

ELIZABETH MARGOSCHES FAMILY PAPERS, 1888-2010
2002.436.1

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
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Below are translations from the Elizabeth Margosches family papers:

Postcard dated July 1, 1942 from Troppau
Sent to Helene Beik, Brunn

Dear Helene:

I received your two informative cards and thank you sincerely for them. Because of my sore hand I have lost what I enjoyed most, my writing. As I will not be able to write for quite a while, please write to me more often. I am under treatment with Dr. Niessur and everyone says that the healing will take a long time. My dear Hans, write to me, from the other children I do not hear anything, not even through the Red Cross. I can really not go out. Miss Walter is the most devoted friend. Mrs. Mayer and Mrs. Nath also come but we now live quite a distance apart. Two old ladies have died now. Mrs. Silber and Mrs. Kolus everything one sees and hears is serious, how should one have courage to live. Give regards to all those that greet me, especially, Johanna, Bertha and husband. In sincere friendship, E.K

Postcard addressed to Helene Reik, TRP.22 No. 891
Theresienstadt, Dresdener Kaserne 16H V
from Ernst Lorenz, Bruenn
Dated March 27, 1943

If finally, only a card from you would be arrive it would be a great happiness. The censor should really be sorry for me and reward me for my long waiting. So with confidence I will keep on hoping.

Pencil inscription from Helene in Theresienstadt. June 5, 1943, Saturday afternoon, 5 o'clock. With great (?) we Jews find Saturday (?.....) day ?.....?

Post card dated July 1, 1942 to Helene Reik, Bruenn
from Viktor Reik, Kremsier 17

Dearest Sister-in-law, Helene:

As I have had no reply to my card of December 26, 1941 and picture post card of December 12 , so I permit myself again today to politely ask for your contribution of 100 kronen in January 1942 as begged for previously. Dear Olga lets me know, that as far as she knows, that at that time (14 days ago) Gerdel and Fritz did not know about the death of Gohtael. Mama was not informed. The Zieglers in Bolivia should reconcile themselves to this sad news. Dear Ludwig was very lucky, as usual in such events to have the dear Otto as a consoler at home. Some people have to suffer everything in the world without having someone to help them. We had a transfer to a different department. Dept. 17/A, Pavillion seventeen A on January 2, 1942 from 10/B.(Illegible ?) dear Ann , children in England, dear Kurt and Dr. David Rudolfer and our very dear friends. I am living a year and a half already without any "personal" feeling for my dear Olga and one has to (?) to have children. We are all to be pitied here. Heartiest regards your brother-in-law Viktor
Expecting your answer and will answer your letter. Best regards.

Post card from Heinz Reik, Prossnitz, February 2, 1942
to Mrs. Helene Reik, Transport #891
Theresienstadt

Dear Aunt:

I received your card on January 21. Today is the first possibility to write. I am staying in touch with Ernst who will inform Kurt. I have good news from Otto on December 3. Hope that you are well, write.
Heartiest regards, Heinz

Postcard from Bertha Lanzer, Prague I, dated April 15, 1942
to Mrs. Helene Reik, Bruenner Transport U 891 Dresdener Kaserne
Room 136, Theresienstadt

Dearest Helen:

I informed Ernst about your card of March 14. Are you treating your foot pains? Cross mail takes at least six months. I gave regards to acquaintances. Olga, Franz L. did not write to brother-in-law. Stay healthy. Sincerest regards, Bertha, Rudolf

Postcard from Bertha Lanzer, Prague, dated February 26, 1942
to Mrs. Helene Reik, Bruenner Transport U 891, Theresienstadt

Dearest Helene:

I am repeating contents of card of February 15, Ernst wrote received telegram from Kurt, he is asking about your address. We wrote a Cross letter to Kurt. Will write Cross letter to Grete and her siblings. Our children send regards

Postcard from Ernst Lorenz, Bruenn dated July 4, 1942
Mrs. Helene Reik, Transport U 8891, Theresienstadt

Following Hanna's letter of March 15, sent second Red Cross letters to Kurt today included your regards and your well being and address. Are you busy? May be at Richard's? Please reply Guido's request at J.O. address. Stay well.

Written in pencil - Now I wait with longing with news from dear Ernst, have received nothing since August 29, and hope to have a reply from you. Illegible

Postcard from Bertha Lanzer from Prague, dated -no date - to
Mrs. Helene Reik, Bruenner Transport U891 Theresienstadt

Dearest Helene:

We hope that you are well. Ernst received a reply telegram from Kurt in which he requests your address. We sent Kurt a Cross letter. Nothing has changed for the time being. Regards to Olga. Sincerest kisses, Bertha, Rudolf.

Margosches Col.

[Postcard in block letters]

April 7, 1942

OWING JOHANNA'S LAST LETTER March 15, EXPEDITED TODAY SECOND RED CROSS LETTER TO KURT. ENCLOSED YOUR REGARDS, STATE OF HEALTH, ADDRESS. ARE YOU WORKING, PERHAPS WITH RICHARD? ANSWER GUIDO'S INQUIRY REGARDING JO'S ADDRESS. STAY WELL!

Stamp not cancelled

ERNST LORENZ
BRNO
SCHERAKLANE 8/III

MRS
HELENE REIK U/891
THERESIENSTADT
DRESDEN BARRACKS RM 136

[On top of card written by Helene Reik]

NOW I AM WRITING LONGINGLY FOR NEWS FROM DEAR ERNST SINCE AUGUST 29. NO NEWS AND A PARCEL. YOUR DEAR LAST REPORTS OF MAY 18, AND MARCH 23 GAVE ME GREAT JOY AND I HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU SOON THROUGH ERNST.

[bottom of card is illegible]

Kremsiei
January 7, 1942
Dearest Sister-in-law Helene!

Since I have remained without an answer to your dear letter of December 21, and my [sic] picture postcard of December 26, 1941, I, today take the liberty to respectfully ask you again for your January support contribution of [?] 700, as in the past.

The dear Olga informed me, that as far as she knows, Gudel and Fritz-at the time 14 days ago-had not yet known of blessed Mama's death. The Zieglers in Bodiva ought to have an easier time coming to terms with this sad news.

Dear Ludwig on such occasions always had the good luck to have dear Otto as consoler. Some people must always suffer in this world without anyone willing to help them.

On January 2, 1942 we moved from 10/B to section 17/A (Pavilion 17/ A).

I EXPECT AN ANSWER SOON, PLEASE BY LETTER, AND I SURELY SHALL ANSWER THE LETTER.

Many regards to our dear relatives, especially the dear children in England, to the dear "KURT" [?], David Rudolfer, and other very dear friends. I AM ALREADY AGAIN ONE AND A HALF YEARS ALMOST WITHOUT PERSONAL CONTACT with my dear [?]ya and my OWN children. For this reason everyone here is to be pitied.

I am sending you, my best regards, and remain with many thanks,

Your loyal brother-in-law
Victor Reik.

Sender: Victor Reik
Provincial Sanitarium
Kremsiei 17/B

Postcard
Esquire

Kromeliz

Mrs. Helene Reik
Brno
Allee Lane 26
Protectorale.

Dr. Edward Adler
Specialist in Internal Medicine
Brno
Dvorak Lane 14/I

Certificate

Mrs. Helene Reik at Schonerer Lane 18A, suffers from hypertension with angina pectoris. The attacks very frequently occur at night. The patient does not sleep well and is very excitable. I therefore recommend that she does not live together with strangers.

Brno, August 16 1941

March 3, 1942

Dear Helene!

Many thanks for the excellent pudding. You really are a great cooking artist. Permit me to help out with a little soap. Probably a Bier-compress and heat application (hot and light) would be best for your knee joint, but unfortunately, for the time being, I can't leave my barracks to see what one could do. It probably will be possible in a little while.

I was with Dr. Eisner in the same room for one week. He was a nice quiet man.

Death has been a grim reaper among us. I am quite well for the time being, and am happy about our good news.

Heartfelt regards to you and Johanna to whom I will write soon.

Holding you in high esteem,

Your cousin Richard.

Sender
Dr. Werner
Hohenelber Barracks
Room 927
Transport No. U/628

Esquire
Mrs. Helene Reik
Dresden Barracks
Room 136
Transport No. U/891

[no date]

Dear Cherished sister-in-law!

I am inquiring [?] as to your health. Are you together with your dear sister? Please write. Victor and I send [?] most affectionate greetings.

Your faithful sister-in-law

Olga-Fredo

Note: apparently [?] blacked out by writer to make corrections

No stamp

Postcard

Olga Reik
M-Ostrav
Schlik Lane 13

Mrs. Helene Reik
N. "V 891"
Theresienstadt

Censored
JKG Prague

November 27, 1942

Note: JKG COULD mean Judische Kultusgemeinile
(Jewish Religious Community)

Dear Helene,

Don't be angry, because I am only today thanking you for your concern. Yes, my dear Helene, great harm has befallen my cherished Lizy, and all of this in these difficult times.

You can imagine how I feel knowing the poor one is all alone far away, that she longs for me and I can't get to her. Actually she seems to have found some good friends there, but I feel she is alone nevertheless! Alas, it is of no use to grieve and complain. God ought to take mercy on us and send peace.

What have you heard so far from your dear children? Are Gretl and Rei[?] already married? Too bad you didn't accept Kurt's repeated invitation to join him, you would have been spared everything. At times it would be nice to know what the future will bring. Here, as everywhere, everyone is very nervous; one is afraid of what the next day will bring. Yesterday we had to hand over all furs and woolen clothing. Since I am so cold-sensitive, I am suffering extraordinarily because of this. I can't buy a pair of wool stockings; I am wearing summer stockings and am freezing. Let us hope I stay healthy to see my beloved Lizerl again. Presently I am getting no news. I am so sorry that Mrs. Pollak is not feeling well. Sometimes I am overcome with a longing to see her and to talk to her. We always were getting along very well with each other. Paula writes to me in utter despair that her daughters are no longer with her. Are you, dear Helene, sometimes getting together with her and Richard? They say around here that the older age groups over 70 will not be included in the transport. There is talk of an old

people's home. Nobody knows anything definite. From your dear letter I learned that all of your acquaintances are gone. One cannot imagine the whole thing.

May God continue to protect us.

Write again dear Helene and give my regards to the dear Johanna.

Affectionately, your Mrs. Werner.

January 13, 1942

What did you do with the furniture?

Letter address

Mrs. Helene Reik

Brno

Allee Lane 26

Sender: Hedwig Werner, Trebitsch, Dolin 16

Prossnitz

November 25, 1941

Dear Aunt Helene!

Already for a long time I intended to write to you, but once one starts to put things off, it takes a long time until one gets down to action. Therefore, please don't be angry with me, because I kept you waiting so long for an answer. But, because I am writing every other day to the dear Hermi, my writing needs are thoroughly taken care of. I am so sorry that you had to move again, but one really cannot do anything about it, since after all, we simply have to accept the given circumstances. I hope above all that the news about the discontinuation of the transports is true and that you, even if this should not be the case, will be spared. I am very interested in the good news from Otto. We got news dated May, then not until August and had not a sign of life from him ever since.

Be so kind and send me the Lanzer's address, so that I can ask what they have heard from Otto. Since May we write regularly each month via the German Red Cross and hope to get an answer soon. A nephew of the Baer's allegedly wrote that the Baers are in the Litzmannstadt ghetto, and Lene has written to the Elder Council there. Fritz undoubtedly is working on transport matters in Brno.

For the time being, I am still working at the upholsterers [could be decorator, or paper hanger] and hope there will be no change soon. From Hermi and the dear little ones I have good news, and got already some knitted warm items from her. You can well imagine that she is very concerned, but for a long time now I had wrapped myself in silence with regard to the events. She had of course even there heard about them, and so I had to write her everything.

Pauli is doing very nicely in school and occasionally sends me some voluntary homework he has done.

Dear Hermi is very busy; she is at the office from 7 in the morning until 7 at night, and the lunch break is also very short. However, on the other hand, the relatives are very nice, look after the children and also otherwise take a keen interest in our fate.

I hope that since your last card, that you again had news from your children and that they are all well. Otherwise, there is nothing new, which is nice. Everywhere we have the same worries but one must not let them take away our sanity. I am very lucky to be still employed, and in addition, we have lots of work, so that during the day, I have hardly time to worry. After all, I believe what will happen, happens, and we must keep our health and above all, not lose our heads.

With heartfelt regards to you, Jo and Ernst,
I am your loyal nephew
Heinz

Please write again soon.

Letter:

Mrs. Helene Reik
Brno
Allee Lane 26 First Floor

Sender:

Heinz Reik
C/o Novak

Pressnitz, Kirchen Lane 15

Brno
January 26, 1942

Dear Sisters!

We are constantly thinking of you, as are the people who shared the apartment with you. We hope that you spent the night all right, and at least, got somewhat used to the existing conditions. Ruza is sending you the cord for the muff; she already had it ready for you. How fortunate that the cold has abated somewhat, thus the trip after all will be a little easier for you. I have notified Kurt and Viktor, also Dr. Pragnaeco[?].

Forgive me if I was unfriendly while packing; I meant no harm. Let me know through Fritz B. if I can do anything for you.

Stay well and keep up the hope that better days will come again for you.

With love your brother

Ernst.

Technical Division: Technical Workshop

Requestor: Technical Building Administration. House HV/376

Work Requested: Soldering of two casseroles for female inmate of 167/HI

Building Administration
Dresden Barrack

Date: March 5, 1943

Received: March 8

Urgency: 2

Forwarded to Workshop: March 8

To Housekeeping:

Transport No. 26/891

Name: Reik

First name: Helene

Age: 59 years

Requests permission for the setting up of a hospital bed in building HI Room No. 182

Justification:

Exact Medical Findings:

Signature of the chief physician.

Translated by Glukstein

11/10/42

God bless and protect you. Remain strong, my beloved child. I hope your marriage will make you happy; you really have earned it through your honesty and ability. Your so dear and heartfelt letters of July and 8/28 which [?] brought me greatest joy.....

11/25/42 _____ see special page

11/29/42

Ghetto [?] 12 days ago I got through a serious stomach operation under the supervision [?] of the dear Professor Dr. Richard Werner. God has protected me until now.....

12/7/42

Ghetto, the 4th day of Chanukah; 5 little candles. Yesterday it was 20 years since my beloved [?] was operated on [?].... I am here already for 4 1/2 weeks.....

12/8/42 _____

12/9/42

Ghetto. Last day of Chanukah.....I am here already for almost 5 weeks.....

12/19/42 _____

12/22/42 _____

12/24/42

Ghetto, Christmas eve. My most tenderly beloved children! The Fourth Christmas without you and already 8 years without my beloved [?]..... This afternoon Susi's mother Mrs. Vogel visited me.....

2

12/26/42

4:30 in the afternoon in the Ghetto. It is Saturday the second day of Christmas. I am feeling better already and hope that things will go uphill with me....I hope that I will after all get to see you my beloved children.....

12/27/42

My beloved little Kurt, two days ago I was so hopeful and happy despite the long and [?] separation from you, but since yesterday I am so depressed despite the obvious improvement of my health, so that I have to look a your dear laughing face in order to get a little bit happier.....

12/29/42

[Mrs. Reik apparently writes about an operation on her leg]

12/29/42

11o'clock in the morning. I just got a fresh dressing on my leg. Thank God, the wound is healing nicely and God grant that it won't suppurate. Today is [?] Langna's birthday; it already had been celebrated on the 26th.....

12/30/42_____

12/30/42_____

12/31/42_____

3

1/1/43

Noon New Year's Day in the hospital where I have been for 8 weeks. [Mrs. Reik writes about her serious illness, a cellulites. She mentions that good care helped her to overcome her illness and especially thanks her cousin Prof. Dr. Werner, who helped her, and visited her frequently. Last night she dreamed of her beloved husband Berthold when they were both young.]....

1/2/43

Ghetto Theresienstadt. I have been in the hospital for 8 weeks [She mentions the fabulous hospital]

1/3/43

10 o'clock in the morning my tenderly beloved boy. I just read your so very dear letter with the New Year's wishes for 1942; they are so pleasant and beautiful.....

1/3/43

Ghetto Theresienstadt, still in the hospital [Mrs. Reik writes that Prof. Dr. Werner has supported her very much].....

1/4/43

[Mrs. Reik thanks God that she got through her illness in the hope to see her children again]

1/5/43 _____

1/5/43

Ghetto in the hospital

4

Five pictures dated 1/6/43

[Mrs. Reik writes that, thank God, she is on the way to recovery and is making the first attempts to get out of bed and to move around. Today she was out of bed for a quarter of an hour. She thinks they the children would hardly recognize her, since she has wasted away about 40 kilos [ca 88lb]

Three times she mentions the Day of the Three Magis and the fact that her mother's birthday had always been so nicely celebrated on this day. Her mother would now be 85 years old but died in 1911 when her son Kurt was not quite $\frac{3}{4}$ year old.

She reminisces about the years in Brunn [Brno] and hopes that God will keep her son so that he can be with her and his wife. She hopes that she will be with her children and her sweet little granddaughter after all the bad war years and experiences.....]

1/7/43

[On the back of a picture captioned "Grufenberg, Whitsuntide 1934 Mrs. Reik reminisces about Whitsuntide she and her late husband spent together]

1/7/43

My beloved mother's birthday; she would have been 86 today and is already dead for 31 years. Together with my dear Nephew [?], who is already fro two years in Palestine, I am placing flowers on my beloved mother's grave on her Yahrzeit in May. [The picture shows her and her nephew placing the flowers]... Usually my beloved husband accompanied me, but at that time he unfortunately was already, very ill.. With great sadness I remember how beautiful it was 35 years ago

5

my beloved husband, I and our beloved eldest, who was 8 months old, for dear mother's birthday.....

1/8/43

[Mrs. Reik writes about her treatment in the hospital]

1/9/43

I make the first attempts at walking. Afterwards I was very ill.....

1/11/43

[On the back of a graveside in Troppav] The cherished picture often gives me solace and lets me hope that I will again see and visit your dear resting place....

1/15/43

[A picture of a bathtub and warm water heater] Ghetto, Clinic where I have been lying for 10 weeks and got through a serious stomach operation and a phlegmon on my thigh. A month ago I was very sick and only my faith in God , my longing for you my beloved children, your dear little pictures, and the dear letters, which I read again and again have enabled me to overcome everything.

How proud was the beloved Papa of our bathroom. And how you beloved children enjoyed the beautiful bathroom. I have been here for a year and have not enjoyed a warm bath since my arrival. I have lost 35 kilos [77lb]

6

1/16/43 _____

1/16/43

Ghetto Theresienstadt. Where I have been in hospital for 10 weeks after a stomach operation that turned out well.....

1/16/43 _____

1/17/43

[Mrs. Reik writes that she had three operation during her ten weeks in the hospital.. She also mention Professor Dr. Richard]

1/17/43

Still in the hospital, had another operation on my leg, but thank God it is healing well....

1/18/43

Ghetto 5 o'clock in the morning. Just awakened. Ten weeks in the clinic [Mrs. Reik writes about a beautiful vivid dream she had during the night]

1/18/43

[On the back of a picture of her husband's grave Mrs. Reik tells how she thinks of her beloved husband Berthold and reminisces about times together]

1/20/43

[On the back of a 1938 picture of her son writes a letter to him reminiscing about times spent together]

SPECIAL PAGE

11/25/42

[On the back of a picture dated 4/12/31 of her husband and son Mrs. Reik remembers a happy past and bemoans the fact that her husband had left her 8 years ago]

7

1/21/43

[On the back of a picture of her granddaughter Mrs. Reik regrets that she could not fulfill her family's wish to join them but hopes that God will permit her to do so in the future]

1/21/43 [Mrs. Reik writes to her granddaughter]

1/23/43

Saturday 10:30 I prayed. Today I am already without fever. Yesterday at noon got a high fever after I had no fever for five weeks.....

1/23/43 _____

1/25/43 _____

1/26/43

Ghetto hospital where I already spent 10 1/2 weeks. After three operations I have been declared cured; only the afflicted leg is still very weak and so am I. I am still lying down a lot. The view in the picture [a view of her family's apartment] reminds me very much of Lake Garda. On our honeymoon I was there with your Papa.....

1/28/43

[Mrs. Reik hopes her son will have a second child, a son who will continue the family name]

8

1/29/43

Ghetto noon, half past eleven, hospital, here since 11/8. [Helene Reik writes about three stomach operations and her injured leg. She apparently is getting out of bed for half an hour at a time. Professor Dr. Richard Werner visited her.]

1/30/43

Saturday morning in the Ghetto hospital, today for 12 weeks. [Helene Reik writes about her stomach ulcer and her festering leg]

1/30/43

Saturday evening in the hospital in the Ghetto Theresienstadt.

My beloved little Kurt, now I am here already for an entire year and of it almost three months in the hospital. Now already..... but it still takes some time until I will recover from the three operations.....

1/31/43 _____

2/1/43

Evening, 7 o'clock. Nobody of my family has been with me today. In the afternoon Dr. Lichtwitz's family and the [?]......

2/2/43

Five o'clock in the morning, slept well.....[?] The widow of a [?] Regional School Inspector whose daughter is [?] in Brno....

9

2/3/43 _____

2/3/43

Ghetto hospital where I have been for almost three months, but I am almost well again.

2/5/43 _____

2/6/43

Ghetto, Saturday afternoon in the hospital after three operation through which, God be Praised, I got well.

2/8/43

Ghetto Theresienstadt in the morning. In the hospital where today I have been exactly three months, gotten through three operations, a serious stomach operation a festering leg.....

2/8/43 _____

2/11/43 _____

2/12/43

Ghetto.....since three days ago in the [?]. This morning the medical director told me that my bed was needed and that I would have to move to a room. Because of my weakness I am very afraid of, but nothing can be done it.

10

2/13/43

[Helene Reik that her worry about housing has been lifted. She mentions again that because of a lack of beds, she had to give up her bed.]

2/16/43

Early morning in the Ghetto after three months in the hospital. Have gotten well through {?}. Since four days ago I am here in my room and am [?] still very much in need of rest.....

3/5/43

Ghetto, Old People's Home, before dinner. Now three weeks have passed since I am back from surgery. Yesterday on the street I met the capable young doctor, Dr. Springer who operated on me. He was happy about the way I looked. Only my leg is very, very, weak and also severe back pain.....

3/12/43

My dearly beloved children, today five years have passes, since you my beloved little Kurt, in our beautiful home in Troppav, presented me to your dear little wife as you dear bride. """"[written on the front of a picture of son and daughter-in-law}

3/16/43

[Helene Reik reminisces about a trip to Rome taken with family members twelve years ago on March 16. She is sitting at the window of a room where 21 women are living.....

11

3/20/43

In the Ghetto Theresienstadt, Erev Purim. My tenderly beloved children. This time the anniversary of many events fall together. Tomorrow is Purim, the second here in the Ghetto, the birthday of dear Aunt [?](Esther) and my beloved children, your 5th anniversary and my 37th wedding anniversary [Helen Reik then reminisces about her son's wedding]

3/23/43

[On the back of a picture of Margarida]

Ghetto Theresienstadt. [?] little grandchild, today is your Grandma's 59th birthday.....

3/24/43

[Mrs. Reik writes that for the last few days she had terrible swollen legs]

3/24/43

Ghetto at noon. My beloved children." Yesterday was my 59th birthday, and I was longing for you with all my heart, my dearest ones. ...[In the afternoon she apparently was taken to the café where she listened for half an hour to music performed by the Vienna Philharmonic that moved her very much.]

3/28/43 _____

4/3/43

Icy cold in the Ghetto, Saturday noon. I am in bed, because after my very severe illness and three operations I got a nasty stomach ulcer. [Also mentioned is a cellulites of the left thigh which has been operated upon twice]

12

4/4/43

[Helene Reik writes that she is slowly recovering after three operations. Since she had a serious stomach operation, she still has to eat bland food. She has to get it herself, which is very difficult for her, because she had two serious operations on left leg.]

4/16/43/ _____

4/23/43 _____

4/26/43

[Mrs. Reik mentions that today is her big boy's birthday]

4/27/43

...I am very, very weak after my long illness and can wlk only a little. We have wonderful spring days, although it is very cold.....

5/9/43 _____

5/9/43 _____

5/13/43

A May day, everything is in glorius bloom in the Ghetto and it is also the birthday of my dearly beloved [?] The only worry you caused me and the beloved Papa were your serious illnesses. Otherwise you only gave us joy and likewise your dear sisters and dear brother....

13

5/20/43 _____

5/21/43 _____

5/21/43 _____

5/25/43 _____

5/26/43 _____

5/28/43

[On her husband's 70th birthday Helene Reik recalls his 60th birthday which they and the children celebrated in Vienna]

6/22/43

[On a picture of her daughter Margarete Mrs. Reik recalls Margarete's day of birth and sends her 10000 greetings and good wishes]

6/29/43

[On the back of a picture of grand-daughter and daughter-in-law dated June 1941, Helene Reik thinks of what has happened to her in the two years since]

6/29/43

About now used to be the magnificent cherry-time, -cakes, dumpling, canning- I haven't seen cherries for two years.....

-July 43

[Mrs. Reik notes that she has been in the Ghetto for 1 ½ years. She is elated that her "beloved thou" have a happy life]

14

7/15/43

[Mrs. Writes about a visit by Berta, Rudi, Johanna, and [?] Schafer. Some of the visitors had lived with her in the same house in Brno]

7/21/43

I am as thin as a reed – 80 [88lbs]

8/3/43 _____

8/17/43

[Mrs. Reik mentions that she is recovering and is taking advantage of the nice days to be outside]

8/21/43 _____

8/28/43 [Mrs. Reik writes a note to her granddaughter who already is 4 ½ years old]

Undated

[On the back of a picture of her husband] My beloved husband at his parents' grave in the cemetery in [?], our dear old homeland. Now already 8 ¼ years have passed since he entered a better beyond. I myself are now already lying as [?] weeks here in the hospital.....

Tomorrow is the 60th anniversary of my beloved, blessed parents. In 14 days I will have my 59th birthday, which after a long serious illness.....

Now I am already here for 14 ½ months. I have lost 40 kilos [ca. 81 lb] and how long will I have to wait yet, my beloved children, until

I underwent 3 operations, a serious stomach operation, a festering let after an injection.... And I am now indescribably weak. I have severe back pain and also still much stomach-and abdominal pain; and for all that I am completely alone. Three months in the hospital and 6 weeks before that I lay in my room. For almost 4 months I could not keep any food down. The nurses.... and have no time for me and I am a great.....

A letter dated 1/7/43 by Helene Reik to the office of Work-and Health Care in the Ghetto Theresienstadt requesting an increase in her food rations.

Helen Reik states that she has been in Theresienstadt since January 28, 1941. She has worked as a knitter and a seamstress. Since 8/15/41 she has been a social services assistant; some of her work dealing with funerals.

Since the beginning of October she has been suffering from a stomach ulcer and had to undergo emergency operation. Since November she has been confined to the hospital's surgery section. Now, after some months, during which she lost 77 pounds, she again can eat without pain.., She urgently requests an increase in her food rations.

Note: On the back of the letter is a diary entry dated 1/19/43. I doubt that the letter was ever submitted.

Dear Helene!

3/III. 42

My heartfelt thanks for the splendid pudding. You are an outstanding cooking artist. Therefore, I am helping you out with a little soap. Probably your knee joint inflammation would benefit from several baths (wet packs or lights). Unfortunately at this time I cannot leave my station to see what one could do. In a short time it will probably be possible. I was one week together with Dr. Eisner in the same room, he was a nice quiet man. The death had a heavy toll with us. At the present things are well with me and I am pleased with our good news. My best regards to you and Johanna to whom I will write next.

I am your respectful writer,
Cousin Richard

Dear Sisters,

We constantly think of you and your shared living quarters and hope that you successfully passed the night and have adjusted to the situation.

Rizza sent me the -----for the ship which she had prepared for you. It is lucky that the cold is a little improved so that your journey is easier. I gave news to Kurt and Victor and Dr. Prajnacco.

Forgive me if I was unfriendly during the packing. It was not intentional. If I can do anything for you, let me know via Fritz B,

Stay healthy with the hope that soon you will have better days.

With love, your brother

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

Olmiitz, 12/21/41

My dear Mrs. Reik!

I hope this letter will have reached your hands unimpededly. . I mislaid your dear card and kept your new address only vaguely in my head –I wanted to answer you immediately, but I am only getting to it today, a Sunday around evening, where I am not going out and are taking a thorough rest. I believe I already told you that the same apartment we had to move into an eight square meter room. Alas, we had to yield our large, beautiful airy room to a family of four. Now are living next to the kitchen where five women have to cook. We are getting along well, since we are all sensible enough to say: that's the way it is and we can't change it. Things are often very difficult and complicated, and one is truly glad to get barely done making dinner. Aside from the coal stove there is also a three-burner gas stove. I am a completely changed person. After all because of the crowded living conditions, one has to be considerate everywhere. Only within one's own four walls one is still master of one's self. How much, dearest Mrs. Reik, I sometimes long to have a good talk with you. Lately I had such a longing for you as never before--. In genera, the people in the house are nice human beings. One simply has to live together;

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under other circumstances, one certainly would have made a different choice. Did I already tell you that Mrs. Bachrach and her daughters are living above us? One of them is widowed, and other is divorced. Mrs. Bauer's husband has been remarried for some time to an Aryan woman from Troppau. Angela and

the little Renate have lived for about two months near us as subtenants. Marianne is a nurse near Prague. The Wlaters live out in a suburb, and he works in a brickyard-perhaps not at the moment. The Warburgs live close to us, about 10 minutes away in an attic-apartment. The kitchen and rooms are small but quite charming. They still like to socialize but still are too much alone, are in low spirits and great pessimists.

How are you getting along? I hope you are well and in good spirits. Did you hear from your children? Will you keep on hearing from them via the Red Cross?

Here I was interrupted and am continuing today on 1/6/42. In the meantime I got your dear card of 12/29. I have been very busy. The days are short and in the evening I am tired and worn out. In the afternoon I frequently have company of newly won very dear good friends, who already have given many times proof of their friendship. Mrs. Rosa Reiks death has surprised and saddened me very much. The woman couldn't yet have been 60 years old. Cousins Elise's husband died in Jagerndorf about 3 months ago. He was over 80 years old.

3

In the last years we too have become an old couple. We still have our good days, but otherwise we already feel our age! Since the carbuncle affair my dear husband has lost much weight, and it is now very difficult to make up for it. Twice weekly (Saturdays and Sundays) I eat at the *Middle Class Kitchen, otherwise I cook for myself and my husband at home. My husband has the noon meal at the above mentioned kitchen and in the evening I do the cooking. This is really crucial, since the noon meal is often insufficient. For the time being we still do our shopping nearby. How about you? Yesterday I gave your regards to the Schwoner [?]. they live far out but frequently are at Mrs. Bauer's house. Cousin Angela has become an old woman; she worries about her children. The Walters have bad luck with their living arrangements. Now in winter they have to move with their 3 children from a bad apartment, where they stayed for a short time, to one that is even worse. Both have become downright old. Enough now! Many sincere regards from my dear husband. Special regards and kisses, my dear friend, you sincere Rosa Spitzen

* A middle class kitchen (Mittelstandskuche) was an establishment maintained by a social service or religious organization, serving midday meals at a moderate price. In Berlin, the Jewish Congregation (Judische Gemeinde) maintained such kitchens in various parts of the city.

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On the margins:

[?] Philip in Troppav, has died; his son-in-law has been killed in the war. Mrs Guttman in Freudenthal visits me often. Her son already has been for one year in Palestine. Alas! She has no news from him. Her daughter-in-law and grandchildren from Brno are already in the East; she has no news. A terrible time!

Please send the Lanzer's address. We too want to congratulate them. Don't forget and answer soon. I am looking forward to it.

4.II, 1942

Dear esteemed lady,

I thank you for your dear lines and for the chocolate which was delivered by Robert yesterday also my heartfelt thanks. My wife visited me yesterday and I hope she will come again, tomorrow, Please don't loose your nerves.

(From Bridgette)

I cannot decipher after "Unser lager inspekteur}

[2]

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

Trieste. 8/29 1938- 11:30

My Dear Ones!

Your shipment has already arrived! That really was fast. The shipping company will fetch it this afternoon and put it in temporary storage. On one of the next days, when I again will be in the city, the dividing up will take place.

In regard to business there is nothing new. I'll still wait until Wednesday to make final travel plans. In any case, I'll let you know in time when I'll be coming.

Now I have to catch the bus again to be in Sistiana by noon.

With the most sincere regards and kisses and again with heartfelt thanks.

Your

Kurt.

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

Trieste, 31 August 1938

My Dear Ones!

Yesterday we got Mom's dear card of the 27th of the month, written just prior to her departure; while in the meantime you probably will have received my detailed letter of the 28th and 29th of the month.

To mention the most important item first: Half an hour ago the shipment that got here so fast and smoothly was unpacked at Zwillingen by Mr. and Mrs. Omg/. Mucki, and me. All the splendor left us speechless. To what trouble and bother Grete must have gone with the purchases. Hence again many, many heartfelt thanks. To be sure, I haven't yet tried on the suits. That we will do later tonight in Sistiana. But if they fit Hans, it certainly will be the same with me. Unfortunately, I had not written you that in Rio one only wears lightest colors; Yes, really stylish is actually only pure white. Thus perhaps the colors turned out to be a little too dark. But on the other hand, the quality is probably all the better.

By the way, I won't yet bet my head that we will indeed wind up in Brazil. The difficulties in obtaining a visa are increasing instead of decreasing every day. Therefore, I have temporarily postponed Project 1 – about which

2

I wrote you on Monday – namely to travel to Prague today. Rather all my documents will be forwarded today by the Generali to its Prague headquarters, so that they can find out for sure from the Brazilian consulate how things are going and whether, yes or no, the visa can be obtained. The answer ought to get here by the end of this week, and then anything further can be decided.

Our odds and ends are slowly rolling in. The notification of Omani's shipment has already been received by the local shipping and storage company. However, the shipment itself has not yet arrived.

Perhaps at the end of the week Mrs. Aigner will be here again, and then at last we will find out in detail and clearly how things are going with our father. He has always been very tight-lipped in his correspondence and lately again has been quite pessimistic regarding the possibility of an early departure.

Mucki is right now at the Café Nazionale at the big square, and old Mr. Mandler is her company. She is feeling significantly better now and is completely taken by the little baby clothes.

With heartfelt regards and kisses, and again many thanks,

Your loyal

Kurt

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

3

My Dear Omami! [?]

The little clothes are absolutely charming, and I like them so much. At their purchase every possibility (regarding colors) has been taken into account. The little Reik one will only have to hurry up and grow into them. The bath towels are wonderful and have such appetizing colors. It will be pure pleasure to dry oneself with them. There was a bit of excitement with the towels – which ones were for the Fri-ischen[?] and which ones, were ours. Then everything was settled. We got 12 similar patterns and they 5 other patterns and 3 white ones.

Well then, many many heartfelt thanks and best regards for everyone.

Your [?]

In the dear company of your children.....

Mandler

Translated by Brigitte Freiden

July 14 – page 7

I just woke Mararita with the noise of my typewriter keyboard and Mucky thinks it is time today, to close this letter. I can follow up on her wishes as the airplane does not leave for 3 days. For today my loving regards from your

true oldest son

Translated by Brigitte Freidin

July 16, 1941

There has been no mail in the last two days and Mrs. Wollner's arrival unknown. I assume that the girls and Hans are enjoying their free time and are swimming, etc. rather than spending time writing.

We are having marvelous weather with one severe rainstorm that quickly dried up. If you come at this time of year you would feel you were in paradise.

Mucky is very busy with Margarita and has not been able to keep her promises to herself to write to various cousins in Budapest. Our youngster is like a whirlwind and nothing is safe from her actions and she does not really understand what is allowed and what is not.

Now if close with love from me and them,

Your loving son

Translated by Brigitte Freiden

Rio de Janeiro – Nov. 1, 1941

I am writing not in my usual order but I am not in the office and received your letter and one from the sisters.

Thanks you for the pressed fern and violets, they mean so much. To remind us of our old home. Winter is starting for you and we have had the first major summer heat over 30degrees, but now it is better.

I am sorry you did not receive my letter of July 30 which had a fat letter from Hans with it, you probably have received mind of August 16 by now plus other of June 15 and 27 September.

I cannot believe that the news you were given at the emigration bureau of no more departure possibilities. The news from Jewish newspapers is that exits are available to middle America, and if that is possible, then why not to Brazil. Ships arrive here several times a month from Spain and Portugal. The passage and its discomfort and the many stops to get here may be more than you feel you can handle which is what my siblings write to me. I cannot judge if it is worthwhile for you to face the unknown where you are alone, or to take the chance to take the journey and be with your children again. Have you written to the Brazilian Consulate in Berlin about a visa? That is the first step, you have to have permission

2

from them to get the through passage permits from Spain or Portugal, that is the way to do. You would brighten our lives and for you a better way.

Put a piece of white paper under these airmail thin letters to make it easier to read the typing.

My vitamin injections are almost over and I feel much better and my rheumatism is better also due to rubbing compounds.

Enclosed are photos of my little family in various poses.

Mucky had a letter this week from her father who is lonely in the country. Her brother-in-law and family visit for their vacation. Her sister who married last year is unable to come, the probability of their getting the inheritance is very complicated and does not look good.

Good news about Hans, he works 10 hours a day at a dairy, loading and unloading milk cans where he gets food to eat also, at night he studies technical subjects in mathematics, etc. Also he took a hiking trip during vacation, still studying to get into technical school. Reni is a wonderful vegetable cook. Grete is making advances in her career.

Margarita just made in her pants which she was not supposed to do

Love from your oldest

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

Jewish Physician
Dr. Edmund Adler

Certificate

Mr. Helene Reik, born 1884, Allee Street 26, suffers from hypertension of 180-190 mg mercury with an enlargement of the left side of the heart, and loud systolic sounds over the aorta. She [suffers?] from a pronounced angina pectoris.

Specialist for Internal Medicine
F. Adler, MD
Brno, Uvorak Lane 14/1

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[A postcard written in block letters]

5) PRAGUE 3/28/1942

DEAREST HELENE! WE ARE HAPPY OVER CARD 3/14. SENT IT TO ERNST. HAVE SENT KURT, CHILDREN YOUR REGARDS, LETTERS CROSSSED. MRS. FRITZI IS BRINGING OUR REGARDS TO YOU. STAY WELL, GIVE REGARDS TO ALL FRIENDS OLGA

MOST TENDER REGARDS

Berta Rudolf

[underline words were covered with //// censors attempt to render word illegible]

BERTA LANZER

Postcard [no stamp]

PRAGUE I
RAHM LANE 4

U891

Received: 3/28/1942
Expedited: 4/1/1942
[Censor's notation]

MRS.
HELENE REIK
BRNO TRANSPORT U891
DRESDEN BARRACKS
ROOM 136
THERESIENSTADT

[since the card had no stamp, it was most likely carried by Mrs. Fritz. It was written 3/28 and received by the censors the same day 3/28]

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[Postcard in block letters]

[No Date]

DEAREST HELENE! WE HOPE YOU ARE WELL. ERNST GOT A REPLY TELEGRAM FROM KURT IN WHICH HE ASKED FOR YOU ADDRESS. THE LATTER IS NOT PERMITTED. WE SENT KURT A CROSS-LETTER. FOR US, FOR THE TIME BEING, NOTHING HAS CHANGED.

GIVE REGARDS TO OLGA

TENDER KISSES

Berta Rudolf

[underlined words covered with /////; censor's attempt to render word illegible]

Berta Lanza
Prague I Removal

Stamp not cancelled

Censored
JKG Prague

Mrs.
Helene Reik
Brno Transport U No 891
Theresienstadt

U No 891

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[Postcard in block letters]

[No date]

DEAR MADAM

HOPE YOU ARE WELL. WOULD BE HAPPY TO NEWS FROM YOU VERY SOON. FOR US EVERYTHING UNCHANGED. GIVE BEST REGARDS TO XXX JO. Little WALTER SENDS HIS REGARDS. REGARDS FROM ALL OF US

YOUR
OLLY KRAMER

[underlines words covered with ////; censor's attempt to render words illegible]
[XXX censored]

OLLY KRAMER
BRNO
ALLEE LANE 26

[No Stamp]

MRS.

HELEN REIK
U 891

Censored
JKG Prague

THERESIENSTADT

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[Postcard in lower case block letters]

4)

3/17/1942

Heinz sent card; are happy knowing you are well! This and Johanna's card 3/6 first news. We hope you no longer have the foot ailment! We send! A soon as permissible
We will fulfill your wishes. To all the most tender regards.

Berta Rudolf

[Underlined words covered with ////; censor's attempt to render words illegible]

Rudolf Lanzer

No Stamp

No. U/891

Prague I

Rahm Lane 1

Mrs

Received: 3/17/1942
Expedited: 3/18/1942

Helene Reik
Brno Transprt U 891
Room 126
Dresden Barracks
Theresienstadt

[censor's notation]

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[Postcard in block letters]

1/17/1943

AFTER HEINZ BERLFRITZ ALSO WROTE
THAT YOU ARE ALL THERE.
ARE VERY HAPPY XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXX
CONTINUE TO STAY WELL!
TENDER REGARDS

[XXXXX censored]

ERNST LORENZ
BRNO
SCHERAK LANE 81/III

[No Stamp]

Mrs HELENE REIK

Received: 1/19/1943

TRP: U No: 891

[Censor's notation]

THERESIENSTADT

DRESDEN BARRACKS
R[oom] 136

17.

[postcard in block letters]

7)

PRAGUE 15 APRIL 1942

DEAREST HELENE! INFORMED ERNST OF YOUR CARD 3/14. DO YOU TREAT YOUR FOOT PAIN? CROSS-MAIL TAKES AT LEAST 6 MONTHS. DID ACQUAINTANCES TRANSMIT REGARDS? OLGA, FRANZL DID NOT WRITE TO BROTHER-IN-LAW. STAY WELL!!

MOST TENDER REGARDS

Berta Rudolf

BERTHA LANZER
PRAGUE I; RAHM LANE 1

[No Stamp]

U891

Received: 4/15/1942
Expedited: 4/17/1942

[Censor's notation]

MRS.
HELENE REIK
BRNO TRANSPORT U891
DRESDEN BARRACKS
ROOM 136
THE RESIENSTADT

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[postcard in lower case block letters]

2/26/1942

Dearest Helene!

Repeat contents of card 2/15. Ernst wrote: "Return cable from Kurt, asks for you address." We write cross-letter to Kurt, will write cross-letter to Grete, siblings.

Our children send regards.

Berta Lanzer
Prague I Rahm Lane 1
Long Lane 19

[no stamp]

Stay well!

Mrs.

Tenderly

Helene Reik
Brno Transport

Berta Rudolf

U – 891

Received: 11/26/1942
Expedited: 11/27/1942

Theresienstadt

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[Postcard in block letters]

4/15/1942

8th CARD

VISITED FOR FIRST TIME THE MARRIED COUPPLE CARASCH, REPORTED EVERYTHING. THEY SEND MANY REGARDS, CONVINCED THAT HELENE XXXXXXXXXX BERTA IN FEAR OF TRANSPORT. IS ILSE THERE? HER TRANSPORT ALLEGEDLY CONTINUED TO PIASKI (LUBLIN)

[Underlined words covered with //;////; censor's attempt to render word illegible]
[XXXXXXX censored]

ERNST LORENZ
BRNO
SCHERAK LANE 8/III

Stamp not cancelled

Received: 4/16/1942
Expedited: 4/21/1942

MRS.
HELENE REIK U/891

THERESIENSTADT

[Censor's notation]

DRESDEN BARRACKS R[oom] 136

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[Postcard typed]

[No date]

My Very Dear Sister-in-Law

I am asking xxx how your are healthwise.. Are you together with your dear sister? Please write. Victor and I sent xxx most tender regards.

Your Faithful Sister-in Law

Olga – Fredo

[xxx censored]

Olga Reik
M. –Ostrav
Schlick Lane 13

No Stamp

Mrs.

Helene Reik

Censored
JKG Prague
2/27/1942

N “U 891”

Theresienstadt

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

Troppav 1/17/1942

Dear Helene!

I got your two sympathetic cards and thank you very much for them. Because of my sore hand I have lost what I liked best about writing. Since I won't be able to write fro some time, I am asking you to write me often. I am in the care of Dr. Niessner. They all say that healing will take a long time. My dear Hans writes often. From the other children I hear nothing, also never through the Red Cross. Of course, I cannot go out at all. Miss Walter is the most loyal companion. Mrs. Mayer and Mrs. Na[?] also come to see me, but we are now living very far from each other. Two old ladies Mrs. Sielber and Mrs. Kalus, have died recently. All one sees and hears is somber. How can one have the courage to live. Give my regards to all who sent regards to me, especially Johanna Berte and husband. In sincere friendship. E.K.

POSTCARD

Mrs.
Helene Reik
Brno
Allee Lane 26.

[Postage Stamp:
Troppav 1/8/42

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[Postcard in Block Letters]

PROSSNITZ 2/15/1942

DEAR AUNT!

RECEIVED YOUR CARD 1/24. TODAY FIRST CHANCE TO WRITE. I AM IN CONTACT WITH ERNST,
WHO NOTIFIED KURT. HAVE GOOD NEWS FROM OTTO 12/3. HOPE YOU ARE WELL WRITE.
HEARTFELT REGARDS

Heinz

Sender: Heinz Reik
Prossnitz
Comenius Street 22

POSTCARD

stamp not cancelled

Censored
JKG Prague

Mrs
Helene Reik
Transport No U 891
Theresienstadt
Transport Brno

CN

Translated by Fritz Gluckstein

[Postcard in Block Letters]

3/27/1943

IF I [apparently crossed out by writer] FINALL A CARD FROM YOU WOULD ARRIVE! THAT WOULD GIVE
ME GREAT JOY! THE CENSOR OUGHT TO HAVE ALREADY PITY ON ME AND REWARD MY LONG WAITING.
HENCE I CONFIDENTLY KEEP ON HOPING.

No stamp

ERNST LORENZ
BRNO
SCHERA LANE 8/III

Received: 4/1/1943 [Censor's stamp]

MRS

HELENE REIK
TRASP: 891 [stricken by writer] U No 891

THERESIENSTADT
DRESDEN BARRACKS RM 136

Note: Top of Censor's Stamp:

[?] of the Jews
in P]?)s