1941.

30 April 1942, Waldlager Britz.³⁷¹ [Binem] Taube,³⁷² letter to his brother Uszer Taube.

B. Taube
Forest camp Britz
Kr[eis] Angermünde Wh. 15/3

To Uszer Taube
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 15 flat 30

Waldlager Britz, 30 April [19]42

Dear Brother Uszer,

Again I'm in a new place. We left Pinnow³⁷³ on 24 April. Lately we'd had enough to eat. Now in this place we receive quite a skimpy ration, 2 kg bread, 2.5 [deca]grams butter, 8 deca[grams of] sausage, 15 d. sugar, 17 d. jam, and 15 deca[grams] white cheese per week, and one soup daily, but the soup's virtue is that it's not especially Jewish. I also wanted to write to you about the work, but until now I haven't been in the factory. Whoever works receives an additional soup. The factory produces metal objects. It employs about 2,500 men. We will work in 2 shifts of 10 hours [each]. Until now we are 450 Jews here, more will come, the rest are Poles, French, Russians, Ukrainians, as well as German workers. On the other hand, it's interesting to describe the camp to you a bit. In one word, a villa. Brick buildings in the forest with all the best comforts. 18 men live in 2 rooms, a special bedroom and dining room, special toilets, washrooms with [...] and all comforts, one just must be [in good health?]. They promised us [...] those other workers, but I believe [...]. All together we have here [...] some 20 men from Kłodawa in one room. As far as health, thank God I'm healthy, but we're becoming weak. Packages arrive here and are distributed properly. Someone could possibly send from a small town, from M. Waksman [...] it would be of use; with clothing this is my

371 The Britz forest camp near Eberswalde, in the Prussian province of Brandenburg.

372 Taube brothers: Binem, Szymon Josef (Józef), and Uszer, and their relative Fela Rybska lived in Kłodawa. Binem, Szymon Josef, and Fela were sent to forced labour camps, while Uszer, his wife Balcia, and their little daughter Edzia fled from Kłodawa shortly before the *Aktion*. The brothers' parents most probably perished in Chełmno.

373 Pinnow (now Pniów, Sulęcín County). A forced labour camp for Jews was established there in 1940 and liquidated in 1942; its prisoners worked for the RAB.

situation: my jacket is completely falling apart. I received torn underwear in Pinnow. And so on! These are not the times of Deutschhöhe.³⁷⁴

Now what do we hear about our d[ear] parents? Someone inquired at a Parisian institute,³⁷⁵ they answered that they can't find out anything. From other towns one also doesn't hear any special regards. Also I'd like you to please send me a photo. From Pinnow I asked Lajb Kleczewski to forward my mail. I hope I receive it. For the time being no more news. Stay well and heartfelt regards, with special regards for Balcia and child and all the friends who are with you. Write me a detailed letter.

ARG I 1113 (Ring. I/592/9)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 8 May [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 11 May [19]42, ink, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 145×104 mm, minor damage and losses of text, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

77

[Before 1 June 1942], *Camp Lautawerk Süd (Lauta near Cottbus)*.³⁷⁶ Szymon Josef Taube,³⁷⁷ letter to his brother Uszer Taube.

[illegible document]

374 Camp in Deutschhöhe (northwest of Przychodzko, Nowy Tomyśl County) had approximately 60 prisoners, who worked for the communal services; the subcontractor was the Karl Plinke company.

375 Inaccurate information. At the beginning of the *Aktionen*, letters started arriving at the Presidium of the ŻSS in Kraków from almost all over Europe with questions about the fate of relatives in occupied Poland. The answer, censored by the occupier, was that the scope of competence of the ŻSS did not include the search for relatives. See Ieksa Bańkowska, "Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna w okresie akcji 'Reinhardt,'" *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i Materiały*, no. 13 (2017), pp. 276–294.

376 Lauta – town in Lower Lusatia, near the town of Cottbus, known for, among other things, its aluminum alloy plant. During World War II the plant was owned by the state and employed forced labourers of various nationalities.

377 Szymon Josef (Józef) Taube (1914–1943?), a baker by profession, native of Kłodawa, brother of Uszer and Binem Taube. He probably perished in the forced labour camp in Lauta. See YVD, 926097..

ARG I 1139 (Ring. I/592/10)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 1 June [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, ink, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 146×104 mm, major damages and losses of text, text mostly illegible, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

78

7 June 1942, Bronwitz (Broniewice),³⁷⁸ forced labour camp. Fela Rybska,³⁷⁹ letter to Uszer Taube.

Fela Rybska
Collective camp³⁸⁰ Bronwitz
Amsee post office, Mogilno County

To Uszer Taube
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 15

Bronwitz, 7 June [1942]

My dearest,

After much effort I have finally obtained your address from Rózia Lewin.³⁸¹ I am curious how you are doing, what you have been up to, and whether you are healthy. I am keen to know everything about you.

And how is sweet Edziunia? Write me about your situation, which Szymek³⁸² described to me in not too bright colours in his last postcard. I keep up regular correspondence with him even though he has been wandering from camp to camp. Nevertheless, we try not to lose touch.

Has your situation improved at all? Try to survive because no matter what your situation, you probably do not regret that you did what you did considering that those who stayed behind have not been heard from.³⁸³

378 Broniewice (Mogilno County).

379 Fela Rybska was a native of Kłodawa; about her parents see footnote 14.

380 Originally *Arbeitslager* (labour camp), corrected to *Gemeinschaftslager*, i.e., communal camp.

381 Probably Rózia Kapłan of Krośniewice.

382 Probably Szymon Josef Taube.

383 See footnote 3.

My dearest! Even though life has been giving us a hard time and surprising us in such an unpleasant way one should not lose hope because good and evil must come to an end. Thus, after such a harsh era there will surely come an era of beauty. We are young so we must endure because the future and the world are before us.

Now let me write something about my life. Perhaps you remember when I wrote to you from Bronwitz to Kłodawa, when you were still there (this name makes me shudder when I recall it) and now I am back where I was, but conditions have improved significantly. Colossal changes for the better have occurred.

Our accommodation is in a nice school building, where we also have good sanitary conditions. I am well. I work and have food.

Goodbye, kind regards, lots of kisses to Edziunia.

Fela

ARG I 1114 (Ring. I/592/13)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 8 June [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 10 June [19]42, pencil, Polish, 146×103 mm, minor damages and losses of text, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

79

14 June [1942], Camp Lautawerk Süd (Lauta near Cottbus). [Szymon Josef Taube], letter to [Uszer Taube], with enclosed letter received by Szymon in early 1942 from M. Targacz from Grabów near Łęczysca.

Camp³⁸⁴ Lautawerk Süd

Sunday 14 June [1942]

Dear brother and sister-in-law as well as your child, the beloved darling Edziunia!

384 The word “camp” in Polish added in different handwriting.

First, I share with you that I received the postcard of 5 June on Thursday 11 June. I thank you very much. You can't imagine my joy when I receive mail from you. This is my only consolation. During this time, I also received a postcard from Binem³⁸⁵ to which I replied immediately. According to his letter he's also not so good, he works 11 hours in a factory and with food it's also not too great, but [what] can you do? What you write to me about work, it's impossible to describe everything. You can describe it in several postcards, or better in a letter, because I'm very eager to know about everything that's happened from [...] until now.

Concerning our dear parents, you've already written many times.³⁸⁶ Do you think then that I [...] you write that you already know everything very precisely and all need God's mercy, but this contradicts what Balcia writes. Alas we already know all the details of their end. Also, in the camp I heard [...] in the winter months [about] disappearances: how they had [...] carried out exercises with this gas. I also received at that time a letter – when I was in Liebenau³⁸⁷ – from M. Targacz³⁸⁸ from Grabów which I include with this letter [...]. The letter also gave a list of some of the victims, but I did not receive the list. I've kept the letter until now as an important document and send it now as an important document in order to know if all the conjectures somehow hold together. And I also ask you please, please to write to me precisely about all you know about this and if there's a real basis to it and how and from where you know all this. Also M.M. Kibel³⁸⁹ read a postcard and wrote immediately to W[arsaw] and he's really angry with you for not passing on any details.

Until recently I worked in the factory, a very responsible job, as well as very hard work, but I worked in shifts of 8 hours. Now I work at a construction project

385 Binem Taube.

386 The parents of the Taube brothers had remained in Kłodawa. They most probably perished in Chełmno between 12 and 14 January 1942; see footnote 372.

387 Liebenau (in Brandenburg Province, now Lubrza, Świebodzin County). The forced labour camps in Liebenau I and II had approximately 380 Jewish prisoners, employed by the RAB.

388 M. Targacz went to school in Kłodawa, he was a classmate of Liba Pinczewska. Binem Taube, Gucia (Golda) Tabaczyńska and Ruwen Wiśniewski (aforementioned in this letter) also went to school with them. See <https://polska1926.pl/podpisy/332947> [access: 11 January 2023].

389 The sender made several references to his correspondence with Moshe Mendel Kibel from Szydłowiec, who was probably a native of Kłodawa.

also on [...] the grounds of the factory, I work 11 hours from 6 in the morning until 5 in the evening, but the work is much easier [...] I'm outdoors, in the factory I had [...] with dust, this harmed me. One thing was better in the factory: we received clogs and work clothing as well as 8 hours but health is more important. Also food is not as it should be. Nearly everyone must go hungry except for those who receive packages from Turek, Zduńska Wola³⁹⁰ [...] where there are still Jews, those have it a bit easier.

In many letters I've asked if you could give me the address of Wolner, perhaps through the mediation of Moshe Mendel Kibel from Szydłowiec, I believe that he knows exactly where [Wolner] can be found, he would certainly [...] something to me he has already been in a camp, [so] he knows the life. According to what Ruwen Wiśniewski communicates there is in [...] was gold, according to [...] we find ourselves now. But I have evidence. The French prisoners are treated better than we are. Also all other groups such as Dutch, Belgians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Russians. And lately they take many [...], from the Protectorate³⁹¹ to here, also many thousands of Russians and Jews are systematically expelled from the factory. Gypsies and Jews from the Protectorate [are] also sent away.

I am very pleased that you live with decent people in [...]. [Pay] attention to the [...].

Grabów near Łęczycza³⁹²

Dear Comrade Szymon Josef,³⁹³

I was at [Mrs] Chasia's when she received the letter and I read it. You ask how we know the fate of the people from our city. Therefore short and clear, it is so painful for me to pass on such news, but no use, because this thing is already fact, for your good and the use of all it's better to present the thing as it is. All the people of Kłodawa were resettled to your grandfather Szmuel through Chełmno.³⁹⁴ This is entirely certain, without any doubt, because

390 Zduńska Wola (Sieradz County).

391 The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, established on the territory of German-occupied Czechoslovakia.

392 Place name added in different handwriting.

393 M. Targacz's letter must have been originally addressed to Szymon Josef Taube at the labour camp in Liebenau. See Ferenc, *"Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie."*, p. 326.

394 Coded reference to the destruction.

2 of the deported fled from the ^hplace of slaughter^h and were³⁹⁵ [...]. These 2 people were not from Kłodawa but from ^hneighboring settlements,^h nonetheless they brought news from the people of Kłodawa... The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of this, that as far as I know, a group of ^hmen^h from the camp^h were sent to Libenau and until today we still don't know their fate, so what it's about is that since we erred as to the destination of their journey, if you will not know the place of their stay, then your responsibility is to hide and save your own life, because they're saying that the children shared the fate of the residents of Kłodawa. Don't pass this letter on to anyone^h [...]³⁹⁶

ARG I 1140 (Ring. I/592/11) and ARG I 748d (Ring. I/549)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, German, Hebrew and Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 140×200 mm, extensive minor damage and losses in text, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Attachment: original, handwritten, ink, German and Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 142×204 mm, damage and losses of text, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

80

September–October 1942, Camp Lautawerk Süd (Lauta near Cottbus). Szymon [Josef] Taube, letters (1) and (2) to his brother Uszer Taube.

(1)

Schimon Taube
Lautawerk Süd
Camp I, *st[ube]* 7

To Uszer Taube
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 15 flat 30

Lautawerk Süd, 6 September [19]42

Beloved and dear brother and sister-in-law and beloved child Edziunia.

Certainly, you are angry with me that I haven't written to you for so long but you must nevertheless forgive me, within the last 3 weeks I was in correspondence with M.M. Kibel from S[z]ydłowiec. He shared with me that Welner finds himself already for several weeks in a camp, but one can't write to him.

395 Targacz met escapees from Chełmno, who reached Grabów in January 1942.

396 The end of the letter had already been missing when Sakowska was preparing her edition.

About you and Libcia Pinczewska³⁹⁷ he knows nothing, also nothing about our beloved parents. Recently I also wrote directly to W. Lewin³⁹⁸ and Libcia Pinczewska, but I also received no answer. Yes, I know everything, but I would gladly receive a few words from you for the new year.³⁹⁹ Perhaps it's possible?

From Binem I received a farewell card that he's leaving the camp as a sick person, but he doesn't know where he's going.⁴⁰⁰ I have had no news from him for several weeks. Szymon Josef Lissak is already with the ^hdeceased^h of 20 August in Küstrin.⁴⁰¹

Nothing special with me, I am, thank God, well and working, may I hear the same from you. I pray that this postcard may reach you.

I send regards and kiss you from the depths of my heart and wish you to be inscribed in the book of life and have a good year.⁴⁰²

From me Sz.J. Taube

Also regards from M.L. Pinczewski and all [our] friends.

397 Liba (Libcia) Pinczewska (1912–1942?) was a native of Kłodawa, worked as a salesperson; during the war she was in the Warsaw ghetto. See YVD, 1521198.

398 Wolf Dawid Lewi, see Doc. 2 and 3.

399 Rosh Hashana (Jewish New Year).

400 Prisoners of forced labour camps located in the Reich or on the Polish territories incorporated into the Reich rarely returned. The prisoners (with Binem Taube probably among them) were moved from camp to camp, and beginning with July 1941, the most severely ill were selected for *Rücktransports* (return transports). Some of the prisoners returned to the Łódź ghetto, but most of them, who had been deported from the liquidated ghettos, disappeared without a trace.

401 Now Kostrzyn nad Odrą/on the Odra River (Gorzów County). In the *Stadtlager* (urban forced labour camp) in Kostrzyn the Jews had been building a RAB motorway since December 1940 (the subcontractor was the Alfred Neugebauer construction company). In 1942 they worked in a cellulose factory. In the camps of Kostrzyn a dozen people were murdered on 25 July 1942. See Przemysław Mnichowski, "Hitlerowskie obozy pracy przemysłowej dla Żydów z getta łódzkiego na środkowym Nadodrzu w latach 1940–1944," in *Materiały sesji naukowej „Getto w Łodzi 1939–1944* (Łódź 1984), p. 9.

402 *Rosh Hashanah* (Jewish New Year) fell on 12 and 13 September 1942.

[10 October 1942]

Beloved and dear Brother and Sister-in-Law I've received your postcard of 5 October today, *Shabbes Berayshis*.⁴⁰³ I had not received any letter from you, it seems to me, for almost 3 weeks.⁴⁰⁴ The last postcard was written by Balcia and also with regards from Edziunia.⁴⁰⁵ To tell the truth, I didn't know much about what happened in the capital. Much was said, but I was always among the doubters. But I trust what you write, for I see that everything is confirmed. During this time I had written to M.M. Kibel in Szydłowiec for him to get in touch with Warsaw. Also from him I received news that was not good. From Binem I've received no mail, I don't know where he is. It's very possible that he finds himself somewhere in a collective camp. Szymon Josef Lissak is one of the 48 who are in the cemetery in Küstrin.

Beloved Brother and Sister-in-Law. Now it's *motse-shabbes*.⁴⁰⁶ I sit and scribble, I don't know myself what. The moment I received the postcard I wept with joy and when I read it, I wept with grief and I thought to myself that here in the camp I'm fine and well, we have enough to eat, and sleep a little less, but without worry. We receive 32 decagrams of bread a day and 3 decagrams of sausage and 3 decagrams of butter and 1 litre of good midday meal and ½ litre watery soup first thing in the morning, before work and coffee 2 times a day. And how are you doing? Write to me about everything in detail.

Take care that contact between us isn't broken, and continues as until now. Make use of all opportunities and write to me more often about everything and in detail, I ask you please, so very much.

Dear brother, you can write to me about everything in the world to the address of a close comrade St. Pomykala, Lautawerk Süd, Camp 3, kreis Calau.⁴⁰⁷ It's best for the letter to be written in Yiddish, even better would be in Polish. If you write a postcard, you can also write to my address, you can

403 Lit. Shabbat of the Beginning, named after the first words of the Torah portion, Genesis 1:1–6:8.

404 About the postal service after the *Grossaktion*, see the Introduction.

405 Uszer and his wife Balcia, assigned to a brushmakers workshop on Franciszkańska Street, survived the *Grossaktion*. The child was murdered.

406 (Hebrew/Yiddish) evening at the close of Shabbat, Saturday night.

407 Probably to avoid restrictions, letters were sent to a Polish prisoner at the same camp who then passed them to Szymon Josef Taube.

also write without bother. I will receive it in good order and in any case you have to send it from ^houtside the area.^{h408}

My dears, write me what you've gone through from *Tisha b'av* to *Yom Kippur*⁴⁰⁹ and what luck did you have that you are among the survivors? And where is Jakub Pinczewski,⁴¹⁰ W. D. Lewin,⁴¹¹ Moniek Masur and all [our] other good friends? In my next letter I will write more to you, now I don't have a head for writing since tomorrow Sunday I have to go to work. Sunday I work only until 2 [p.m.], today Shabbes we work only until 12 and the remaining days of the week we work from six-thirty in the morning until 5 in the evening. The work is sugar-sweet, sometimes lighter and sometimes heavier, one gets by.

Nothing more especially. I am, thank God, well, may I hear the same from you. I send regards and comfort, it is very hard for me to express words of comfort, when I don't know what is going on, write to me...

Also regards from all [our] friends, especially from M.L. Pinczewski, brothers Wierzbicki, Abram Rzeszewski Jr.,⁴¹² Ab. Opoczynski,⁴¹³ also sincere regards for Icchok Kryszek, Libcia Pinczewska, and all friends. Recently I wrote 3 letters to Warsaw. I to you, Uszer, II – [to] W. D. Lewin⁴¹⁴ [sic], III – [to] Libcia. I've received no answer to any of these letters.⁴¹⁵ Be sure to remember and write to me right away to this address: St. Pomykala, Lautawerk Süd, Camp 3, kr[ei]ls Calau, and I will receive the letter all right. Also write to me if you have had any contact with Kłodawa⁴¹⁶ during this time. I've already

408 I.e., outside the ghetto.

409 In 1942 the *Tisha B'Av* fell on 23 July, while *Yom Kippur* – on 21 September, that is from the beginning to the end of the *Grossaktion* of the Warsaw ghetto.

410 Jakub Pinczewski (1900–1944?) was a native of Kłodawa, worked as a merchant. During the war, he was in Kalisz and then in the Warsaw ghetto. See YVD, 826103.

411 I.e., Wolf Dawid Lewi.

412 Abraham (Abram) Rzeszewski (1902–1943?) was a native of Kłodawa, worked as a Hebrew teacher. During the war he was in the Lautawerk labour camp, where he probably perished. See YVD, 2023468.

413 Abraham (Abram) Opoczynski, related to Pinczewskis, was in a labour camp as well. He survived the war and moved to Israel.

414 It refers to Wolf Dawid Lewi.

415 Pinczewska and W.D. Lewi were probably among those deported to Treblinka in the summer of 1942.

416 See footnote 3.

written to Kł[odawa] several times, but without success. I send love and consolation.

Your Sz. J.

I repeat again, write answers directly about everything, for it can be in Yiddish and ^h[from] outside the area.^h Have a good week.

10 October [19]42, evening.

The letter that you write to me should be clear and precise and without any hinting, because it will not be censored, in addition I will still write a postcard from the camp this week. I send words of greeting and comfort to you again.

Your Szymon Josef

Special regards and words of comfort for Balcia. I very much ask Balcia to add as much as possible.

In one of the last letters, I enclosed 10 Rm. Have you received it?

ARG II 374 (Ring. II/273/1).

Description: (1) original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 8 September [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, 145×105 mm, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, ink, 1 sheet, 2 pages; (2) original, handwritten, 207×295 mm, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, ink, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

81

11 October 1942, Camp Lautawerk Süd (Lauta near Cottbus). Szymon Josef Taube, letter to his brother Uszer Taube.

Szymon Josef Taube
Lautawerk Süd

To Uszer Taube
Warsaw
Camp I, *st[ube]* 7
Franciszkańska Street 21 flat 109
Brushmakers' Shop

Lautawerk Süd, Sunday 11 October [19]42

Dear Brother and Sister-in-law. I received your postcard sent ^hfrom outside the ghetto^h yesterday. As I've already told you, I wept with joy when

I received it and wept with sorrow when I read it, especially because you no longer sent me a greeting from your dear child and also that we must comfort each other. That for me is enough and more than enough. I also must urgently ask you one thing, that you write me more often about everything that you didn't have the opportunity to write about in the course of events, that you didn't manage to write. This will be my comfort.

As you already know, Binem left his camp as sick several months ago and until today I have no news from him. Very possible that he's somewhere in a collective camp. While from the first group of sick people from our camp that went to Litzmannstadt⁴¹⁷ there came greetings from Rumkowski.⁴¹⁸ I've already written several times to Kołodziejski and Kantorski in Tönningen⁴¹⁹ and also to Waltersdorf,⁴²⁰ but I've received no answer.

This week I'll write again to M. Kantorski, perhaps this will do something. Nothing more especially. I am well, thank God, and am still working at the construction site. For how long the work will continue I don't know exactly. Probably I prefer this work because it's outdoors, though we work 12 hours a day and in the factory it's only 8 hours. And with food we get by. Write me back right away. How do you live and how does it look for you with eating breakfast, dinner, supper, and housing and in general?

Be comforted and regards from the depths of my heart. Also many regards from everyone from Kłodawa. Did Juel Ide⁴²¹ Herszkowicz remain in Warsaw? Please reply to me right away.

Your brother and brother-in-law. Do not forget me.

Sz. J.

ARG II 375 (Ring. II/167/3)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, ink, postmark 21 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 23 October [19]42, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

417 Here, a reference to the Łódź ghetto.

418 As of 5 January 1942, shortly before the first transports to Chełmno, the *Sicherheitsdienst* ordered *Postsperre* in the Łódź ghetto; however, postcards from labour camps were delivered to the addressees. From May 1943, it was not allowed to send even the so-called *Grusskarten-Drucksachen* (a few words about health). Sakowska, "Łączność pocztowa," p. 106.

419 German name for Kłodawa.

420 Now Nielesto (Lwówek County). There was a forced labour camp there.

421 Probably Juel Ide – from the names Joel and Jehuda.

31 May 1942, Września, Ohlendorf camp.⁴²² L. Sznurbach and W. Przedecki, letter to Sala Włocławska.

Duplicate of a letter from one of the men deported in April 1942 from Włocławek. The postcard is addressed to a friend of his wife.⁴²³

L. Sznurbach	To S. Włocławska
Września, Warthegau	Warsaw
Ohlendorf camp by the railway station	Świętojerska Street 43, flat 36
	c/o Mr Świder

It has been four weeks since my father-in-law and I had to part ways with our loved ones. My father and I are in a camp in Wrzesień 1) not knowing where my Ziunia, my sweet Leniusia, 2) and my family were sent. I cannot stop thinking about them and how they are doing. I have been building a railway. I am getting used to this work, but my *mugyn* 3) is not properly taken care of.

Dear Sala, do write [...] to me as soon as you get any news about our family. Write about [...] in Warsaw.

Kind regards to aunt. Go to grandma and tell her to try 4)

Kind regards. Unfortunately [not?] from the wives and children

[...] W. Przedecki 5)

31 May 1942

Explanations:

- 1) Probably a reference to Września in the Poznań region.
- 2) The sender's wife and daughter were deported at the same time in an unknown direction.

422 In Września, there was a camp at the railway station; the work was for DRB. The sub-contractor was the Ohlendorf company, which employed approximately 370 Jews and over 100 Poles. About a dozen Jewish prisoners were hanged, including two for an escape attempt on 1 June 1942. The camp was liquidated in late 1943. The Poles were released; see *Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939–1945. Informator encyklopedyczny*, ed. Czesław Pilichowski, Warszawa, 1979, entry 5525.

423 Copyist's title and explanations, with bold figures inserted in the text.

- 3) Stomach.
- 4) The rest is illegible.
- 5) The sender's father-in-law.

ARG I 1198 (Ring. I/592/16)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (FLIG*), renderings of a postmark 3

June [19]42 and a stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 5 June [19]42], ink, Polish, 138×203 mm, barely legible fragments, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

83

1 June 1942, Schwanningen (Swarzędz),⁴²⁴ labour camp. Fiszek Ajzenberg, letter to unknown addressee.

Copy of a postcard sent by a young resident of Łódź from a labour camp near Poznań.⁴²⁵

Ajzenberg Fiszek 668, room 87
Communal camp D.A.F. 24
Schwanningen
Kreis Posen

1 June [19]42

My dears!

I am in a labour camp close to Poznań. I must share with you the sad news that my father died on 19 April and uncle Izak Lejb with his whole family are away.⁴²⁶ I am healthy and ask you to do everything possible to send me

424 The *Gemeinschaftslager* DAF forced labour camp in Swarzędz was set up in the summer of 1942. It had 1,200 Jewish prisoners, who built the railway from Poznań to Kutno. The sub-contractor was the Schmitt u. Junk company. Some of the forced labourers were murdered on the spot. The camp was liquidated in August 1943; its prisoners were deported into the interior of the Reich.

425 Copyist's annotation in Yiddish.

426 Between January and 1 June 1942, approximately 61,000 Jews were deported from the Łódź ghetto to Chełmno.

a parcel of bread, jam and cigarettes, and nothing more. If you can't send me a parcel, please ask Pola, Heniek and our relatives to send it to me.

Dear Pola! I ask you not to delay with this matter and to send me a bread package as regularly as possible. Write me how are you doing. How is dear mother? I have received a letter and 25 marks from her. I am very touched that my old mother thinks of me and has done so much for me. I am very grateful to her. Dear sister, I am impatiently awaiting your reply. When I receive it, I will send you a letter in which I will tell you what we have been through. I greet you all very warmly. Be well,

Your brother Fizek

ARG I 1185 (Ring. I/592/12)

Description: duplicate (2 copies), handwritten (H*), pencil, German, Yiddish, 150×196 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages. Information noted by the copyist in German and Yiddish: stamp [of the camp censorship] "approved," postmark 3 June [19]42, stamp of the ghetto post office [of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw] 7 June [19]42.

84

16 June 1942, Mogilno (labour camp in the monastery).⁴²⁷ Jakub Topolski of Osięciny and Rafał Olewski, letter to Izaak Borenstein.

Mogilno, 16 June [19]42⁴²⁸

To Mr Izaak Borenstein!

It will certainly surprise you that I turn to you privately, but we cannot turn officially to any institution, and I know you as a community activist and also you, if you remember, also know me very well. I am Yankev Topolski from

427 The forced labour camp in Mogilno in a former Benedictine monastery operated at least from mid-1941 to 7 September 1943. It was subordinate to the county construction bureau (*Kreisbauamt*). The prisoners worked for the municipal services; they perished probably in Auschwitz. In May 1942 the *Judenrat* of Inowrocław sent a postcard to the chairman of the Council of Elders in the Łódź ghetto inquiring whether the Jews who had been deported from Piotrków Kujawski in an "unknown direction" could be found in that ghetto.

428 Date added in different handwriting.

Osięciny. It is already a year's time that we find ourselves in the camp in Mogilno, we are all together 33 Jews from Osięciny and Piotrków Kujawski. Until recently we haven't had to go for help to anyone, because our families were in place, but it's already been 8 weeks that we don't know what's become of them.⁴²⁹

We find ourselves in a very sad state; we don't receive any medications. Also the food is very meager, it can't be any more meager. It's unnecessary to set down the details. Therefore, I ask you please to help us out as much as possible with whatever you still can. I write in the name of all, hopefully you will take an interest in our dire situation. I thank you in advance.

With greetings and respect,

Yankev Topolski

Please respond. Do not write in Yiddish, but it can be in Polish.

This is my address: J. Topolski, Mogilno, Lager im Kloster⁴³⁰

The response should not be in the name of any institution, but from a private person.

I have read this letter.

And what Mr Topolski writes is correct.

And we ask in the name of all that attention be paid to this letter.

Elder of the Jews of the Camp⁴³¹ in Mogilno

Rafał Olewski⁴³²

ARG I 1152 (Ring. I/592/14)

Description: original, handwritten (two handwritings), ink, German, Yiddish, Polish, 145×208 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages.

429 Jews from Osięciny and Piotrków Kujawski (Ciechocinek County) were killed in Chełmno in April 1942.

430 The address is in Polish in Latin characters.

431 It can only be assumed that a *Judenrat* existed in this camp. Otherwise, such councils are only known from the network of Bełżec sub-camps, see Tadeusz Radzik, "Praca przymusowa ludności żydowskiej na przykładzie obozu pracy w Bełżcu w 1940 r." in *Żydzi i judaizm we współczesnych badaniach polskich*, ed. K. Pilarczyk, (Kraków 1997), pp. 307–319.

432 Note below the letter. Rafał (Rafael) Olewski (1914–1981) was a native of Osięciny. After a stay in Mogilno and other forced labour camps, he was sent to Auschwitz. He managed to survive a death march and was sent to Bergen-Belsen. Active in the DP community after the war, he left for Israel in 1949 with his wife and daughter. Author of memoirs.

[21] June [1942], Wilkowiecko near Opatów,⁴³³ labour camp. Mojsze (Mundek), letters (1) and (2) to his family.

Two postcards of 21 June from Wilkowiecko, Opatów County, Bautrupp[e] “Nord”⁴³⁴

(1)

Dear Sister and Brother-in-Law,

I'm writing you this postcard from the camp, you can write back to me here. We're [working] here, Father is working in Kamyk, at home it's very quiet, there are few people here, it's the eve of [resettlement]. Don't expect any card from home. I've provided for Mama and Temer not far from me, it's possible that later she will be able to go home. As soon as I know something I'll write to you. How are you, how does it look with a job? Father's work should save him from [resettlement]. For us here it's not bad, we receive food and work now [...].

May we be worthy to see each other soon, send my love to the child. I remain. [?] Shabbes I was in Krzepic[e].

Mojsze

(2)

Wilkowieck[o], 21 June

Dear Sister and Brother-in-Law,

Letting you know that here it's already after the expulsion. There's no news here but destruction and more despair. We are still here, Father works in Kamyk and the two of them⁴³⁵ [live] in midair. They were at [...] what to, do they need to leave. May we still have the fortune to see and rejoice with everyone. What's happening with you? You should write to us to the sender's

433 Wilkowiecko (Opatów County). The family of the sender lived in Krzepice and Kłobuck. The father and possibly also the brother worked in Kamyk. In September 1940 these localities, which during the occupation were incorporated into the Reich (Province Upper Silesia), had 970, 1,340 and 263 Jewish residents respectively.

434 Note of the copyist, partly in Yiddish.

435 Probably the father and brother of the sender.

address. We are entirely stripped, no bedding. I greet you with all my heart, I had a card from Father, I see them, but what of it. They need to leave and go somewhere. What do you hear about us? Please answer, special greetings to you

Mundek⁴³⁶

^yThe letter is written from a family that lived in Krzepice and Kłobuck. According to the letter, the expulsion occurred there. Even before the father was taken for labour. In Wilkowiecko and Kamyk there were camps for road work. The father is over 61 years old.^{y437}

ARG I 1196 (Ring. I/592/15)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (H* [?] two handwritings), Yiddish and Yiddish in Latin transliteration, pencil, ink, 148×193 mm, minor damage and losses of text, 1 sheet, 1 page.

436 Everything suggests that the sender of both letters was the same person. Mundek might be “polonised” Mojsze.

437 Note of the copyist [?], in Yiddish.

Part V

Letters from within
the Warsaw ghetto
at the time of its
destruction

29 July 1942, Warsaw ghetto. “*Khosed*” letter to Shmuel Winter.

Honored and praiseworthy activist,
Admirer of Yiddish literature,
Director Sh. Winter!

I have the honour of calling on you once again with my weighty request. From a previous letter which you received, it is already known to you exactly who I am, and what I’ve done until now for Yiddish literature, so I consider it unnecessary to repeat all this. I must only add that I am now seriously ill and require urgent material help. I turn to you [plainly], friend and admirer of the Yiddish printed word, you should with your good heart [...] [me help] coming in such a dangerous hour with a significant sum, so that I may [...] save myself from my illness.

I believe and am sure that you, who has already kept more than one Yiddish writer alive, will not let me perish!

With deep respect,

[...] (“*The Khosed*”)⁴³⁸

438 The name was not deciphered. “*Hasid*” (or “*Khosed*”) was a pen name of Peretz Opoczyński (1892–1943), however, the letter is in handwriting which differs from that of Opoczyński, see e.g., ARG II 499 (Ring. II/464).

29 July 1942

ARG II 28o (Ring. II/221)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 222×162 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

87

August 1942, Warsaw ghetto. Lonia [Wyszyńska], letters (1)–(4) to her husband Icek (Wicek, Yitzchok) Wyszyński.⁴³⁹

(1)

I. Wyszyński
Gęsia Street 35a, flat 67
or Zamenhofa Street 11

22 August 1942⁴⁴⁰

Dear Wicek,

The man who has handed you this letter is my colleague. If you can and if you have something for us, you can send it through him. But you have to pay him. I have just left work. I have picked up Abuś from the playground. He is sitting and eating the soup I brought. He finds it very tasty. We feel fine most of the time, I am just worried about you and Rozunia. Have you had any news? Write how you are doing. Be well and stay optimistic.

Yours,

Abuś and Lonia.

Write what is new with Mrs Cygielman. Give me her private address because her sister is mad with worry because she has not heard from her.

Lots of kisses,

Wife and son

Yours Wicek, 22 August 1942

439 Yitzchok Wyszyński, manual labourer for the ŻKOM. See *Jewish Social Self-Help* (forthcoming).

440 Date moved from the end of the letter.

Mrs Cygielman works at Leszno Street 58^y
Emergency service⁴⁴¹

(2)

Dear Wicek,

Miss Hechtszajn must have delivered my letter to you. I have received the parcel and 50 zlotys you sent through her. Today I received the letter and bread. This young woman is my flatmate. You can fully trust her. Wicek, I have only the June coupons. You must have the July ones. Wicek, listen, she, that is the young woman, will leave you her coupons too and you will buy bread for her too. She goes to the large ghetto⁴⁴² almost daily and you will [...]

^yThe letter was not finished due to the blockade of the Többens' [workshop] on 24 August 1942.^y

(3)

25 August 1942

Dear Wicek,

We are safe and sound. We only miss you and Rozunia. I think you can imagine how worried I was when I could not find out whether you were alive and where you were. Thank God, but what now? How can I contact you? Miss Hechtszajn wondered why I did not take the risk and go to you, but would that have been the right thing to do? I would have had to leave the kid.

441 Reply on the back of the letter. Medical Emergency Service was an ambulance station established in late 1941 by the ŻSS on the initiative of *Judenrat* member Bernard Zundelewicz. It employed several doctors, ran an outpatient clinic at Leszno Street 58, had one ambulance, and a rickshaw adapted for transporting patients. Its activities ended with the liquidation of Toebbens' workshop during the ghetto uprising.

442 In December 1941, an area west of Żelazna Street was excluded from the ghetto; as a result, it was divided in two separate parts; the northern one was popularly called big ghetto and the southern – small ghetto. They were connected by a wooden bridge in February 1942.

What has Rozunia told you? Does she not go hungry there? Abuś misses his daddy a lot. He spends his whole day in the playground. When we meet I will tell you what I went through. Do you see Abram? How is Masza?

Lots of kisses,

Abuś and Lonia

And what now? I ran out of bread yesterday, and I am low on cash too. But I do trade sweets and make a few zlotys. With that money I sometimes buy Abuś a cucumber or carrot, but I cannot buy extra bread. Wicek, what do you think, should I take the risk and come to you? Write how you are doing, where you live and with whom.

Hope for the best and try to send me something if you can.

Wicuś! I have received everything you have sent through Miss Hechtszajn. We are very grateful for everything.

I cooked the cream of wheat for Abuś. He liked it a lot. If you can, send us some bread. Where do you eat and what? Hope for the best and take care of your health. Kind regards to everybody.

Yours forever,

Lonia and Abuś

Find Mrs Cygielman and hand her her sister's letter.

She is in despair on account of not hearing from her sister.

Have you heard anything about our Rozunia?

Wyszyński, Zamenhofa Street 19⁴⁴³

(4)

26 August 1942

Dearest Wicek!

I have received the letter, bread, crystal,⁴⁴⁴ carrot, and kohlrabi. The parcel and money sent [with] Miss Hechtszajn have reached me too. Thank you for all that. Wicek, have you not been stinting on food too much to send us

443 The address is overwritten with the letter's text.

444 Sugar or salt.

some? Your today's letter has thrown me off balance. I am very worried by your frame of mind. My darling, you urge me to "*zay geshtarkt*"⁴⁴⁵ but you are down in the dumps yourself. So now it is my turn to urge you, Wicek, to not lose hope, perhaps... Have you heard anything about Rozunia? Abuś looks well. He spends his whole day on the playground. He even got some suntan. I am doing my best to give him some extra food, because at the playground he is fed soup and 50 grams of bread with jam. Today at teatime he ate cream of wheat with butter. How much does butter and pork fat cost there? Here it is 2.8 zlotys for 10 grams. If you can, do send me that flour and just about anything else you can, but do try to eat so that you do not grow weak. This week I am working the night shift and I have a problem with Abuś because all of us women go to work at night. Once I took him with. He spent the last two nights with one of my female colleagues.

I would really, really like to see you again but how could we do that? Wicek, I urge you to find out what Mr Sztolcman's⁴⁴⁶ telephone number is, he works in the *gmina*. Write it for me.

Warm regards. Hugs and kisses.

Yours, Abuś and Lonia

Regards to Mr and Mrs Goldin and everybody.

ARG II 290 (Ring. II/224)

Description: original, handwritten, pencil, Polish, Yiddish, 95×154, 147×215 mm,
8 sheets, 11 pages.

445 (Yiddish) be strong.

446 Abram (Adolf) Sztolcman.

August 1942⁴⁴⁸

Mr Landau
 Gęsia Street 30
 Ostdeutsche⁴⁴⁹

Mr Landau,

Rabbi Blumenfeld⁴⁵⁰ is with his family on Stawki Street.⁴⁵¹ They are your employees. Do save them while there is still time!

ARG II 291 (Ring. II/219/2)

Description: original, handwritten, pencil, Polish, 290×139 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

⁴⁴⁷ Alexander (Leyb) Landau (?–1944), engineer, owner of a large carpentry workshop in Warsaw. During the war the establishment was confiscated by Germans but he retained the position of director. For considerable time a large group of people, including social activists associated with Oyneg Shabes and the ŻSS, found protection there from deportation to Treblinka. He provided financial and organisational help to the Archive. He escaped from the ghetto, but was eventually arrested, sent to Auschwitz and murdered there.

⁴⁴⁸ Handwritten in ink.

⁴⁴⁹ The abbreviated form of Ostdeutsche Bautischlerei Werkstätte (OBW). It used to be a factory of brothers Aleksander and Józef Landau. During the *Grossaktion* many Oyneg Shabes collaborators found employment there. See Engelking, Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto. A Guide to the Perished City*, p. 521; Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?*, p. 154.

⁴⁵⁰ Yehiel Meir Blumenfeld (?–1942), rabbi in Warsaw, teacher at Tachkemoni yeshiva. He was shot on September 16, 1942 at the OBW workshop. Ringelblum accused him of collaborating with the infamous “Thirteen,” see ARG I 446/15 (Ring. I/504).

⁴⁵¹ That is, at the *Umschlagplatz*.

[August or September] 1942, Warsaw ghetto. [Eliyahu Gutkowski],⁴⁵² letter to Mr Mall [?].

[from *Umschlagplatz*]⁴⁵³

Mr Mall, I urge you

E. Gu[tkowski?]

from Ostdeutsche⁴⁵⁴

Blima Waser [floor?] IV r[oom?] 11

Blima Luftig from Ursus⁴⁵⁵

Bluma Luftig⁴⁵⁶

Mundle Szyfryn

Larome [?] Rycenberg

Izrael Rycenberg

Eugenia Finkelkraut

Kajla Fryndman

[from] Ursus

ARG II 292 (Ring. II/219/3)

Description: original, handwritten (three handwritings), pencil, red and purple crayon, Polish, 74×113 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

452 Eliyahu Gutkowski (1900–1943), teacher, graduated in 1938 from the Polish Free University (Wolna Wszechnica Polska) in Warsaw; politically associated with Right Poalei Tsiyon. In autumn 1939 he fled from Łódź with his wife Luba and 3-year-old son Gabriel to Warsaw. He became one of the key members of Oyneg Shabes, did cataloguing work, edited bulletins, prepared outlines of documentation works, recorded testimonies, and copied documents. He also wrote his own texts on the economic life of the ghetto.

453 Added in LEG* handwriting.

454 See footnote 449.

455 Ursus Industrial Works. Ursus at 2/29 Skierniewicka Street employed Jewish workers during the war.

456 Repeated in the original.

[August 1942], Warsaw ghetto. Cesia⁴⁵⁷ (surname unknown), letters (1) and (2) to unknown addressee.

(1)

Dear friend!

I received your letter. You wonder why I don't write an answer. Believe me, with such experiences you forget about everything. You should know what we experienced. Saturday, 1 August, at exactly 6 o'clock in the evening, I noticed through the window that something was happening on the street. I did not know exactly what. A few minutes later Ukrainians come into the courtyard and scream to come down. I decided with my dear wife and children that we won't go down until they come to my door. And that's what happened. A few minutes later there's knocking on the door. I ask who's there. They answer me, "*Otwori*."⁴⁵⁸ I open the door and two Ukrainians come in with their rifles and ask me if I have a watch. I take out my Cyma⁴⁵⁹ [...] and show him, and he takes it right away and tells me that he won't shoot, but he orders me to take food and go down. Of course I, with my dear wife and children, went down to the street. We go out. On the street stand thousands of people. I had no idea what was happening. I stationed myself and my dear wife and children right beside the house where I lived, where a small group of people stood. Standing a few minutes, I noticed that more people were coming. Where from! I ask the control [officer] what will happen to us. He tells me they are going to the *Umschlag*. It won't be good for me there. I look at my dear wife and my children. I notice that there are tears in their eyes. This means I made a mistake. I should have stood by the control, and I stationed myself with those already controlled and must go to the *Umschlag*. I tell the Ukrainian who watched us that we did not yet go through control, we only just came out of the house, and poorly stationed ourselves. He screams at me and wants to hit me. I stay standing in the same place. I feel faint, I don't have any candy on me. The heat is tremendous. I look at my dear wife and children and I think

457 Despite a female nickname, the sender is male: he writes about his wife and children.

458 (Ukrainian) open!

459 Swiss-made wrist or pocket watch, manufactured from 1862.

to myself that I should go away with my dear wife and children. I can't forgive myself that. I have a good certificate from M[enakhem Mendel] Kohn. A very good certificate that has been honoured to this day. It occurred to me that I will send for Kohn and I take a police officer, send him to Kohn that he should come down straight away.

Dear friend, since it is now late at night I am very tired I will write the end in the second letter. Be healthy for me and may God give better times.

Respectfully, "Cesia"

(2)

Dear friend,

At this moment I take a second police officer and send him to the officers who controlled for him to explain to them what happened to me. He comes back immediately and orders us to come, take your family and go to the control. The certificate was for me, my dear wife, daughter, and son. But my brother's daughter was also with me [...] was with us. A 14-year-old missy. We go to the control [officer], he takes the certificate and says that we are free, and asks how many we are. My dear wife says 4 people and he counts 5.

He screams to go back and we went back. Now I think I've already lost everything. I look at my dear wife and children and feel sorry for them. I think maybe something can be done on the *Umschlag*. A second opportunity will come, so I comforted my dear wife and children. At this moment a car drives up and stops next to me and an officer gets out. I tell my daughter, go to him and show him the certificate and tell him that we incorrectly placed ourselves. And she goes and he orders us to come along and brings us to the control, the same officer and shows him the certificate and tells him that we must be freed. He answers him that my wife [fooled him]. This was certainly an hour later and he remembered and orders us to go back. I start pleading. He screams at me as the Ukrainians beat me and my dear wife with rifles and we go back. Unfortunately it starts getting dark. I did not bring any food or candy with me. I don't see Kohn with us and I wait. I resigned myself to everything. I look around me to see with whom I will be going away to the *Umschlag*. There were definitely six thousand [people] standing there. [Beside me, I] saw no more than my dear wife and children. Unfortunately, I must tell the truth. I was so egoistic. I was not concerned about anybody.

And as we are standing another car comes and the commissioner of the ghetto Auserwald gets out. So I send my daughter once again with Kohn's certificate and she tells him everything. He orders to call us and we go. He asks me how many we are. I say 4 people and he orders all of us to come and counts us over and it's all right, and he sends us straight to the freed people, my dear wife starts to cry and to spasm. I barely calmed her. And she asks me what will happen to my brother's daughter who was left there. I tell her it's possible Kohn will come and moreover I took a police officer right away and promised to [pay] him well if he would [...] her. And he promised me that everything [will be] set. At that moment Kohn came and found me and was very pleased with me. Then he went to the officers and spoke with them in a very friendly manner. Somewhat later wagons and trams came and started taking away the people on the *Umschlag*. 1,000 people remained. They brought them to Pawiak [prison] for the night. After that they freed us all and my brother's daughter was brought to me. In the second letter I will write more interesting things.

Greetings to you,

Your friend, Cesia.

ARG II 279 (Ring. II/222)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Yiddish, 225×245 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

91

[August or September] 1942, Warsaw ghetto, *Umschlagplatz*. Josef Kirman,⁴⁶⁰ letter to [Yitzkhak] Giterman.

I. Giterman

Lubeckiego Street 6 flat 15

Beloved beloved Giterman,

I beg of you, save me. It is still possible. I've been taken from the street and sent to the *Umschlagplatz*.

460 Josef Kirman (1896–1943), poet, in the ghetto collaborator of the underground press, rescued from deportation in the summer of 1942, deported to the Poniatowa labour camp after the ghetto uprising and perished there.

I still want to see my wife and my two small children, whom I've left [behind] in a province. Save me as soon as possible.

Yours, J. Kirman

ARG II 212 (Ring. II/219/1)

Description: original, handwritten, pencil, Yiddish, 125×88 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

92

6 October [?] [1942], Warsaw ghetto. Workers of unknown workshop, letter to Hersh Wasser.

Dear Heniek,

Take into account that we are not fully set. This tailors' workshop fell apart. Have mercy and find something for us.

/-/ [signature illegible]

ARG II 529d (Ring. II/393)

Description: original, handwritten, pencil, Polish, 105×65 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

93

23 January 1943, Warsaw ghetto. Marysia Gilde, letter to Róża Zylbermanowa⁴⁶¹ or Saba Faktorowa.

Mrs Róża Zylbermanowa
or Saba Faktorowa

23 January 1943

My dears,

We have miraculously survived. There is almost no chance of **our** having a future because our workshop will most probably cease to exist. Do write

⁴⁶¹ Perhaps a resident of the house at Nalewki Street 23, see ARG I 656 (Ring. I/67).

whether it is possible to come to you. If need be, meaning that if we have to move tomorrow, we would like to stay for a few days at your place if it is possible. Do write whether this is possible.

Kind regards,

Marysia Gilde

ARG II 285 (Ring. II/277)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Polish, 156×199 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

Part VI

Inquiries about
relatives in the Warsaw
ghetto prior,
during and after
the *Grossaktion*

94

4 April 1942, Bruxelles (Brussels). Bernard (surname unknown), letter to I. Fiszbin.

Mr I. Fiszbin
Lubieckiego [sic] Street 17, flat 39
Warsaw, General Government

Brussels, 4 April 1942

Dear sister, brother-in-law, and the entire family,

I can let you know that, thank God, all of us are healthy and we all wish you the same. Dear sister, I have sent you a few parcels but have received no reply. I beg of you, write back so that I can send you more parcels. These parcels are from France. We send you warm kisses.

Your loving Bernard

ARG II 335 (Ring. II/167/1)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, ink, postmark illegible, stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, stamp of the German censorship, French, Polish, 138×189 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. It had a postcard attached for the reply, which was written but not sent:

94A

24 April 1942, Warsaw ghetto. I. Fiszbín, letter to J. Liberman in Brussels.

I. Fiszbín
 Lubeckiego Street 17, flat 39
 Warsaw
 General Government

J. Liberman
 13 Ch. de Waterloo
 Brussels
 Belgium

24 April 1942

Dear children, I have received your letter, for which I am grateful. And the parcels. Now I can let you know that our situation has not changed. Fela has been unwell, and so has Father. Dear children, I can tell you that Mendel's entire family is dead and Josek, who stayed with me for a few days, died here. Dear children, if you have some old clothes or footwear, do send us some, but make sure that the parcels are not big so that we can get them sooner. This is all for now. Be well. Kisses from afar. Thank Bernard for the parcel. Reply instantly.

ARG II 283 (Ring. II/167/2)

Description: original, handwritten on a Belgian postcard, ink, Polish,
 138×189 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

95

11 August 1942, Stanisławów. Julius Gerner, letter to Izidor Gerner.

Julius Gerner
 Stanislau
 Bundgasse⁴⁶² 26

Mr Izidor Gerner
 Warsaw
 Elektoralna Street 30

Stanislau, 11 August 1942

Dear Izidor!

I am writing to you for the third time and unfortunately I have not received any answer from you yet, which makes me very surprised and worried.

462 German name for Związkowa Street.

I explain to you that I am not asking you for help, but only for information about your condition.

Do you already receive more frequent news from your dear children?
Otherwise nothing important, I send you warm greetings and kisses
Your loving uncle

Julius

ARG II 366 (Ring. II/270/2)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 14 August [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 18 August [19]42, ink, German, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

96

[11 August 1942], *Ostrowiec Kielecki*.⁴⁶³ *Pela Okonowska, letter to Mrs Grabska.*

P. Okonowska
Ostrowiec Kiel[eck]
Szeroka Street 8

Mr S.R. Grabski
Warsaw
Pawia Street 1

^hWith God's help^{h464}

Dear Mrs Grabska,

Please do write how Blimcia is doing. I have written and telephoned a hundred times but she has disappeared without a trace. Do you by any chance know how our Fiszal and Benjamin are doing? Take pity on us and write us back because we are at the end of our rope with worry. Please, do not hide anything from us and write us the whole truth.

Yours sincerely,

Pela

463 Now Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski.

464 In the original, abbreviation in Hebrew characters.

ARG II 354 (Ring. II/223/2)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 11 August [1942] and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, ink, Polish, 148×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

97

[12 August 1942], *Starachowice*. *Pela* (surname unknown), letter to her uncle J.J. Głowiński.

Mr J.J. Głowiński,
Warsaw
Nowolipki Street 16, flat 19

Dear uncle,

You have not written to us for so long. I beg you on my own and Motek's behalf to give us a sign of life. Any news about the rest of the family? Are all of the children still with you? We beg of you to write a few words.

Yours truly,

Pela

ARG II 368 (Ring. II/223/3)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 12 August [1942] and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, ink, Polish, 148×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

26 July and 21 August 1942, Częstochowa. Rafał Zajdman, letters (1) and (2) to A. Sandacz.

(1)

Rafał Zajdman
Częstochowa
Warszawska Street 20
Flat locked⁴⁶⁵

Mr A. Sandacz
Warsaw
Krochmalna Street 25, flat 29

Częstochowa, 26 July, Sunday

Dears!

What is new with you? Why have you stopped writing to us? Please, do write at once because we are very worried. Are you at home? Or are you to 'move'?⁴⁶⁶ Everybody or just some of you?

Write at once!

May God be with you.

The Zajdmans

(2)

R. Zajdman
Częstochowa
Warszawska Street 20

Mr and Mrs A. Sandacz
Warsaw
Krochmalna Street 25, flat 29

Częstochowa, 21 August

This is the umpteenth time we write to you, but we have not heard back from you. We tried several times to call you, but the telephone connection failed. There is just one thing we ask of you: reply at once.

Even if it is just two words.

⁴⁶⁵ Postman's annotation.

⁴⁶⁶ The sender must have heard about the deportation of the Jews from Warsaw, which started on 22 July 1942.

God bless you,

The Zajdmans

Description:

ARG II 337 (Ring. II/223/1) and ARG II 338 (Ring. II/269) (1) original, handwritten on a postcard, ink, postmark 28 July [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 31 July [19]42, Polish, 148×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages; (2) original, handwritten on a postcard, ink, postmark 21 August [1942] and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 25 August [19]42, Polish, 148×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

99

[27 August 1942], Łódź ghetto. Chaim Rumkowski, letters (1) and (2) to Hersh Wasser and Bluma Kirszenfeld.

(1)

The Chairman of the
Jewish Council of Elders
Litzmannstadt

To Hersh Wasser
Warsaw
Muranowska Street 6, flat 15⁴⁶⁷

Name Estera, Lejb Wasser⁴⁶⁸ domiciled here,
Street Hohensteinerstrasse⁴⁶⁹ 43–45, flat 10 is well.

(-) Ch. Rumkowski
Chairman of the Jewish Council
of Elders in Litzmannstadt [Ghetto]

467 The same information on the reverse.

468 Hersh's parents, Estera and Leyb Wasser, and Bluma's sister Dora Elbirt and her daughter Sulamit[a] died in the Łódź ghetto, probably in September 1942. In January 1942, after the *Postsperre*, their letters ceased; in March and August that year the Wassers received pre-printed postcards stating that their relatives in Łódź were fine.

469 German name for Zgierska Street.

(2)

The Chairman of the
Jewish Council of Elders
Litzmannstadt

To Bluma Kirszenfeld
Warsaw
Muranowska Street 6, flat 15⁴⁷⁰

Name Dora, Sulamita Elbirt domiciled here,
Street Hohensteinerstrasse 43, flat 101 is well.

(-) Ch. Rumkowski
Chairman of the Jewish Council
of Elders in Litzmannstadt [Ghetto]

ARG II 529a,b (Ring. II/393)

Description: original, printed with handwritten inserts, German, 146×104 mm,
2 sheets, 4 pages; (1) postmark illegible, stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 28 August
[19]42; (2) postmark illegible, stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 28 August [19]42.

100 [4 September 1942], *Stoczek Węgrowski*.⁴⁷¹ Fela [Manyszewicz?], letter to her
brother Jankiel Goltsztejn⁴⁷²

Hersz Manyszewicz
Stoczek Węgrowski

Mr Jankiel Goltsztejn
Warsaw
Gęsia Street 30, flat 40⁴⁷³

My dearest,

I have not heard from you for so many weeks. I beg of you to write back
and tell me how you are doing as soon as you get this postcard.

470 The same information on the reverse.

471 Stoczek (Węgrów County).

472 The sketch was probably drawn by Abram Krzepicki, one of the few escapees from Treblinka. He was taken there on 25 August and succeeded in escaping on 13 September 1942. Before coming back to the Warsaw ghetto, he stayed for a month in Stoczek. See *The Last Stage of Resettlement is Death*, Docs. 22 and 23; Kassow, *Who Will Write Our History?*, pp. 309–310.

473 Gęsia Street 30 was the address of the OBW workshops.

Do not try to hide anything from me. Do write everything. Is Herszek well? Is Gina with you?

Your sister, who wishes to see you again at least once more,
Fela.

ARG II 369 (Ring. II/275/1)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 4 September [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 11 November [sic] [19]42), ink, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

101 [5 September 1942], Kałuszyn.⁴⁷⁴ Chuma (surname unknown), letter to her brother Jankiel Goldsztejn.

Srul Drylich
Kałuszyn
Zielona Street

Mr J. Goldsztejn
Warsaw
Gęsia Street 30, flat 40

My dears,

At present⁴⁷⁵ I am in Kałuszyn with my child. I know nothing about my husband or sister. What is new with you? I will write a letter to you when I get your reply,

Your sister Chuma

ARG II 346 (Ring. II/275/2)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 5 September [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 11 November [sic] [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. A note in pencil below the sender's address: "to buy jam perhaps."

474 Kałuszyn (Mińsk Mazowiecki County). On 25 September 1942 most of the town's Jews were deported to Treblinka.

475 The sender probably arrived from Mińsk Mazowiecki, where the *Aktion* took place on 21 August 1942. Some of the Jews fled from Mińsk to Kałuszyn and other localities.

Ostdeutsche Bautischlerei Werkstatt[te]
For Rand
Warsaw
Gęsia Street 30

Berlin 7 September [1942]

My dear,

I have received your letter of 1 September, I am assuming that you have also received my mail in the meantime. I wrote to Heini last week that he should get in touch with Landau Zurich. I have also sent him your picture, but only one. If I receive more from you, I will send it to him, he also wants me to send mine this week. May God make something happen, [but] it all goes so slowly. If Schloyme wanted, he could certainly do something, [but] he relies on miracles. He wrote to me last year that he will soon come to Lertscha. I have sent two notebooks to Modrow, but I don't know where to send the other two, since you asked about Będzin. I can't do anything for Henryk myself, maybe the only thing is that he comes to Lertsche, but that's no use to him, because the air there is not good for him.⁴⁷⁶

I have nothing special to write about, only that dear God should send us a *Jeszuje*⁴⁷⁷ soon. I wish you all the best for the New Year⁴⁷⁸ and that we will soon be together with the children. I will stay at home for the holidays, as there is no *minyán*.⁴⁷⁹

Greetings, kisses

Lea

ARG II 330 (Ring. II/225)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, German, 140×168 mm, 2 sheets, 3 pages.

476 The sender probably had heard about the 18 June 1942 *Aktion* in Będzin. Thousands of the Jewish inhabitants of the city were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

477 (Hebrew/Yiddish) salvation.

478 See footnote 402.

479 (Hebrew, lit. number), quorum; prayer group of at least ten adult men (over 13), required for public prayers, such as for reciting *kaddish* or reading the Torah. In the case of Lea,

103

19 September 1942, Buczacz.⁴⁸⁰ Jizia (Giza Eisenbach),⁴⁸¹ telegram to Judyta Ringelblum.⁴⁸²

Deutsche Post Osten

N 033 Telegram

+ + 633 Buczacz 363 11 19/9 1150

via Lvov

= RP 3[3] zlotys = Judyta Ringelblum

Warsaw Office

Leszno Street 18, flat 31⁴⁸³

‘ Warsaw

No [?] 78/7

Reply by telegram is family healthy Jizia

ARG II 522h (Ring. II/388)

Description: original, printed form, German, Polish, 208×148 mm,

1 sheet, 1 page. At top notations (pencil): “Halman N-lipki” and

“Heeresunterkunftsverwaltung.”⁴⁸⁴

who, as a woman, was not included in the minyan, it was coded reference to the fact that there were few Jews left in Berlin.

480 Buczacz (Czortków County).

481 Jizia or Giza Eisenbach, née Ringelblum, Emanuel’s younger sister, first wife of the historian Artur (Aron) Eisenbach, whom she married in 1931; their daughter was born in 1938. She perished together with the child in the ghetto in Buczacz in the late 1942 or early 1943. Her husband survived in the Soviet Union.

482 Judyta Ringelblum (c. 1904–1944), née Herman, wife of Emanuel, Polish language teacher, CENTOS activist and organiser of childcare in the Warsaw ghetto. She was killed with her husband and 14-year-old son Uriel at the Pawiak prison in early March 1944, after being denounced and discovered along with a group of 34 Jews who were being sheltered by Mieczysław Wolski and his family at Grójecka Street 81.

483 Until the *Grossaktion* the Ringelblums had lived in their pre-war flat at Leszno Street 18.

484 Reference (annotated at a ghetto post office) to the Management of the Army Quarters, employer of the brushmakers’ workshop at Świętojerska Street 34, and to the Bernhard Hallmann’s workshop at Nowolipki 59 where Ringelblum was employed, and where the telegram was redirected to.

104

[Before 23 September 1942], Firlej.⁴⁸⁵ Symcha Guterman, letter to his sister Frania.

Symcha Guterman
Firlej by Lublin

To Maria Ostrołek
Warsaw
Gęsia Street 30,⁴⁸⁶ flat 28

My dear sister Frania,

We cannot understand why you are not writing to us. I do not know how to explain this. Mum is very worried. So write what is new with you. There is nothing new with us.

Kind regards,

Guterman Symcha

ARG II 342 (Ring. II/223/4)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 23 September [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 26 October [19]42, ink, Polish, 148×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

485 Firlej (Lublin County). In October 1942, the Jews of Firlej and those resettled there from Slovakia in April and May of that year were resettled to Lubartów and from there deported to Bełżec.

486 The addressee had been assigned to the OBW workshop.

105

24 September 1942, Genf (Geneva). Komitee zur Hilfeleistung für die kriegs-
betroffene jüdische Bevölkerung, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

Committee for the Relief of
the Jewish population affected by the war
62, rue des Paquis (nr 247)
Geneva

Registration Office⁴⁸⁷
of the *Judenrat*
Gerichtstrasse 15
Warsaw
(General Government)
Majzelsa 9 B⁴⁸⁸

Ref. 7064/6.

Geneva, 24 September 1942.

Dear Sirs,

We would be most grateful if you could locate the present address of Mrs Hanna Altmann, Śliska Street 31 flat 24, Warsaw, and possibly send us some information about the condition of the above-mentioned person. We would also like to know whether Mrs Altmann has received any food parcels from Mr Arnold A. Cohn, Copenhagen.

With our best thanks in advance for your efforts, faithfully yours,

Committee for the Relief of the
Jewish population affected by the war
62, rue des Paquis (nr 247) Geneva

P.S. We would also like to ask you for news about the condition of Mrs Laja Kac, Pawia Street 41 flat 26.

ARG II 95 (Ring. II/271/1)

Description: original, typewritten on a postcard, postmark damaged, stamps of the Committee in Geneva and of German military censorship, German, 149×104 mm, sheets 1 sheet, 2 pages.

487 Department of Registration of the Jewish Population at the *Judenrat*, headed by Paweł (Pinchas) Wasserman.

488 The correct address annotated in pencil at a ghetto post office.

106 30 September 1942, Lvov. Mania Goldberg,⁴⁸⁹ letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

Mania Goldberg
Lvov
Wybranowskiego Street 11, flat 3

Judenrat
Warsaw
Registration Office

Lvov, 30 September 1942.

Dear Mr Secretary,

I kindly ask you to provide me with information about the following individuals: Benjamin Grines, Sara Grines, and Lunio Grines. They lived at Leszno Street 65, flat 11. I have not heard from them for a long time, and therefore I have taken the liberty of turning to you in this regard.

Thank you in advance. Yours faithfully,

Mania Goldberg

ARG II 89 (Ring. II/272/1)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 30 September [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 6 October [19]42, ink, Polish, 148×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

489 Mania Goldberg worked in the Jewish hospital in Lvov; see YVD, 9433445.

107 30 September 1942, Bodzentyn.⁴⁹⁰ Rózia (surname unknown), letter to J[ózef] Frydman.

Mr J. Frydman
Warsaw
Dzielna Street 31, flat 45

Bodzentyn, 30 September 1942

Dear Józef,

Why have I not heard from you for as many as 4 weeks? I do not know what to think. For the time being I am in Bodzentyn, I arrived in Bodzentyn today, I do not know how long I will stay here, I will write to you again.

Be well, so far we have been well. Kind regards to you. Kind regards from the kids and aunt Rachela, and from me,

Rózia⁴⁹¹ [and] children

ARG II 333 (Ring. II/275/3)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 2 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, pencil, Polish, 147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

490 Bodzentyn (Kielce County).

491 The sender did not write her address because she was probably hiding in Bodzentyn. After the *Aktion* there were no Jews there, as can be inferred from a post office clerk's 30 September 1942 annotation on a letter addressed to the local branch of the ŻSS, see AŻIH, ŻSS 211/17.

108

3 October 1942, Warsaw-Bielany. Berek Engel, letter to Hela and [Mietek] Engel.

Bielany
Kamedułów Street 71⁴⁹²
B. Engel

Warsaw
[x]⁴⁹³
M. Engel
Dzielna Street 31, flat 14⁴⁹⁴

Bielany, 3 October 1942

Dear Hela,

I am quartered in Bielany, I am doing pretty well. Write to me how you, Henia, and Zalme are doing, are they [alive?], how is Mietek doing at his *placówka*? All I need here is money, since I have very little, perhaps you can sell something and send me a few zlotys with somebody, nothing new so far. Regards to everybody,

Berek

Write whether I can come over. Do I have anybody to come over to?

ARG II 371 (Ring. II/273/3)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, two postmarks: 3 October [19]42, the second illegible, and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, illegible, pencil, Polish, 148×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

492 Located at Kamedułów Street 71 in Warsaw, the Bielany Joint-Stock Company plant manufactured city buses during 1936–1939 and trailers for the Wehrmacht during the occupation. This plant was one of the work details that employed Jewish forced labourers from the ghetto. During the *Grossaktion* they were quartered in a hall in Łomianki (some with their families). According to D. Fogelman, a former Bielany labourer, that work detail was regarded as one of the best, as the Jews were treated on a par with the other workers. After the outbreak of the uprising in the ghetto, the Jews from the plant were deported to Majdanek.

493 [x] Nowolipki Street 36 flat 24.

494 The current address annotated by a ghetto post office.

109 3 October 1942, Kraków. The Ginzigs (family), letter [to the Judenrat in Warsaw].

Kraków, 3 October 1942

I hereby kindly request further information about Mrs Balbina Cajtag, a teacher permanently domiciled and working in Warsaw.

Mrs Cajtag and her son Janek used to live in the house at Szpitalna Street 33 and during the last several months she lived at Solna Street 17, flat 25 as Mr and Mrs Duński's subtenant.

Please be so kind as to send your reply to the following address: E. Ginzig, the Heitler cardboard factory, Kraków, Długosza Street 8.

Yours faithfully,

The Ginzigs

ARG II 88 (Ring. II/275/4)

Description: original, typewritten, Polish, 208×135 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

110 5 October 1942, Treblinka.⁴⁹⁵ Hersch Lepak, letter to his wife (name unknown).

Treblinka, 5 October [19]42

Dear wife!

I have been in Treblinka since 31 August [19]42 and I am healthy. I am employed as a carpenter in the camp workshop. How are you, how is your health? Write me if the parents are healthy.

495 It is possible that the letter was sent from the Treblinka I labour camp, but it also cannot be ruled out that this is the only surviving example of a 'false' letter from deportees from the Warsaw ghetto. During the *Grossaktion*, the Germans fabricated fake letters from the displaced, or spread rumors about them. Some of them were false, but some were indeed

Greetings and kisses from me to all of you.

Your Hersch Lepak

ARG II 383 (Ring. II/273/2)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, German, 148×210 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page.

111

10 October 1942, *Piotrków Trybunalski*.⁴⁹⁶ Szlomo Kac, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

N. Miedziński
Piotrków (Radom District)
Litewska Street 6

To the Department of Registration
of the Jewish Population
by the Judenrat
in Warsaw (Jewish district)

written by the deportees from Warsaw – before they were sent to the gas chambers of Treblinka. The rumors about the letters were intended to confirm the message of the official announcements about the deportations from Warsaw and to reassure Warsaw Jews that nothing dangerous was happening. As Havi Dreifuss notes, the dating of Lepak's letter is questionable: Lepak writes that he has been in Treblinka since 31 August 1942, and it is known that deportations from Warsaw were suspended between 28 August and 3 September. It is possible, however, that Lepak was deported on 28 August and did not find himself in the camp until later, if the train stood for a long time on a siding near the camp, which was the norm during this period due to the huge numbers of people being brought to Treblinka from all over the GG. See Ferenc, "*Każdy pyta co z nami będzie.*", pp. 421–423; Havi Dreifuss, *Geto varsha. Hasof* (Jerusalem 2018), p. 199; Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, The Operation Reinhard Death Camps* (Bloomington, IN, 1987), p. 66; Maria Ferenc Piotrowska, "'All Those Rumors Occupy People's Thoughts...' On the Relationship between Rumors and Knowledge about the Holocaust in the Warsaw Ghetto", *Rocznik Antropologii Historii* no. 11 (2018), pp. 139–158.

496 The ghetto in Piotrków was established in October 1939. Between 15 and 21 October 1942, approximately 22,000 Jews were deported from Piotrków to Treblinka. Those deported were the local Jews together with those from the Poznań and Płock regions who had been resettled to the Piotrków ghetto earlier. Jews from forced labour camps operating at industrial plants and selected craftsmen quartered in the 'small ghetto' remained in Piotrków. The last were deported in November 1944 to concentration camps in the Reich.

10 October 1942

To the W.E.L.Ż. in Warsaw.

I kindly ask for the address of Mr Jakób Blender, who used to live at Majzelsa Street 4, flat 4 and is now employed in one of the “workshops.”

Yours faithfully,

Szlomo Kac, c/o Miedziński,
Piotrków, Litewska Street 6

ARG II 94 (Ring. II/268/1)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 13 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 15 October [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

112 10 October 1942, Lvov. Ewa Bornstein, letter to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

Ewa Bornstein⁴⁹⁷
Lvov,
Warszawska Street 3

To the Jewish Community
Addresses Department
Warsaw

Lvov, 10 October 1942

I kindly ask you to give me the addresses or news about the following persons:

Dr Bornstein Roman ⁴⁹⁸ – former address Chłodna 24/14			
Bornstein Gertruda	”	”	”
Bornstein Rosalia	”	”	”

497 Ewa Bornstein was smuggled out of the Lvov ghetto with her children and taken to Warsaw by Polish rescuers who provided them with shelter. She survived the war under the name of Kazimiera Jankowska. For details see Yad Vashem, *The Righteous Among the Nations Database*, 4016972.

498 Probably Roman Bornstein (1908–?), doctor, fought in the Warsaw uprising of 1944. He was aided during the war by the same family who helped his sister-in-law, Ewa Bornstein. After the war he immigrated to Germany. For details see Yad Vashem, *The Righteous Among the Nations Database*, 4016972.

Dr Bornstein Mikołaj ⁴⁹⁹	”	”	Leszno 8/12
Jakubowicz Zygmunt	”	”	Śliska 18/8
Jakubowicz Irene	”	”	”

If you know at least one address, please forward my message to the addressee, and give him my address.

I would be very grateful for a prompt reply from you. I enclose a postcard for a reply.

Yours faithfully

Ewa Bornstein

ARG II 84 (Ring. II/272/2)

Description: original, typewritten with handwritten signature, German, 208×148, 147×105 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages. Attached is an envelope (typewritten, postmark 12 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 15 October [19]42, German, 158×114 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages).

113 14 October 1942, Berlin. Heinrich Israel⁵⁰⁰ Cohn, letter to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

Heinrich Israel Cohn
Berlin 113
Wichertstrasse 48 II

To Mr Chairman of the *Judenrat*
in Warsaw, Administration
of the Jewish Residential District
Housing Office of the *Judenrat*
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 8o

499 Mikołaj Bornstein, doctor. He survived the war in hiding outside the ghetto. For details see Yad Vashem, The Righteous Among the Nations Database, 4017706.

500 Under the 1938 race laws, Jews in the Third Reich had to add Israel or Sara into their names.

Berlin No 113, Wichertstrasse 48 II, 14 October [19]42

Since July I have had no news of my cousin, Mrs Bertha Sara Jacobsohn,⁵⁰¹ born Blumenfarb in Poppen, county of Thorn,⁵⁰² last residence Berlin 50, Spichernstrasse 5, despite repeatedly sending cards, which were always returned. As I am very worried about this, I would be obliged to you if you would inform me as soon as possible whether my cousin has moved on 10 September from Warsaw, Gartenstrasse 27, room 5.⁵⁰³ If the answer is yes, please give me her new address.

Thank you in advance,

respectfully

Heinrich Israel Cohn

ARG II 85 (Ring. II/271/2)

Description: original, typewritten on postcard, postmark 14 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 19 October [19]42, ink, German, 148×103 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages. Below the sender's address, notes: "Registration [Office] as indicated, 20 October 1942" added probably by a *Judenrat* clerk, and "Housing [Office] Kurza Street 9," added by a ghetto post office. Enclosed is a postcard for a reply addressed to H.I. Cohn.

114

19 October 1942, Breslau (Wrocław). R. Hochberger, letter to R[oman] Weinberg.

R. Hochberger
Breslau XIII
Victoriastr[asse] 107

Mr R. Weinberg
Warsaw
Nowolipie Street 58
General Gouvernement

501 Bertha Jacobsohn (1873–1942) was resettled to the Warsaw ghetto from Berlin in April 1942 with a transport of several hundred Jews. She was probably murdered in Treblinka in the summer of 1942.

502 German name for Toruń, at that time in Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreußen. Poppen is now Popowo, near the north-eastern border of Toruń.

503 German name for Ogrodowa Street. The address of a shelter for deportees and refugees.

Breslau, 19 October, [19]42

Dear Romek!

Forgive me for not having given a sign of life about myself so far, but I may write about it another time. I turn to you with a great request: be kind enough to inform my Dear Parents that I, as well as Adela, are healthy and working. Pucúś has stayed with the in-laws and he is healthy. I would write to them, but unfortunately I do not have their address. I will be happy if they write me at least a few words. You, Romek, also write a few words to me at this address: R. Hochberger, Breslau XIII, Victoria Street 107.

If you write to us, keep it short and a few words, such as: We are healthy, we feel well, etc., in a word, do not write superfluous things. I will remain much obliged to you, as long as you arrange this for me.

Apart from that, nothing new. I greet you, as well as your Parents, and I beg you to arrange this for me as soon as possible, so that I may have an answer as soon as possible. Greetings and kisses to everyone from us.

Be well⁵⁰⁴

ARG II 334 (Ring. II/275/5)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Polish, 145×211 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages; envelope (handwritten, postmark 19 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 22 October [19]42, ink, German, 177×124 mm, 2 sheets, 2 pages).

115 24 October 1942, Oleśnica.⁵⁰⁵ Henryk Kurc, letter to [Anszel] Kujawski or to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

Kurc
Oleśnica
via Busko-Zdrój

Mr A. Kujawski
Gęsia Street 13, flat 2
or *Judenrat*

504 Signature illegible.

505 Oleśnica (Busko County). There were approximately 2,000 Jews in the ghetto in Busko, including those from both the surrounding area and from Płock. On 1 October 1942 all were taken to Jędrzejów and from there a month later deported to Treblinka.

Registration Department
Warsaw
(Ghetto) Gęsia Street 13, flat 2
Kurza Street 9

Oleśnica 21 October 1942

My dears,

I kindly inquire and beg you to reply immediately for God's sake and tell me whether the following people are still in Warsaw:

Chemja Dawidowicz	Smocza Street 2, flat 8
Anszel Domb	Smocza Street 7, flat 34
Izrael Lajb Wajntraub	Nowolipie Street 21, flat 25
Abram Lajb Domb ⁵⁰⁶	Zamenhofa Street 24, flat 41
Anszel Kujawski	Gęsia Street 13, flat 2
Abram Naparstek	Nowolipie Street 21, flat 25
Roza Kurc	Nowolipie Street 21, flat 25
Chana Kurc	Nowolipie Street 21, flat 25
Symcha Grabowiecki ⁵⁰⁷	Leszno Street 2, flat 41
H[ersz] Wasser, MA	Muranowska Street 6, flat 15

Thank you very much in advance.

Yours faithfully,
Henry Kurc

ARG II 97 (Ring. II/268/2)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmarks 26 and 27 October [19]42, and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 30 October [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

506 Anszel Domb (1903?–1943?) was a native of Łódź, a merchant by profession. During the war he was in the Warsaw ghetto. See YVD, 519873.

507 Symcha Grabowiecki (1906–1944?) was born in Łódź, a weaver by profession. During the war he was in the Warsaw ghetto. See YVD, 1615092.

25 October 1942, Lublin, forced labour camp. Abram Borowski, letter to his brother D. Borowski.

Lublin
Lipowa Street 7⁵⁰⁸
Kom. 13⁵¹⁰

Ostdeutsche
Bautischlerei Werkstaten⁵⁰⁹ [sic]
Warsaw
[x]⁵¹¹ Gęsia Street 30⁵¹²
for D. Borowski

No such house, addressee unknown
29 October /-/⁵¹³

Lublin, 25 October

Dear brother,

I received your letter of 10 October one day before [your] postcard of 28 September. Dear brother, imagine [me] when I received your letter standing during a roll call.⁵¹⁴ Imagine the hapines that surged inme, but reading that Szlamek was gone too caused despair and suffering inme. Dear brother, I received your postcard from alady who read my leter and shes inquiring about Mrs Tympulper I can tell you that no women came with us from Lublin.

Dear brother, Heniek came with me to Lublin but I dont know where he is, Pynij Borowski is with me. Dear brother I urge you to find out how Berek

508 Labour camp at Lipowa Street 7 in Lublin, established in December 1939. A year later, it came under management of the German Arms Plant (*Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke*, DAW), which specialised in the wood industry. In 1941, most of its prisoners were Jewish craftsmen from Lublin. More than 2,000 Jewish POWs were detained there. After having murdered the Jewish prisoners on 4 November 1943, the Germans employed a few dozen Majdanek prisoners of various nationalities. See Tadeusz Radzik, *Lubelska dzielnica zamknięta* (Lublin 1999), pp. 133–135; Józef Marszałek, *Obozy pracy w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie w latach 1939–1945* (Lublin 1998), p. 95.

509 Meaning OBW workshop.

510 Most probably: Company No 13.

511 [x] Gęstrase 30; crossed out at a ghetto post office.

512 Added in red pencil at a ghetto post office.

513 Added on the back of the envelope in purple pencil.

514 See Introduction.

Mangut is doing because he deserves it because Moszek shares with me what he has as if we were two brothers.

Dear brother, write to me about what remained in our flat on Parysowska Street, is everything there, because we did not take anything with and I beg of you to send me some warm clothes, primarily long underwear because I've been wearing the ones I brought. I was issued a pair of high boots, so send me some puttees but the most important thing is a few zlotys cos I don't have two groszes to rub together.

Goodbye, your brother

Abram Borowski

Dear brother, send me a scarf and some old gloves.

Dear brother, what I wrote in the other letter [about] me to Mr Lande is the return address [x]⁵¹⁵ [x]⁵¹⁶

Dear brother, my friend is writing on my behalf because I have to go to work so I urge you to take care of these things for me.

Your brother,

Abram Borowski

Write me about what Warsaw looks like and what's up with the flat on Miła Street and what you did with our flat on Parysowska Street.

Dear brother!!! Do me a big favor. There is a friend from Warsaw with me and he left his wife in Warsaw, he has sent 20 letters already, but he cannot contact her, so I give you her address here and would you go and find out what's what? The address: Fela Borodowska, that's the wife or her cousin, Bronka Borer. Workshop's address: Curt Rörych Nowolipie Street No 80, Deutsche Textil-Fabryk.⁵¹⁷

My friend's name is Szmul Zeldman and he works with me. Take care of this quickly, do this before fulfilling my request. Should you find out nothing, he has a brother: Aron Zeldman, Miła Street 49, flat 6. Front, 3rd floor. Waiting for a swift reply!!!⁵¹⁸

Abram Borowski

515 [x] illegible.

516 [x] To this address he should write.

517 Deutsche Textil-Fabrik, Kurt Rörych's saddlery workshop at Nowolipie Street 80. Before the *Grossaktion* it employed 500 people.

518 ^c In different handwriting.

ARG II 377 (Ring. II/273/5)

Description: original, handwritten, pencil, Polish, 116×197 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages; envelope (handwritten, stamp of camp censor (no date), postmark 27 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 2 November [19]42, ink, 155×125 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages).

117

25 October 1942, Rawa Ruska. Roman Segal, letter to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

Roman Segal
Rawa Ruska
Galicia
Judenrat

To the *Judenrat*
Department of Registration
of the [Jewish] Population
Warsaw
Kurza Street 9⁵¹⁹

Rawa Ruska, 25 October 1942

Please kindly tell me if the following people are still living in the local Jewish district:

- 1) Maria Lemberger, last address Leszno Street 49
- 2) Genia Fromberg, last address Nowolipie Street 46, flat 76
- 3) M. Buchwald, last address Parysowska Street 4, bakery

Thank you in advance, please reply shortly. I will cover the cost of the return letter should it arrive.

Roman Segal

ARG II 107 (Ring II/268/3)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 27 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 30 October [19]42, ink, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

519 Annotated at a ghetto post office.

28 October 1942, Bendsburg (Będzin). Szymon (surname unknown), letter to [Meir] Kramarz.

Hanna Sara Bornstein
Bendsburg O/S
Alter Ring⁵²¹ 11/11

Ostdeutsche Bautischlereiwerke Co.
to I. M. Kramarz⁵²⁰
Warsaw
Gänsestrasse (Geşia Street) 30

Bendsburg, 28 October 1942

My dear!

Forgive me for not writing for so long. There were many reasons for my silence, but it is better late than never. Nothing has changed. I work and I am well. I am at Gordon's who extended his hospitality to me. Please, write back at once and tell me how you are doing. Do you know anything about my parents? Where does my uncle Huberman live now? He recently worked for the Schultz company and was quartered on Nowolipie Street. Please, do try to write back about everything in detail and exhaustively.

Please, Mr Kalinowski lives at Nalewki Street 36, I think he will be able to give you information about my parents' whereabouts. You certainly understand that I am waiting with utmost impatience for your reply. So please do what you can quickly and write back at once.

My dear, do you know anything about aunt and uncle Bekermann? Kind regards to you and all family and friends.

Yours,

Szymon

ARG II 332 (Ring. II/275/6)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 28 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 31 October [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. Under the sender's address, note (pencil): "Geşia firm [...] Ost[...]"

520 Meir Kramarz (c. 1902–1942), member of Left Poalei Tsiyon, trade union activist, served in the Polish Army before the war. He was one of the organisers of social aid in the Warsaw ghetto; from April 1942, an instructor of the combat units of the Anti-Fascist Bloc; killed in the *Grossaktion*, probably in September 1942.

521 German name for Stary Rynek (Old Market).

29 October 1942, Staszów near Opatów.⁵²² K. Haj[l]man, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

M. Rosz
Staszów, Opatów County
Długa Street 7
For Mrs K. Haj[l]man

Mr *Judenrat* [sic]
Registration Department
Warsaw
Kurza Street 9⁵²³

Staszów, 29 October 1942

To the Registration Department.

I would like to ask for current information about my husband, whom I have not heard from for three months.

I was left all alone with two children without any protection.

Thus, I kindly urge you again for detailed information about my husband. My husband's last address was:

Warsaw, Nalewki Street 43, flat 86, Berek Hajlmann [sic].⁵²⁴

ARG II 91a (Ring. II/268/4-5a)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 23 October [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 2 November [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. On p. 1 notation (pencil): "Kurza 9" and stamp: "B". Enclosed is a postcard for the reply addressed to M. Rosz (1 sheet, 1 page) and the printed Information Card of the Department of Registration containing basic information on Henryk Berek Hajlman (1 sheet, 2 pages; ARG II 91b).

⁵²² Staszów (Opatów County).

⁵²³ Annotated at a ghetto post office.

⁵²⁴ On p. 1 of the enclosed Information Card, the person of inquiry is Henryk (name crossed out) Berek Hajlman, whose last address was Nalewki Street 43; on p. 2 there is a note: "[...] Hajlman Henryk, from Nowolipie Street 67, now Leszno Street 76 flat 6, 5 January [19]43, /-." The sender's husband probably perished in Treblinka.

120 5 November 1942, Rembertów⁵²⁵ Judenlager. Josef Müller, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

Camp for Jews
Rembertów
Josef Müller

To Address Bureau
of the *Judenrat*
Warsaw
Wildstrasse⁵²⁶

Rembertów, 5 November 1942

To the Address Bureau of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

I kindly ask for the address of Mr Józef Kiselsztejn, last known address at Solna Street 16. If possible, please deliver this letter to the aforementioned.

Dear Józek, please write how you and our loved ones are doing. If you can, please take care of my possessions. Could you send me a few zlotys? I would tell you about the way.⁵²⁷

Kind regards,

Józiek

ARG II 101 (Ring. II/270)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 10 November [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 12 November [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

525 Rembertów (Warsaw County).

526 German name for Dzika Street, including Zamenhofa Street (part of Dzika renamed in 1930). The address bureau was located at Kurza Street 9. See Introduction.

527 It can pertain to the way to send money, or to some tip as to how the addressee himself could leave the city.

121 6 November 1942, Reichshof (Rzeszów). The Judenrat in Rzeszów, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

Jewish Community
Reichshof

P.T. Jewish Community
in Warsaw
Department of Registration
of the Jewish Population in Warsaw
Kurza Street 9⁵²⁸

Reichshof, 6 November 1942

P.T. Jewish Community in Warsaw.

We kindly ask you to tell us whether Moniek and Stella Herschenfuss, Muranowska Street 7, flat 9, c/o Mr [?] Debstock, are in Warsaw. Thank you in advance for notifying us.

Brotherly greetings⁵²⁹

ARG II 105 (Ring. II/268/6).

Description: original, typewritten on a postcard, postmark 7 November [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

528 Annotated at a ghetto post office.

529 Signature illegible.

122 8 November 1942, Augsburg. Felicja Hammer, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

Felicja Hammer⁵³⁰
in. Fa. Ch Dierig⁵³¹
Fichte[l]bach branch
Augsburg
Fichtelbacherstrasse 1

To the Elder
of the Jews
in Warsaw
Ghetto

Augsburg, 8 November 1942

Dear Sir,

I kindly ask you to inform me where my family is as I have not heard from them for a long time. They lived in Warsaw: Sz. Hammer, Muranowska Street 13, flat 6, and my uncle, J. Katz, Warsaw, Majzelsa Street 4, flat 16 (Kurza Street).

Thank you in advance and I hope that you, Sir, will kindly fulfil my request.

Yours faithfully,

Felicja Hammer

ARG II 92 (Ring. II/269/1)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark illegible and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 12 November [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

530 The sender's name is repeated twice, and the information: "detailed address" is added.

531 The sender was doing forced labour at a factory of the Christian Dierig textile concern in Augsburg.

123 10 November 1942, Hohensalza (Inowrocław). S. Rudnik, letter to A. Finkelstein.

S. Rudnik
Communal Camp
DAF No 16⁵³²
Hohensalza
Pakoscherstr[asse]⁵³³

To Mr A. Finkelstein
Warsaw
Pawia Street 1, flat 4
[General] Government

Hohensalza, 10 November 1942

My Dears,

Finally I and my wife have been brought from Schröttersburg⁵³⁴ to the camp, we are well. Please write to us immediately how our dearest daughter is. Otherwise, no news, many regards and kisses for all,

Rudnik and Wife

Please reply immediately

ARG II 372 (Ring. II/273/6)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 10 November [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 12 November [19]42, ink, German, 148×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

532 *Gemeinschaftslager* DAF had approximately 1,000 prisoners who worked for the town's communal services. The subcontractor was the Otto Quast company.

533 German name for Pakoska Street.

534 German name for Płock.

124 October–November 1942, Siedlce. Rywka Popower,⁵³⁵ letters (1) and (2) to her brother [Kalman] Huberband.⁵³⁶

(1)

Judenrat
[Siedlce]⁵³⁷
Popower

K. Huberband
Warsaw
Miła Street 9⁵³⁸

Dear brother, I am in [Siedlce] today. I was in Kosów for 10 days.⁵³⁹ Dear brother, you cannot imagine how bad I feel, I'm all alone. Without one grosz, I don't have anybody, what should I do, I sit day and night on the stairs, please reply [if only I could get out of here?]. Send me 50 zlotys I might still be here [...]

Rywka

(2)

R. Popower
Siedlce
Sokołowska Street 12
Miła Street 9

P. T. K. Huberband
Warsaw⁵⁴⁰

535 Rywka Popower was the daughter of the *tzaddik* Jehoszua Heszel Fraenkel-Teomim and his wife Chana Bracha, sister of Kalman Huberband, half-sister of Shimon Huberband and Kalonimus Kalman Shapiro.

536 Kalman Huberband (1905?–1943), Rabbi Shimon Huberband's older half-brother. He was active in Agudath Israel, worked as director of the yeshiva "Daat Moshe," established by their oldest half-brother, Rabbi Kalonimus Kalman Shapiro (1889–1943). K. Huberband was involved in the purchase of weapons for the ghetto uprising, see Hersh Wasser's note attached to ARG I 417 (Ring. I/218).

537 In the original, Szelce. Between 22 August and 26 September 1942 most of the Jews of Siedlce along with those resettled from Wartheland and nearby localities were killed in Treblinka. Many of the sick, the personnel of the Jewish hospital, and other Jews were shot on the spot. On 1 December 1942 a rump ghetto was established in Siedlce in order to concentrate the dispersed and hiding Jews.

538 Quarters of people assigned to the OBW workshop.

539 The *Aktionen* in Kosów Lacki (Sokołów County) were conducted on 23 September and 19 December 1942.

540 Both addresses are in different handwriting.

Brother and sister-in-law, I beg of you to take pity on me and send me some money because I am all alone on my own, take pity on me and write to me because I want to come to you, reply because I will not live without you.

Dear brother, write me that I should join you, my dears you are all I have, I cannot write no more, do reply at once,⁵⁴¹ all I dream of is to come to you, that's all, perhaps you could send somebody for me so I can say that they are from you.

R. Popower

ARG II 491 (Ring. II/385)

Description: original, handwritten on postcards, pencil, ink, postmarks:

(1) 21 October [19]42, (2) 11 November [19]42 and stamps of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw: (1) illegible, (2) 14 November [19]42, Polish, 149×104 mm, 2 sheets, 4 pages.

125 11 November 1942, Stanisławów. Samuel Nelken, letter to Isidor Sereth, pharmacist.⁵⁴²

Jewish Hospital
to Samuel Nelken
Stanisławów
Stanisławów County

Registration Office
of the *Judenrat*
to pharmacist Isidor Sereth
Warsaw

11 November

My dears,

Though after lying sick and hungry in hospital for 4 weeks I am too weak to write, I clutch at the straw of some faint hope that you, my dears, will not

⁵⁴¹ See Introduction.

⁵⁴² Izaak Isidor Sereth (1896–1942?) held an MA in pharmaceuticals. In the Warsaw ghetto he was the head of the pharmacy at Twarda Street 34 and later at the corner of Lubeckiego and Gęsia Streets. When he learned that his wife and 10-year-old son were taken to the *Umschlagplatz*, he probably wanted to try to save them, but perished himself. See Maria Ciesielska, *Lekarze getta warszawskiego* (Warszawa 2017), pp. 251, 256, 258.

forget about me and will wire me something to the hospital's address. If you could send me some food from the parcels and some shots, even kali[um] hypermanganicum [?]⁵⁴³ or glucose, I would be forever grateful to you. I am literally without a grosz. In hospital I get 50 grams of stale bread, 1 litre of watery soup with maximum 30 grams of flour and 3 small pots of unsweetened tea a day. As long as I worked, that is before my illness, at Margosch's, I managed to get by, but now!!!

My beloved aunt is gone, Lusia is as needy in Uhersko.⁵⁴⁴ Her address is: Mina Igel, for Lusia, Uhersko, [post] Gut bei Stryj,⁵⁴⁵ Stryj County. She gets soup 3 times a day, [they were] evicted from the flat without a grosz, without anything. Edziu works in Lvov, his address is: W. Sobel, for Edzio, Weissenhofa Street 10, Lvov. He works but I do not know what he is doing exactly.

I will probably stay here for 4 more weeks, I had [a problem] with [...], I have with my heart, I am too weak to stand, the physician is telling me to eat well, it means bread – this costs 40 [zlotys for 1 kilogram], millet – 38–40, butter – 240, cheese – 60, sugar – 100, egg – 4, saccharine – 3 pills for 1 zloty, etc. ???⁵⁴⁶ I am in so much pain that I cannot write any more – apples 20 zlotys for 1 kilogram. I just send hundreds of kisses to you and your son. Do write what is up with my loved ones.

Your uncle

S. Nelken

You can still save me!

About five percent of our friends have remained so I have nobody.

ARG II 367 (Ring. II/275/7)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, Polish, 153×194 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page; envelope with the imprint of the L. Schleien firm (Stanisławów) (handwritten, postal stamps, ink, German, 177×110 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages).

543 In the original: cali.hmn apl.

544 Uhersko (Stryj County).

545 Perhaps a German name for Dobrzany (Stryj County).

546 Three question marks in the original.

126

12 November 1942, Rembertów, Judenlager. M. Korentajer, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

M. Korentajer⁵⁴⁷
Judenlager
Stary Rembertów
Kościuszki Street 6

To the *Judenrat*
in Warsaw
Zamenhofa Street 19
Registration Office⁵⁴⁸

Rembertów, 12 November 1942

To the *Judenrat* in Warsaw,

I kindly ask you to inform me about the whereabouts of my mother Korentajer Malka. She was on the *Umschlagplatz* until 5 November.⁵⁴⁹ My mother is about 60 years old.

I attach a postcard on which you can kindly write your reply. Thank you in advance. Regards.

ARG II 96 (Ring. II/270/5)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 13 November [19]42, stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 14 November [19]42 and a stamp of the Secretariat General of the *Judenrat* (21 November 1942, no. 20542), pencil, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages; enclosed is a postcard for the reply (originally both postcards were sewn together), addressed to M. Korentajer (1 sheet, 1 page).

547 Possibly the poet, author of songs performed in ghetto theatres, translator and librettist, among other things; mentioned in theatre advertisements in the *Gazeta Żydowska* only by surname.

548 Annotated at a ghetto post office.

549 In late November 1942 the Nazi authorities released approximately 1,000 people detained on the *Umschlagplatz* after 21 September 1942, that is, after the *Grossaktion*.

127 [Before or 12 November 1942], Lublin. B[oleśław] Norski-Nożyca,⁵⁵⁰ envelope of the letter to Pinchas (Paweł) Wasserman.

B. Norski-Nożyca
Lublin
SS Lager (D.A.W.)
Lipowa Street 7

Mr Director Wasserman
Judenrat
Warsaw
Zamenhofa Street 19

ARG II 102 (Ring. II/270/3)

Description: original, handwritten on the envelope, stamp of camp censor, postmark 12 November [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 17 November [19]42, ink, Polish, 154×125 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. See Doc. 136.

128 25 November 1942, Ferramonti di Tarsia (Italy), camp. Feibus (Fajbus) Holzman, letter to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

Feibus Holzman
Ferramonti-Tarsia
prov. Cosenza
Cam. 16
Italia

Germany (General Gouvernement)
To the *Judenrat*
Warsaw
Germany (General Gouvernement)

Ferramonti, 25 November [19]42

To the Warsaw *Judenrat*

550 Bolesław Norski-Nożyca (1904?–1943?), a popular singing actor from Warsaw; in the ghetto he performed the songs of ghetto beggars and took part in cultural events organised by house committees. After the *Grossaktion*, he was deported to the camp at Lipowa Street in Lublin, then to the camp in Budzyń, and from there most probably to Majdanek, where he perished. See Agnieszka Żółkiewska, “Bolesław Norski-Nożyca – nieznaný aktor estradowy z getta warszawskiego,” *KHŻ/JHQ* (forthcoming).

After 1 1/2 years without news of my brother named Leizor Jakob Holzman living in Warsaw, Nowolipki Street 46 flat 64, at Glatt, I kindly ask you to inform me about him. If possible, give him my address.

Waiting for your prompt reply I remain

With respect

Fajbus Holzman

ARG II 93 (Ring. II/271/3)

Description: original, typewritten on a postcard, stamp of camp, postmark illegible, stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 22 December [19]42, ink, German, 146×103 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

129 [28 November 1942], Prague (*Praha*, Czechoslovakia). Marta Reich-Vider, letter to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

Marta Reich
Prague II
Krakowska⁵⁵¹ 7

To the Central Office
for Registration of the Jews
Warsaw
General Government
[x]⁵⁵² B⁵⁵³

To the Central Office for Registration of the Jews.

I would be very grateful if you could inform me where Ludwik and Emilie Vider are, AAC 15 and 16, departing Prague 20 June [19]42.⁵⁵⁴ I would be most grateful and gladly willing to pay for the same.

551 Below the signature of the letter, German name for the street.

552 [x] Dzielna Street; it was added in different handwriting, then crossed out.

553 Added in red pencil; it is the initial letter of *Biuro Ewidencji*, Registration Office.

554 On 27 April a transport from the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was brought to Warsaw, but this transport, AAC 15 and 16, was sent to the ghetto in Terezin. On 14 July 1942, Ludwik (b. 1878) and Emilie (b. 1887) Vider were taken from Terezin to the killing

With respect

Marta Reich-Vider
Prague IIa, Krakauergasse 7

ARG II 106 (Ring. II/271/4)

Description: original, handwritten, ink, German, 159×208 mm, 1 sheet, 1 page;
envelope (original, handwritten, postmark 28 November [19]42 and post office
in Warsaw 30 November [19]42, ink, German, 170×110 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.)
Paper and envelope with imprint: "R.L."

130 28 November 1942, Lvov. Emil Mangel, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

Emil Mangel
Lvov
Zamarstynowska Street 23, flat 22

To the Judenrat
Warsaw
Kurza Street 9⁵⁵⁵

28 November 1942

To the Jewish Religious Community in Warsaw.

On the reverse of the postcard please write whether the following individuals are in the residential district under your administration and what their current addresses are. For orientation, I list their old places of residence:

1. Izak Mangel – Śliska Street 47, flat 5 ... dentist
2. H. Steinerowie – Nowolipki Street 44, flat 22, dentist
3. Erna Mangel-Herlingowa – Zamenhofa Street 36, flat 3
4. Helena Mangel – Dzielna Street 25, flat 136[,] seamstress

As the individuals listed are my immediate family, I kindly ask you for information, for which I thank you in advance,

Emil Mangel

centre in Mały Trostynets (now Belarus) and murdered there. See Yad Vashem, Transports to Extinction: Holocaust (Shoah) Deportation Database, 5091913.

555 Annotated at a ghetto post office.

ARG II 100 (Ring. II/272/3)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 30 November [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 28 December [19]42, ink, Polish, 148×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages; enclosed is a blank postcard with a postage stamp.

131 [30 November 1942], *Kraków Julag I*.⁵⁵⁶ Alfred Dafner, letter to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

Alfred Dafner
Kraków 14
Julag I

To the *Judenrat*
of Warsaw
Department of Registration
Kurza 9 B⁵⁵⁷

Gentlemen!

I respectfully request information as to whether Mrs Hela Weisberg,⁵⁵⁸ residing: Nowolipie Street 23 flat 2, is still in Warsaw.

Yours faithfully

A. Dafner

ARG II 87 (Ring. II/269/2)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 30 November [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 5 December [19]42, ink, German, 147×107 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

556 The labour camp in Kraków-*Płaszów* was established in autumn 1942. In January 1944 it was transformed into a concentration camp. The author is referring to the *Judenlager I* (Camp for Jews I), located on Wielicka Street, in the area of the Jewish cemeteries in *Płaszów*, where the forced labourers of the *Ostbahn* (Eastern Railway) were quartered.

557 Annotated at a ghetto post office.

558 Haja Weisberg (1896–1943), née Dafner, was a native of Łódź; during the war she left for Warsaw with her family. She, her husband, and daughter perished in the Holocaust. Her son survived. See YVD, 1468441.

132

3 December 1942, Sambor. Arje Szrajbman, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

P. Twurski
Sambor (Dis[trict] Galicia)⁵⁵⁹
Wałowa Street 6
For A. Szrajbman

To *Judenrat*
Warsaw

Sambor 3 December 1942

Dear Post Office of Warsaw *Judenrat*

Please give me the exact address of M. C. Altter and M. Altter.⁵⁶⁰ This is concerning their business.

Respectfully
Arje Szrajbman

ARG II 108 (Ring. II/268/7)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 3 December [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw illegible, ink, Yiddish in Latin transliteration, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

559 Sambor (Drohobycz County).

560 Moshe Bezalel Alter (1867–1942), brother of Abraham Mordekhai Alter (1866–1948), the last *tzaddik* from Góra Kalwaria, lived in the Warsaw ghetto. During the *Grossaktion*, he worked in Schultz's workshop, from which he was taken to *Umschlagplatz* with his children and murdered in Treblinka. Mendel Alter, rabbi in Kalisz, son of the *tzaddik* from Góra Kalwaria, before the war president of the Union of Rabbis in Poland. See *Jewish Social Self-Help* (forthcoming).

J. Zandel
P.O. Box *Judenrat*
Jewish Residential District
Lvov

Judenrat
Jewish Residential District
Warsaw

I kindly ask you for information about the following individuals:

H. Zandel, Pańska Street 10, flat 12,

H. Zandel, Komitetowa Street 1,

Adam Szenberg,⁵⁶¹ district officer of the Jewish Order Guard [sic].

Warm thank you in advance for a reply to the address written on the reverse.

J. Zandel

Lvov, 8 December 1942

ARG II 114 (Ring. II/272/4)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 14 December [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat in Warsaw* 17 December [19]42, ink, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

⁵⁶¹ Perhaps Aleksander Szenberg, see AŻIH, collection “*Rada Żydowska w Warszawie*” (*Judenrat in Warsaw*), file 221/15: *Wykaz imienny funkcjonariuszy Służby Porządkowej* [Surnames’ list of the Order Service members]; No 27 on the list.

134 12 December 1942, Bendsburg (Będzin). Dawid Israel Unger, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

D. Israel Unger
Bendsburg
Mark[t]str[asse]⁵⁶² 57

To Jewish Religious Community
Warsaw

To the Jewish Religious Community, Warsaw

I kindly ask you to inform me about Moritz Unger,⁵⁶³ Zamenhofa Street 17 flat 21, who is currently in Warsaw with his family. Thank you in advance. Reply to address Bendsburg, Dawid Israel Unger Markstr. 57.

12 December [19]42.

ARG II 110 (Ring. II/268/8)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 12 December [19]42 and stamp of the Judenrat in Warsaw 13 December [19]42, ink, German, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

135 13 December 1942, Pinne (Pniewy),⁵⁶⁴ labour camp. M. Nüssenbaum, letter to the Judenrat in Warsaw.

M. Nüssenbaum
Pinne Castle, Samter District
Warthegau, Pr[ovin]z Posen

To Jewish Community
Warsaw
General Governement

⁵⁶² German name for Modrzejowska Street.

⁵⁶³ Moritz Unger (1892–1942?) was born in Olkusz, he later lived in Erfurt in Germany. He was probably among the Jews expelled from Germany in 1938. During the war he lived in Będzin and then in the Warsaw ghetto. See YVD, 11648118.

⁵⁶⁴ Pniewy (Szamotuły County); in 1921, it had 99 Jews (3.6 per cent of the total population); in 1941, three forced labour camps for Jews were established there.

Pinne, 13 December [19]42

It has been a long time since I received any news from my family. From 21 July I have received no mail and have written many times and received no answer. This is: S. Bzura, M.D. – Muranowska Street 44 flat 84. I have a big request: to notify me if they are still in Warsaw and their address.

If that is possible, I expect a quick answer. I would be very grateful for everything,

with respect

M. Nüssenbaum

ARG II 104 (Ring. II/269/3)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 14 December [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw [...] [19]42, ink, German, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

136 13 December 1942, Lublin, SS camp. *Abuś Nisenbaum and B[olestaw] Norski-Nożyca, letters (1) and (2) to Pinchas [Paweł] Wasserman.*

SS Camp
Lublin
Lublin District
Lindenstr[asse] 7
XI Kolonn.⁵⁶⁵
Abuś Nisenbaum

Judenrat
Mr Director Wasserman
Registration Department
Warsaw
Franciszkańska Street 30

(1)

Lublin, 13 December 1942

Dear uncle,

It has been 8 weeks without news from you, I am wondering why this is because I often write to you. My dears, the only cousin you still have, thank

565 Probably number of a company.

God, and who is still alive, thank God, is asking you to please not forget to write to him.

Be well. Regards to everybody.

Your cousin Abuś Nisenbaum

(2)

Dear Mr Director Wasserman! I am wondering why my request has not been fulfilled yet. I was supposed to receive money. I think that I deserve it. I hope that you will not have me on your conscience and will help me. At the same time, I ask you to transfer this postcard to Szmul Eilman, who lived at: Majzelsa Street 10, he is my friend's uncle. Looking forward to your reply,

Yours sincerely,

Norski-Nożycza.

PS. Regards to friends. Waiting, yours sincerely,

B. Norski-Nożycza

ARG II 103 (Ring. II/269/4)

Description: original, (1) typewritten, (2) handwritten on a postcard, postmark and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, ink, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

137

14 December 1942, Kawęczyn near Warsaw, labour camp. J. Wajnberg, letter to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

Labour camp, Schmidt [and] Junk
Kawęczyn⁵⁶⁶
Rembertów post office
via Warsaw

To the *Judenrat*
in Warsaw

566 In May 1942, Jewish workers assigned by the Labour Office to the construction company Schmidt and Junk were quartered in a labour camp in Kawęczyn. There were two camps in Rembertów: at Kościuszki Street 6 and in Kawęczyn. The workers of the Schmidt and Junk were deported to their deaths in July 1943.

Kawęczyn, 14 December 1942

P.T. *Judenrat* in Warsaw,

I would like to ask a big favour of you. I am from the provinces. I worked in the Schmi[d]t [and] Junk company in the town of Kraśnik and I have been transferred here, to Warsaw, to the same company. My brother is the only remaining member of my family. He is in Warsaw, but I do not know his address. I turn to you and ask you to reply to my letter and inform me where my brother is, at which *placówka* and where. His name is Abram Wajnberg. He is a carpenter by occupation. Before the resettlement he was on Twarda Street and after the resettlement he worked on Wronia Street and now I do not know, so please reply.

Thank you in advance,

Wajnberg

ARG II 111 (Ring. II/270/6)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw, ink, Polish, 147×105 mm, 2 sheets, 3 pages.

138 18 December 1942, Hohensalza (Inowrocław), labour camp. Icek Leszczyński, letter to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

Workman I. Leszczyński
Inowrocław
“Hochtief”⁵⁶⁷ P.O. Box 14

To Elder of the Jews
Warsaw (ghetto)

18 December [19]42

To the Elder of the Jews Warsaw

Please inform me of the addresses of Izaak Glitzenstein,⁵⁶⁸ Rabbi in Toruń (Pomerania), also of J. Rochow, Warsaw, Pl. Krasińskiego (previous address).

⁵⁶⁷ Prisoners of one of the forced labour camps in Inowrocław worked for the Poznań branch of the Hochtief company from Berlin.

⁵⁶⁸ Izaak (Isaak) Glitzenstein (Glicensztajn) (1895–1943), rabbi from Toruń. During the war he was in the Warsaw ghetto. According to Emanuel Ringelblum, Glitzenstein was not

I await your reply and thank you very much!
With respect!
Icek Leszczyński
Sender's address on the other page.

ARG II 98 (Ring. II/223/5)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 20 December [19]42
and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 22 December [19]42, pencil, German,
148×104 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages.

139 *After 21 December 1942, Warsaw ghetto. M. Micner, letters to the Judenrat in Turobin.*

21 December 1942

[x]⁵⁶⁹

I hereby ask you to inform me about the whereabouts of my son Iza[a]k Micner [x].⁵⁷⁰ And if he is not there, please reply and tell me where he is. I know that you will fulfil my request.

Yours faithfully,

despairing father

M. Micner

§Schultz Company

Tailor shop§

Nowolipki Street 29, flat 19

Return

To the Council of Elders

legally a rabbi and collaborated with the infamous “Thirteen,” however, Ringelblum put his name among other rabbis on the “List of losses” after the January 1943 *Aktion*, see ARG II 261/10 (Ring. II/231), p. [4]. See YVD, 752620.

569 [x] To the Council of Elders.

570 [x] worker of the [...].

Your son Izaak
Micner has left
to meet his maker
§He is already dead§
Council of Elders

Turobin⁵⁷¹
via Krasnystaw

ARG II 289 (Ring. II/274/7)

Description: duplicate, handwritten (LP*), pencil, Polish, German, 110×145 mm,
1 sheet, 2 pages.

140 25 December 1942, Rembertów, Judenlager. Franka Cybulska, letter to the
Judenrat in Warsaw.

Stary Rembertów
Kościuszki Street 6
Camp for Jews
Franka Cybulska

Warsaw
Judenrat
Zamenchofa [sic] Street 19
Registration Department

25 December 1942

The Department of Registration of the Population.

I kindly ask you to inform me about the place of residence of Stella Berland, who before the deportation lived in Warsaw at Pańska Street 69, flat 24. Her most recent workplace was one of the tailoring workshops in Warsaw. I turn to you with this request because you are the only possible source of information. I am in a camp in Rembertów in a very dire material situation, and the said person I am looking for will certainly not say no and she can help me.

Thus I urge you to inform Stella Berland that Franka Cybulska is in a camp and asks for help. Please fulfil my request and write back to my address to inform me where this person is. Kind thanks in advance.

Yours faithfully,
F. Cybulska

571 Turobin (Krasnystaw County).

ARG II 86 (Ring. II/270/7)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 31 December [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 4 January [19]43, pencil, Polish, 147×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages. On p. 1 stamp: “Mun. [?] Rembertów Camp, Warsaw District” and note in German (ink): “Censored, Bauer, 30 December [19]42 (unimportant).”

141

26 December 1942, Lvov-Kleparów. J. Litwakowa, letter to the *Judenrat* in Warsaw.

J. Litwakowa
Lvov-Kleparów
Dzielna Street 10

To the *Judenrat*
(Registration Office)
Warsaw

26 December [19]42

To the *Judenrat*, Warsaw

I kindly ask you to give me the address of Ewa Buk. For a time, she lived on Puła[w]ska str[ee]t and then, in 1941, she was head of the kitchen in the Jewish Epidemic Hospital.

Respectfully

J. Litwak

ARG II 99 (Ring. II/272/5)

Description: original, handwritten on a postcard, postmark 28 December [19]42 and stamp of the *Judenrat* in Warsaw 2 January [19]43, ink, German, 148×105 mm, 1 sheet, 2 pages; enclosed is a postcard with a postal stamp, addressed to J. Litwak (1 sheet, 1 page).

Glossary

AKTION (German, lit. action; pl. *AKTIONEN*) – a term belonging to the Nazi occupation newspeak; a German operation aimed at total or partial destruction of a Jewish population of a town, ghetto or camp, linked with terror, tortures, pillage, confiscation of belongings, mass murder on the spot and/or in killing centres; *see also GROSSAKTION*.

BACHUROT (Hebrew, lit. girls, young women) – here: female members of Hehalutz.

CHAVEYRIM (Yiddish, lit. friends) – here: comrades.

CHAZAK VE'EMATZ (Hebrew) – be strong and brave; greeting slogan of Zionist youth movement.

CHEVRA (Hebrew, lit., group, society) – here: group of friends.

CHOL HA-MOED (Hebrew) – intermediate days of Jewish holidays, here: of Passover.

COMMUNAL CAMP – from German *Gemeinschaftslager*, Jewish slave-labour camps owned by private German companies who rented Jews from the SS for a nominal fee.

FAMILY – popular term for a Jewish youth organisation, used among its members.

FORCED LABOR CAMP – as of 12 October 1939, all Jews between 14 and 60 years of age became subject to forced labour; the camps established from August 1940, mostly in the Lublin District of GG, were dealing with road construction and drainage projects; camp inmates were maltreated, usually returned (if at all) in very poor shape.

GAZETA ŻYDOWSKA (Polish) – periodical for the Jews, published officially from 23 July 1940 to 28 August 1942 two-three times a week, printed in Kraków, distributed

in the entire GG. It was a tool of Nazi propaganda, however, also a source of information on real problems of Jewish life under the occupation. The editor-in-chief was a journalist Fritz Seifter from Bielsko.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT, GG – following Hitler's decree of 26 October 1939, central part of Poland occupied by the Third Reich. As an administrative unit, GG existed until the end of WWII; it was divided into Kraków, Lublin, Radom and Warsaw Districts. The fifth District, Galicia, was included in GG from 1 August 1941. The central authority was governor general Hans Frank, residing in Kraków.

GMINA (Polish, lit. community) – traditional self-government organisation of Jews in a given town; also its authorities; here: *JUDENRAT*.

GOY (Hebrew/Yiddish, lit. nation; pl. *GOYIM*) – a non-Jewish person, gentile.

GROSSAKTION (German, lit. great action) – sometimes called Great Deportation; a Nazi code name for the deportation and mass murder of approximately 270,000 Jews from the Warsaw ghetto between 22 July and 21 September 1942. *See also* AKTION.

GROSZ (Polish; pl. GROSZES) – Polish currency, 1/100 of a zloty.

HEHALUTZ (Hebrew, lit. the pioneer) – Zionist pioneer youth movement organised in the early 20th century which sought to prepare its members for settling in Palestine; it was later divided in various factions.

HEHALUTZ HATZAIR (Hebrew, lit. the young pioneer) – one of the groups of the *Hehalutz* movement, especially focused on preparing its members to work in agriculture in Palestine.

HOTEL POLSKI AFFAIR – a trap set by the Germans in the spring and summer of 1943 in the Polski hotel on Długa Street 29 in order to discover Jews who were hiding outside the ghetto; via Gestapo agents they were sold documents of South America citizenship and also the so-called Palestinian certificates; the Jews were made believe they were to be exchanged for German prisoners. Around 10 per cent of the trapped 4 to 5,000 Jews survived.

JEWISH COMMUNITY – traditional self-government organisation of Jews in a given town; also its authorities; *see also* GMINA and *JUDENRAT*.

JEWISH SOCIAL SELF-HELP – in Polish *Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna* (ŻSS), in Yiddish *Aleynhilf*; organisation for social aid for Jews in GG, active under other name(s)

from September 1939, officially established 29 May 1940; it served as the umbrella organisation for CENTOS, TOZ and other Jewish associations; it was liquidated by the Germans on 29 July 1942; replaced by the Jewish Self-Help Office of dubious activity, which lasted until spring 1944.

JUDENFREI, JUDENREIN (German, lit. free of Jews) – the terms used by the Nazis to describe the situation in towns after the *Aktionen*.

JUDENLAGER (German, lit. camp for Jews) – also *Zwangsarbeitslager für Juden* (forced labour camp for Jews), *Judenarbeitslager*, *Arbeitslager für Juden* (labour camp for Jews) – these are all synonyms for forced labour camps.

JUDENRAT (German, lit. Jewish Council; pl. *Judenräte*) – German appointed authorities for Jews of a given town (or labour camp); sometimes referred to as *gmina* or *kehillah*, also as Council of Elders.

KADDISH (Hebrew) – one of the oldest, most important and frequently repeated prayers, praising God, his greatness and holiness; traditionally recited by mourners.

KILLING CENTRES – sometimes called death camps; established by Germans with its primary goal of mass murder of the Jews and Roma, by the use of poison gas. The first such centre was in Chełmno nad Nerem (Kulmhof), where exhaust fumes and special vans were used. The other killing centres had specially built gas chambers, in Bełżec, Sobibór, Treblinka, Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau.

LAGER (German) – camp.

LANDSMANSHAFT (Yiddish) – organisation of former residents of a town, province or country.

LITZMANNSTADT (German) – German name for Łódź, renamed on Hitler's order of 11 April 1940 in honour of the Prussian general Karl Litzmann, famous from the battle for Łódź in 1914.

MIZRACHI (Hebrew, lit., eastern) – also acronym for spiritual centre; religious Zionist movement, starting in 1902; also a political party in Poland active from 1918 to 1947.

OSTDEUTSCHE BAUTISCHLEREI WERKSTÄTTE, OBW (German) – workshops located at Gęsia Street 30 and 75–79. That company appropriated the furniture factory of brothers Alexander and Josef Landau, who became its directors.

OYNEG SHABES (Yiddish) – from Hebrew *Oneg Shabbat*, Joy of Shabbat, code name of the group of people in the Warsaw ghetto documenting the fate of Jews under German occupation, and also the name of the underground archive they established, also called the Ringelblum Archive, from the name of its organiser and leader, Polish-Jewish historian Emanuel Ringelblum (1900–1944).

PAWIAK PRISON – the biggest German political prison, on Pawia Street (hence the name) in Warsaw. During the German occupation, approximately 100,000 people were held there, of whom 37,000 were murdered, including Emanuel Ringelblum and his family.

PLACÓWKA (Polish; pl. *placówki*) – detail work site

POALEI TSIYON (Hebrew/Yiddish, lit. Workers of Zion) – international leftist Zionist organisation, established 1905; active in Poland from 1918; split in 1920 into Right Poalei Tsiyon and Left Poalei Tsiyon; the latter had considerably more followers.

POSTSPERRE (German, lit. postal lock) – suspension of mail privileges, both sending and receiving.

PROVINZ OBERSCHLESIEEN (German) – Province of Upper Silesia, administrative unit established after 12 October 1939 on southwestern part of Polish territory annexed to the Third Reich with Kattowitz (Katowice) and part of Lower Silesia, before WWII in Germany, with Oppeln (Opole).

PROVINZ OSTPREUSSEN (German) – Province of East Prussia, administrative unit of Germany, then of the Third Reich, with annexed parts of Polish territory around Suwałki.

REGISTRATION BUREAU – Department of Registration of the Jewish Population (W.E.L.Ż.) of Warsaw *Judenrat*, also known in an abbreviated form as *Biuro Ewidencji* (Registration Bureau).

RINGELBLUM ARCHIVE – see OYNEG SHABES

ROSH HASHANAH (Hebrew, lit. head of the year) – Jewish New Year, celebrated on the first and second day of the month of *Tishrei* (September/October); it also recalls the creation of the world.

RUMP GHETTO – (from German *Restgetto*) 63 ghettos established by the GG authorities in October and November 1942 in order to concentrate the remnants of the Jewish

population, 70–80 per cent of which had been annihilated between the summer of 1941 and the summer of 1942.

RURAL (VILLAGE) GHETTO – type of the ghetto established in Wartheland, from late 1940 to October 1941, in the regions where Jews did not live or constituted a small percentage of the local population; there were five of them; their inmates were murdered in the autumn of 1941 in the local forests and in early 1942 in Chełmno.

SHECHITA (Hebrew/Yiddish, lit. slaughter) – especially ritual slaughter; here: massacre

SHELTER(S) – primitive quarters for refugees and deportees, usually in former prayer rooms; in Polish called *punkt(y)*, lit., point(s).

SHEMA ISRAEL (Hebrew) – Hear, O Israel! First words of the most important Jewish profession of faith in God

SHOP, WORKSHOP – German owned factory, plant taken over from a Jewish company; it manufactured products for Germans, especially for the army; the first workshops were opened in the Warsaw ghetto in 1941; in Polish called *szop*.

SICHERHEITSDIENST, SD (German) – security service [of the Third Reich]; its posts were in every bigger town in the occupied territories; its functionaries participated in acts of terror against civilians.

STUBE (German, lit. room) – here: living quarters at the forced labour camps.

THE “THIRTEEN” – official name: Office to Combat Usury and Profiteering (*Urząd do Walki z Lichwą i Spekulacją*); its address in the Warsaw ghetto was Leszno Street 13, hence the monicker. It was a Gestapo agency in operation from late 1940 till July 1941. In spite of its official name, the members’ main activity was extortion of goods and money from the ghetto inmates, including profits from smuggling.

TISHA B’AV (Hebrew) – the 9th day of the month of Av; day devoted to mourning and fasting in commemoration of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. and 70 C.E.

TKUMA (Hebrew, lit. rebirth) – cultural and educational association in the Warsaw ghetto, promoting Hebrew language and culture.

TOEBBENS, TÖBBENS – Walther Toebebens (Többebens), owner of the largest workshop in the Warsaw ghetto; it employed over 18,000 people.

TZADDIK (Hebrew, lit. the just) – Hasidic spiritual leader, often called *rebbe*.

UMSCHLAGPLATZ (*UMSCHLAG*) (German, lit. transfer point) – assembly point north of the Warsaw ghetto near the siding, where Jews were forced into freight cars to killing centres.

WARTHELAND (German, lit. Land of Warta [River]) – administrative unit established on the western part of Polish territory annexed to the Third Reich; it was divided into *Regierungsbezirke*, regions, called after their main towns: 1. Hohensalza (Inowrocław), 2. Kalisch (Kalisz), from February 1941 Litzmannstadt (Łódź), 3. Posen (Poznań).

YOM KIPPUR (Hebrew) – Day of Atonement; day of fasting and prayer on the 10th day of the month of *Tishrei* (September/October), concluding the celebration of the Jewish New Year.

ZLOTY (Polish; pl. *ZLOTYS*) – Polish currency; *see also* *GROSZ*.

ŻYDOWSKA ORGANIZACJA BOJOWA, *ŻOB* (Polish) – Jewish Fighting Organisation; underground organisation of armed resistance, formed mostly by Zionist youth movements and the Bund; established 28 July 1942; its units existed in Warsaw, Kraków, Częstochowa, Będzin, Sosnowiec; the best-known acts of resistance in the Warsaw ghetto were the self-defence on 18–22 January 1943 and the uprising (along with the Jewish Military Union, *ŻZW*) which started on 19 April, ended in June 1943; the commander of the latter was Mordechai Anielewicz.

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211/17

221. JUDENRAT in Warsaw (*Rada Żydowska w Warszawie*) 1939–1945

221/15

301. COLLECTION of testimonies of the Holocaust survivors (*Zbiór relacji Żydów ocalałych z Zagłady*)

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THE CENTRAL Database of Shoah Victims' Names

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