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To do justly is joy to the righteous,  
But ruin to the workers of iniquity.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Ellen Loeb

Trudi<sup>2</sup>:

I recently came across my sister, Ellen Loeb's, diaries as well as this collection of letters from Westerbork to the Strauss family, who were friends of my parents, in Amsterdam. The letters and the diaries had been in a bank vault for fifty years. My sister practiced as a physician in Dallas until her death in 1980. She and my mother, both survivors of the concentration camps, had been extremely close ever since the Second World War. Although she said that neither she nor my mother wanted their story told, I believe I'm actually following her wishes by publishing her diary, for she wrote at the beginning, "A book should be written about this."<sup>3</sup> Here, then, is our story.

My father was a physician in the German Army, Battalion #65 during World War I.<sup>4</sup> He was raising chickens where he was stationed in order to have eggs and chicken soup for his patients. He even sent eggs to his infant daughter (me) when I was sick. In 1916, my grandfather

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<sup>1</sup>Proverbs 21:15, The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text, A new trans, with aid and pervious versions and with constant consultation of Jewish authorities, (Philedelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1917, rpt. 1945, 1955), 1014.

<sup>2</sup>Trudi Shakno, Interview by Diane Plotkin, Dallas, Texas, June 23, 1991.

<sup>3</sup>See Diary of Ellen Loeb, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Julius Loeb, born July 10, 1881 at Huffelsheim, Germany, passed away November 2, 1943 at Westerbork, courtesy Local Archive Service, Amsteldijk 67, 1074 HZ Amsterdam.

was killed, run over by Kaiser Wilhelm's carriage in the spa of Kreuznach in the Hunsruck region of Germany (where Mosel wine is brewed). My father was allowed military leave to attend the funeral. He was discharged in 1918 and was awarded the Iron Cross on July 13, 1934 on a document which was dated March 18, 1935.

I was four years old when I saw him for the first time. I remember that he came home with a dachshund. I think he was a political liberal whose sympathy was with the working class. He felt that he, as a physician could contribute to the physical health of the community. He chose to live in Wuppertal (originally Elberfeld, the birthplace of Friedreich Engels), an industrial city in West Germany which was the twin city of Barmen. Wuppertal<sup>5</sup> was the headquarters of such companies as Bayer Medical, Solingen Steel, and Bemberg Rayon, while Barmenia, named after Barmen, was the very first medical insurance company in the western world. Credit unions also originated there.

After World War I, my father taught volunteers to administer first aid in case of disasters. He had used young German students as make-believe patients, and these young people turned against him when they later joined the Nazi party.

My father, who was president of the synagogue, was informed by other Jewish agencies to prepare as many Jewish teenagers as possible to leave the country and place them with Jewish families in Italy. He traveled to Italy with about fifteen girls. I was seventeen years old at the time. My father was contacted by a cousin of his, who lived in Holland. He offered whatever help we needed. By March or April 1932, my cousin and my parents arranged for me to go to

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<sup>5</sup>The Wupper River flows between Barmen and Elberfeld.

Holland.

In 1934, my father, who had studied under Dr. Semmelweis<sup>6</sup> in Vienna, was being sued for having performed an abortion, which was allegedly complicated by infection. Although he was judged innocent through the intercession of Professor Sauerbruch, Dean of the medical school in Berlin, my father's medical license was revoked, and my mother found him in his office contemplating suicide. In 1935, she had him taken across the border into Holland by a young Christian man. My father came to live my apartment in Amsterdam and never went back to Germany.

My mother stayed in Germany to dissolve the household. When she came to Amsterdam, she brought our maid with her. My father was too old to get a license to practice medicine in Holland; my mother was a trained dietitian. They couldn't bring any money, but because I had emigrated before the time of Hitler, I was allowed to bring a dowry. My parents' ten rooms of furniture and household goods were declared as my dowry, and this was then the basis of their new livelihood, a sanitarium for people who needed to be on special diets. This flourished since a physician, my father, was in charge, and my mother was the dietitian. Three years later they had spread out to three adjoining suburban two-story homes. They had ten people working in the kitchen and other places in this diet retirement home.

In 1938, on the eve of *Kristallnacht*, my father, hearing about the burning and destruction in Germany, suffered a cerebral hemorrhage. For a person who had a major cerebral stroke that

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<sup>6</sup>Ignaz Philipp Semmelweiss reduced maternal mortality due to post childbirth infection by instructing his students and colleagues to disinfect their hands with a calcium chloride solution (The Epic of Medicine, ed. Felix Marti-Ibanez, M.D., (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc.), 1959, rpt. 1962, 231).

left him totally paralyzed, there is credit due the Dutch cardiologist and the immediate therapy he prescribed. The morning after the stroke, my father was visited and encouraged to communicate by a speech therapist who brought flash cards with her and began to work with him to restore his speech. My father had to be in a sitting position most of the day. The therapist's aid then moved my father back home and slowly trained him to talk, write, and walk once again. The only residue was a juxtaposition of the laughter and crying responses.

My husband and I emigrated to America on August 15, 1939. During the week we were on the ship, Hitler invaded Poland. My parents and sister had tried to get out of Amsterdam once before. They had planned to go to England, and from there to South America. When they were to leave, however, they lost their nerve before they crossed the channel and went back to Amsterdam.

My sister was picked up by the SS and disappeared for a bit, but she came back. I don't know what happened to her. She was then put into a hiding place between the ceiling and the next floor of the house. Then, by agreement between the Jews and the Nazis, the Jews in Amsterdam began to be transported to Westerbork.<sup>7</sup> A few of their friends went in each transport. In 1941, the family began to suffer harassment, and in 1942 was listed for transport to

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<sup>7</sup>A transit camp in northern Holland, situated in the province of Drenthe, 11 km south of Assen. The camp was originally built on the order of the Dutch government to provide temporary shelter for Jewish refugees from Germany before they emigrated because they were not allowed to stay in The Netherlands. When the war broke out, the camp was taken over by the Germans, who used it as a transit camp. Between July 15, 1942 and September 13, 1944 ninety-three trains departed more than 100,000 people to extermination camps in Germany and Poland. Run by SS-Obersturmführer Albert Conrad Gemmecker, the camp was run smoothly and without incident. As long as the train left every Tuesday with its weekly quota of deportees, Gemmecker "acted the part of a decent gentleman, who treated the Jews correctly." Running of the camp was, by and large, left to an organization of German Jews ("Camp\_Westerbork: Symbol of Destruction," trans. S. Bruidegom & Dr. L.A.J.J. Houwen, Faculty of Arts of the University of Groningen, no publisher or date given).

Westerbork. My father's cardiologist did not feel that my father could make the trip and wrote the following letter:

*September 4, 1942<sup>8</sup>*

*I herewith advise the authorities that Dr. Julius Loeb is suffering arteriosclerosis. He suffered a stroke, and his mobility and ability to communicate are very limited. He needs the constant attention of his wife and daughter, and I consider him unable to survive transport to Westerbork.*

*Dr. J. Groen*

*Specialist for Internal Disease*

It didn't help; they had to go anyway. They were transported to Westerbork on November 8, 1942.<sup>9</sup> In Westerbork there were days called "writing days" when the prisoners could write to their friends in Amsterdam. At first no one knew what was to become of them, as indicated by this first postcard.

*My Dear,*

*Ich weis nicht was soll es bedeuten.* (I do not know what all this means).

Later cards, however, describe the worsening conditions, deaths in, and transports from the camp. Despite this, however, they were allowed to receive packages every six weeks. My family received them regularly from friends of theirs who had a mixed marriage.

On one card thanking this family for a package, they wrote:

*December 24, 1942*

*In a great hurry.*

*Dear Strausses,*

*Our thanks for the wonderful package. So much love and compassion. Our friend Mr. Karpf, who was allowed to return to Amsterdam, offered to send us, through you, a package each week. The towels and handkerchiefs were so welcome.*

*I'm working in the hospital. Dr. Spanier from Dusseldorf is the administrator. I hope that my parents will soon be allowed to work there too. Many regards.*

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<sup>8</sup>Letters and Diary trans. Trudi Shakno.

<sup>9</sup>See Appendix\_\_\_\_\_, Documents of transport of Julius, Dina, and Ilse Loeb to Westerbork, Courtesy of Jan Ooms, Westerbork, The Netherlands.

*Yours,  
Illa*

In all the letters, however, my parents and sister addressed their friends formally because in Germany, no matter how good a friend you were, you were still called by your last name.

The next letter was written on two sides, one from Mr. Strauss' mother after the death of her husband, the other from my father:

*April 4, 1943*

*Dear Children,*

*My sorrow is still a frightening dream. The thought that our beloved father is now free from pain and delivered of suffering and anxiety is my solace. Do not worry about me, my dearest.*

*Your mother*

*Dear Richard,*

*Please accept my heartfelt condolences and be assured that your father has been spared much future suffering. My family will look after your mother.*

*My daughter still suffers from scarlet fever, and my wife is still hospitalized. Only the hope of an end to all this keeps us alive. Very heartfelt regards.*

*Yours,*

*Julius Loeb*

It seems that everyone from Amsterdam had someone sending them something. There was a collection station for clothing and other necessities at the Jewish Community Center in Amsterdam, where people could be supplied with the bare necessities.

*May 1, 1943*

*Dear Mrs. Pintus,*

*Please do not think that I forgot you, but I suffer a bone infection on my right hand, and my daughter has been isolated in the hospital with scarlet fever for five weeks.*

*Would it be possible for you to obtain some summer clothing for us? There will be a group from the Jewish Community Center visiting here.*

*My husband's health is very precarious. Six weeks ago my daughter's mother-in-law died very suddenly here in Illa's arms.*

*Many regards.*

*Yours,*

*Dina Loeb*

May 1943

Dear Strausses,

*You made us so happy with your package. I'm wearing your sweater day and night. It's freezing here at the North Sea. We have no blankets. When we left, all our blankets had been taken by out rest home guests. Could you find us some?*

*Illa works in the hospital. I will soon work in the diet kitchen. Your parents, Mr. Strauss, are doing reasonably well. Your dad still enjoys his food. We need towels, toilet paper, and maybe some apples. Where is our son-in-law's mother?*

*Oh to be with you and just talk. And how we wish for a piece of meat. Do not forget us. Many, many regards.*

*Your,*

*Dina Loeb*

As far as I know, my mother-in-law was still in Amsterdam at that time, making hats. Some time later she was transported to Westerbork. She had been depressed ever since her emigration from Berlin and had attempted suicide shortly after her husband passed away on March 21, 1937. She was treated, but we were advised that she would repeat her attempt. She did commit suicide in Westerbork shortly after her arrival.

May 12, 1943

Dear Strausses,

*Again, many thanks for the wonderful package. It lifted my depression. We are now all recovered from infections, scarlet fever, and my ear infection. Illa is working again in the hospital, and my wife is starting to work there. She is in the dietary department. I myself work in the pharmacy.*

*We could survive here, but how long will we be allowed to stay? Meanwhile, all our clothing is wearing out. I have no shoelaces for myself or my wife. Please try to get us some. Also, could you get me a steel writing pen? Your mother, Richard, whom I see periodically, is doing reasonably well. We hope that you are all in good health.*

*Yours,*

*Julius Loeb*

July 1, 1943

Dear Strausses,

*Many thanks for your post, which arrived in time for me to answer today, the assigned day for letter writing. Regarding your Aunt Hedwig, I forgot to tell you in my last letter that I immediately contacted a teacher who takes care of the deaf and dumb. He sleeps near me. I asked him to keep an eye on her. Unfortunately he has not yet been able to find her. I myself went to the administrator and got a document saying she has not arrived. I will be notified if she*

*comes here and will help her as much as I can.*

*Many thanks for the razor blades. Could I ask you to send my wife a steel fountain pen and either a scarf or a handbag for her birthday, July 12? Please tell me what I owe you, but I hope maybe one of these things will arrive in time. Otherwise, we are doing all right.*

*Yours,*

*Julius Loeb, Barrack 17*

*Lager Westerbork*

*July 6, 1943*

*Dear Strausses,*

*I have just returned from the camp administration. Mr. Phillip has not arrived here. You need to inquire in all the hospitals. Many of our acquaintances have arrived here lately. Some have been allowed to return to Amsterdam. One of them is Mr. Karpf.*

*Could somebody send us some summer clothing?*

*Julius Loeb*

*July 7, 1943*

*Dear Strausses,*

*Since my wife and daughter work all day and there is little for me to do, I do the writing. Thank you again for the packages, especially the food, the first in a year's time. You cannot imagine what a treat this is. We have enough vegetables, but no meat.*

*Many of our friends are arriving now. Since the time we came, we came on November 8, 1942, only ten of this group are still here. I pray that we can stay. We only have you left in Amsterdam.*

*Thank you so much for the buttons for my suit.*

*Yours,*

*Julius Loeb*

Because mothers' birthday was on July 12 [born 1894], and my father's on July 10

[born 1881], the next letter thanked their dear friends for birthday presents.

*July 17, 1943*

*Dear Strausses,*

*With what love you have surrounded me for my birthday. We celebrated in spite of these sorrowful days. We tasted your wonderful cake and shared it with friends and co-workers.*

*We do not know what the future will be. Hopefully we can stay here. I will try to bring some flowers to your bereaved father as soon as I am allowed to. Again, all my love and thanks.*

*Dina Loeb*

*September 23, 1943*

*My Dear Mr. Strauss,*

*I am very sorry that I have bad news for you. Your mother went totally unexpectedly on a*



*transport today. When I saw her last, she looked well. I feel for you. Hopefully all will be well.*

*I have a lot of work, but the diet kitchen is an interesting place to be. Warmest regards.*

*Yours,*

*Dina Loeb*

*September 25, 1943*

*Dear Strausses,*

*The arrival of your package provided a holiday for us. We are so needy. My wife and daughter join me in gratefully thanking you for the razor and the shoes. They are somewhat big, but so what.*

*I sent a poster to you about the site of your father's burial plot. If you make contact with the Jewish community, they will arrange to have the urn sent to you for burial.*

*My wife has been sick in the hospital again; very high fever, but no diagnosis. But she is improving.*

*Somebody stole the buttons off my gray suit.*

*We hope to be able to stay here for some time. Please be thanked for all you're doing. We hope to be able to reciprocate in the near future.*

*Yours.*

*Julius Loeb*

*Barrack 17, Lager Westerbork*

*September 28, 1943*

*Dear Strausses,*

*We do not hear from you anymore. I am sitting on the kitchen floor to write. I am free till 4:00 P.M. Then diets for supper, then infant formula. Dr. Mosberg is with us quite a bit. He is hospitalized.*

*We hear nothing from Amsterdam anymore. Would you have some discarded, mended hose. You could let us have? Many regards.*

*Dina Loeb*

My mother smoked two to three packs of cigarettes a day.

*October 22, 1943*

*Dear Strausses,*

*Many thanks for your card and package. You are the only ones thinking of us. My husband is hospitalized. I am concerned. Illa and I have lots of work, but providing some nourishment and a proper diet to patients boosts my morale.*

*We have no money at all any more, and I must ask you for some soap ( and cigarettes). How is your little boy?*

*Yours gratefully,*

*Dina Loeb*

My father died of pneumonia on November 2, 1943, and I received this in 1944 from The

Netherlands Red Cross:

19 Juli 1944

Rud., Schachnow [sic], 2720 Oaklawn, Dallas,  
Texas, U.S.A.

*The Correspondence bureau of the Netherlands Red Cross wishes to inform you that Mr. Dr. Julius Loeb, born 10 juli 1881 died 2 November 1943 in Westerbork.*

According to his death certificate from Westerbork, he was buried in Province Drenthe. City records verify this.<sup>10</sup>

Sometimes people were cremated and the remains sent in urns to the survivors. Other times people paid for graves, but I never found the grave. I still feel it is there near the North Sea.

November 1943

Dear Strausses,

*Thank you for your letter of friendship. We discouraged condolences from our new friends here. Your letter was our loved one's eulogy.*

*We have a lot of work and are tired by evening. Then we sleep and start over at 6:00 A.M. Through my work I can help people somewhat, and that is my satisfaction.*

*Does Mrs. Van Zuylen know that my husband is not with us any more? She relied so much on his judgment.*

*I am so glad that everything is going well for you. You are the only ones to help us. Hopefully we will see each other again. Many regards from our hearts, and many thanks.*  
Dina Loeb

December 6, 1943

Dear Strausses,

*Your package made us very happy. We are doing all right, having already been here thirteen months. I now have to tell you something very important. From now on we can receive one package every six weeks, one for Illa and one for me, not more than two kilos each. We would prefer butter, cheese, and sausage, but no bread. We will send you food stamps to be put on top of the package. If you have a few guilders left, we would be very grateful.*

*I receive very little mail and do not hear from the children in America.*

*The new package rule starts December 15, 1943.<sup>11</sup>*

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<sup>10</sup>See Appendix \_\_\_\_\_ Document of Julius Loeb's death. Courtesy of Jan van Ooms, Westerbork, The Netherlands.

<sup>11</sup> " Wednesday, December 1, 1943: 'A heavy blow has fallen upon us. The Commamnant has laid down that, as from December 15th, men and women who are on their own can receive a parcel of feedstuffs of not more than two kg once every six weeks, families with not more than two children one parcel every four weeks, and families with more than two children a parcel every

*Many, many best regards,  
Dina Loeb*

*December 25, 1943*

*Dear Strausses,*

*We are sorry not to hear from you. Nobody but some of Illa's friends are thinking of us. Our health is good. I even gained some weight.*

*It's very cold here, but when I work, I do not feel it. I am in the kitchen from 7:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.*

*My daughter Illa and I are so close; we live so peacefully together and hardly need anybody else. Our beds are next to each other, and our belongings are with us, so we get along.  
Dina Loeb*

This bond lasted for the next twenty-two years.

*Dear Strausses,*

*After a long time I can write again. This will probably be the last time, as we are scheduled to go to Theresienstadt. We thank you for all your love. Please write Please write to our daughter in America and tell her where we are. We would be so grateful if you would continue to help us.*

*Since yesterday I have been sick with gallbladder trouble, and I fear tomorrow's trip. But it will be okay. Again, many regards, also to our daughter in America.*

*Your,*

*Dina Loeb*

I never heard from them. From Illa in the same letter:

*Dear Strausses,*

*It really is not going well with mother. I just hope that she survives the trip.  
Your last package has not yet arrived. Best regards.*

*Illa*

After they were scheduled for transport to Theresienstadt, my sister was offered a

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fortnight, but only from Jewish relatives or from relatives who are partners in mixed marriages. Berlin has ordered this restriction on foodstuffs. In a German newspaper it was pointed out that the Jews at Westerbork lived far better than the German population" (Philip Mechanicus, Year of Fear: A Jewish Prisoner waits for Auschwitz, trans. Irene S Gibbons, (New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1976), 201).

reprieve in Westerbork,<sup>12</sup> but elected to go with her mother.<sup>13</sup> This established a tremendous bond between them which carried them through their misery, through their liberation in 1943, and until their deaths.

In Theresienstadt they went back and forth from barracks to semi-decent living quarters. When they were transported to Auschwitz, they lay on those horrible wooden planks, six people to two yards. The greatest privilege was to take out the slop jar at night because you could get some fresh air.

They had one blanket for six people. They were led to the gas chamber at Auschwitz. In front, a medical officer separated the invalids and the more feeble from the younger and more able. The latter were to go to Mauthausen to a work camp. My sister was among those. My mother was to be gassed because her legs appeared swollen. She then explained to the medical officer that she did not have edema, but that her daughter's legs were also large and that she could work and walk with her. By some miracle that saved her from the gas.

Next they were taken to Mauthausen. There they made themselves some bras out of grass and ate grass wherever they could find it, thinking they were eating vitamins. My husband and I did not know what happened to them until we received a letter in 1945, which was written on a gray envelope.<sup>14</sup>

After the war my sister began to write to me of all the terrible things she and my parents

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<sup>12</sup>Appendix\_\_\_\_, record of transport of Ilse Leopoldine Loeb to Theresienstadt, 30 August, 1944, Courtesy of Jan Ooms, Westerbork, The Netherlands.

<sup>13</sup> Appendix\_\_\_\_, record of transport of Dina Mayer Loeb to Theresienstadt, 12 July, 1944, Courtesy of Jan Ooms, Westerbork, The Netherlands.

<sup>14</sup>See Letter from Arthur C. Schwartz, p. 29.

endured. She began with a letter but stopped in the middle and recorded her experiences more completely in a diary. Here, then is her story as she wrote it.

The Memoirs of Ellen Loeb<sup>15</sup>

Dear Trudi and Rudy,

It is really strange to write to you. What we went through in these terrible times is difficult to put on paper. A book should be written about this. First I have to tell you that unfortunately, but also miraculously, only Mother and I have survived. You cannot imagine what this means. You know that we were in Westerbork. We were sent there on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 1942. I worked as a nurse in the concentration camp at Lenzing. Before I came to Lenzing, I was in three other concentration camps. I think I should recall it one more time so I won't forget.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 1942, our parents and I were aroused at 2:00 A.M. by the Gestapo and had to join all the other Jews to be transported to Westerbork. Had Father applied for legal exit visas, we never would have been brought here. The only way to get them was through a Mr. Puttkammer, who stamped our papers for legal immigration. You had to pay money to authorities in Amsterdam, and then you were safe for a time. The papers for our legal immigration, did not arrive until arrive an hour before we had to board the train in Westerbork for transport to Theresienstadt, but they saved us for awhile.

There was terrible trepidation at the station; you cannot imagine how it upset Father. Our neighbor had succeeded in getting a car to bring us and what little we could take with us to this meeting point. Father, who had a massive heart attack and a stroke, could hardly walk, but we got to the station and were at Westerbork in a couple of hours.

Westerbork was a Dutch transport camp located near Zwolle, one of the most northern

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<sup>15</sup>This narrative has been constructed from two diaries: one a letter to Trudi and Rudy Shakno, the other a personal diary of what happened daily. Because one often says the same as the other, the two were combined.

points of little Holland. The big barracks had no lights; everything was fenced in. Inmates were brought there for transport to Auschwitz. When people came there, some were lucky and, for some reason, got to stay longer. Others had a shorter stay. Some, who were luckier, were then transported to Theresienstadt. Others, who had exit papers to other countries, were sent to Celle [Bergen-Belsen], and some just stayed in Westerbork to keep the camp and a very big hospital <sup>16</sup>going. Sick people could go to the hospital. In the beginning that was a fantastic way of being safe for a time, but later it no longer worked.

Father and Mother, by showing Father's military discharge papers as a physician in the Kaiser's army, were taken out of immediate transport. I myself, now being older than sixteen years of age, was not eligible for this status, but Mother, as always, saved me. She said, "And what about my child?" I looked young, and I escaped transport that time, but this lasted only eight days. Then we were scheduled for transport again, but the head doctor, Dr. Spanier, talked to the Nazis and got Father another reprieve. There was a transport to Auschwitz every week, and you could just never get it out of your mind. You might be on the next week's list; you never had a minute's rest.

One time I didn't feel very well and was put on the transport list, but I took twenty ephedrine tablets. My pulse went up to 120, and I was declared untransportable because I

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<sup>16</sup>The hospital in Westerbork was one of the finest in the Netherlands. At its peak, it had 1,725 beds, 120 doctors and over 1,000 employees. There were separate wards and many specialists, isolation rooms, a department for the mentally ill, a well-stocked dispensary, a separate diet kitchen, many stores, draughtsmen, orthopedists, hairdressers, photographers, laboratories, social welfare, a chaplain, first aid posts, a hygiene service, dental clinics, dispatch riders, a postal service, an operating theater, an x-ray department to test for tuberculosis, immunization against typhoid and paratyphoid, and testing of blood groups. The prisoners held weekly medical conferences (Mechanicus 7).

couldn't work, and they didn't know what was ailing me. All the other people were going directly to Auschwitz.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April I contracted scarlet fever, and Mother had an infection on her thumb. Poor Father, who could not help himself, had to take care of both of us. At that time we still got little packages from old friends in Amsterdam, and this helped us. Of course, these friends were not Jewish. Before the end of the six weeks, pretty unexpectedly, we were put on the transport list again. The scarlet fever helped us because the six weeks isolation period were not up yet. Mother was taken back into Westerbork, and Father was so sick that they put him into the hospital, so we were safe for a little while.

A few weeks later I was scheduled to go on transport again, but this time I took castor oil and had such diarrhea that they could not take me. After that time we got some respite. But eventually we were taken to Theresienstadt. I can only tell you, my dear sister, that God meant well to take Father and save him from Auschwitz.

We lived there in barracks with three hundred people.<sup>17</sup> Mother and I were next to each other on the third floor. Mother started working in the kitchen; Father worked just enough to keep him off the transport lists;<sup>18</sup> and I was lucky, I worked as a nurse. Poor Father was usually alone all day. During this time we were on the list to be transported to Auschwitz seven times.

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<sup>17</sup>"[Prisoners] were driven into the huts in dense crowds, three, four and sometimes five persons to two beds with their luggage. The beds are arranged in three tiers, separated by passages half a metre wide at most, without a single table or bench or chair. Up to 1,000 or 1,100 people in one hut, without elbow room, without proper storage for their clothes, all jumbled up together.... They sleep tightly packed together,... often on the steel frame of the bedstead, sometimes on the floor "(Mechanicus 58).

<sup>18</sup>Each Tuesday 1,000 people were shipped off to their deaths in Auschwitz or other camps (Mechanicus 7).



You cannot imagine how upsetting this was. On the days there were transports, we had to get up at 4:00 A.M., dress all the sick people and ready them for the trains. It was more than a person could do - to put these people in those cattle cars. It was so awful. I can only say that we did not know where they were going. We thought they were going to Theresienstadt, which was not thought to be all that bad because the Red Cross made periodic visits there. If anybody would have known where they were really being sent, nobody would have had any hope, and they would not have survived.

That's when I started to be a nurse. I knew absolutely nothing, but I acted as if I knew everything. I just watched everybody wherever I could, and pretty soon I'd advanced to being a friend of the head nurse. After observing her for a short time, I learned how to take care of my patients.

In the beginning, the hospital in Westerbork was very primitive. There were no instruments and no medicine, but later it got better. In fact, we even had a modern operating room. At first I worked in women's internal medicine; then, for a short time, I was in surgery. I was then assigned to the children's ward. After that I was in charge of pediatrics.

One day I heard that there would be twenty very sick children from another concentration camp arriving in Holland.<sup>19</sup> We were to make them well so that they could either go to work or at least be brought to Auschwitz to be done away with. We tried to be ready for them. We prepared a room with big and little beds. We didn't have any linens, or at least we had very few. The only thing to give this room a friendlier appearance were some wonderful blue flowers we

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<sup>19</sup>Mechanicus describes the arrival of fifty children on June 10, 1943 from Vught, a transit camp in northern Holland. Scattered throughout the hospital barracks, they suffered from such diseases as scarlet fever, measles, pneumonia, and mumps (43).

had been picking in the meadow outside that we put in water glasses all around.<sup>20</sup>

At 5:00 the next morning the train arrived, and pretty soon came the gurneys with the children. Great was our horror, and we were frightened of what we were seeing because the line of carts just didn't stop. There were more and more, sometimes three children on one stretcher. Many were babies under one year old. We were not prepared for those. There were also children of two and three years of age up to fourteen, all of them very, very ill. They were half naked or wrapped only in a thin blanket. Most of them were cried miserably and were totally exhausted and hungry. More and more gurneys were being brought into the room until eventually we had a total of forty-five children with all kinds of diseases. Most were scantily dressed. Many had pneumonia after having had measles. Others had otitis media, chicken pox, whooping cough, and many other children's diseases. Almost all the children had terrible diarrhea. You were actually fighting for each child.

At first we had to put them into some kind of bed, so we separated them, as far as possible, according to age and disease and put two or three in one bed, one bunk on the top, and one on the bottom. But it didn't work. Little ones, many under three years of age, didn't even know their names. They had no parents and many were too weak to talk. But we tried to do the best we could. You just cannot believe what went on. I could write for hours about their misery.

In Westerbork we were able to help them. To a large extent, many really got better. Almost all recovered. I think five children were beyond saving. I'm so sorry that these children had to go on transports. I cursed the parents who had left their children alone in the underground

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<sup>20</sup>Purple lupins grew all around the camp (Mechanicus 43).

instead of staying with them, but I'm sorry to say, I understood it later because this was the better of the choices left to them. If the mothers had stayed with their children, in most cases they would have gone on transports, usually to Auschwitz or Theresienstadt and been taken immediately with their mothers to the gas chambers.

We tried to keep the children unable to travel as long as possible so you could postpone the transport day. We hoped that for each child there would be some change in our situation. There was one child in particular we could keep from being transported only if he became ill, and that might save his parents as well. He had been in the punishment barracks for people who were in the underground and had been found by the SS. So we gave him a milk injection. The poor boy developed a high fever, but that saved his family. The parents didn't know about it, but it was a terrible responsibility for me, and I worried and was frightened. The head of pediatrics tried to pacify me. He didn't feel that there was such a terrible risk.

So, from June 1943 until February 1944, I was very, very busy with the children. It was wonderful and thankful work, but I knew that in the end they would be taken to Auschwitz.

In October 1943, our father got very sick. First he had an inner ear infection, and later he had pneumonia. The last few days and nights, we were with him. He was lying on an operating table in the hospital. The illness lasted three weeks, and we were able, thanks to Mother's working in the kitchen, to give him what he needed. I can only say that it was very lucky that our father did not have to endure the rest of all this.

Mother and I were put on the transport list again, but through her work as a trained dietitian, we were rescheduled for a later date. The same worked for me. We were actually among the last thousand in Westerbork. The parents in this group were to be sent to

Theresienstadt, but the young people were to go to Auschwitz. So my number was not up yet, but Mother was to be transported on February 23. I just volunteered to go with her.

The transport to Theresienstadt was not so bad: two days and two nights in a normal train compartment with whatever belongings we had left. We did not have a bad trip. We got through the Gestapo, which was very difficult. All our belongings were locked up for two weeks. Everybody went through them and stole whatever they could, but especially what little food we had left. We also had to be stripped and checked. I had some money, but it was found. You just cannot fathom what it meant when they took what little money we had. It's a miracle they did not put me in a special prison. I was really frightened for the first two weeks.

Theresienstadt was a former military station. Now only Jews and the Gestapo lived in this city. The Jews lived in barracks and private homes. The rooms held ten to twenty people, and the barracks as many as sixty. There was no heat. The people who had a room did not always have beds; they slept on straw mattresses. In the barracks they had cots, one on top of another. We had to borrow coats and thin blankets from other inmates since ours were locked up.

In 1943, the circumstances had been terrible in Theresienstadt. Hunger was especially bad in 1942 and 1943. The hygienic facilities were impossible. There were no toilets or running water, no facilities of any kind for health or cleanliness. People died, hundreds at a time in one day. They just lay there, thousands of them, on the floors of the barracks and warehouses, covered with lice and terrible diarrhea, totally neglected. The food was not too bad, but there was not enough, so the old people who could not work just died from hunger. If you had to have anything else, you would have to barter. Hanukkah 1943 we received a letter from you through the Red Cross. This was the only light in all that we went through. The lipstick you sent me

bought us half a bread.

Some of the Czech Jews got big packages from friends in Czechoslovakia, and they did very well. Others were poorer than we were, especially old people who could not work and didn't have anything to barter.

In 1944, suddenly everything started to get better. There were fewer people there. We had hospitals and even some old age homes. In May the Germans began something new - city beautification.<sup>21</sup> We were expecting the Red Cross to come to Theresienstadt, and everything looked great. We even had a film company, and they made a movie to send to other nations. So, by the time we came to Theresienstadt, it wasn't all that bad. There was a physician's control office, and everybody, at regular intervals would be checked for health.

Mother immediately contracted a bad case of flu. In Theresienstadt you had to pay for everything with food. For half a bread we bought a bed for her. After three weeks we were assigned to a room with eight other people in a huge military barrack, but it was well located. We got a little rest here and had the feeling that for the foreseeable future there would be no transports. This made a great difference. I again was employed as a nurse, this time in the surgical department in a pretty big hospital. It was well supplied with everything. You would almost think you were in a normal situation. Pretty soon I knew what I was doing.

After three months I was assigned to a new unit for Germans for a modern treatment of blood diseases. They called this treatment *heilgas*.<sup>22</sup> Only three nurses and three physicians

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<sup>21</sup>For the visit of the Danish Red Cross June 23, 1944 and the filming of the propaganda movie, "The Fuhrer Gives a City to the Jews" (Bondy 437-441).

<sup>22</sup>"Healing gas," an antibacterial and astringent combination used for treatment of wounds (Peter Loewenberg, M.D.).

worked in this unit. There were twenty patients. I was called to see the head physician who had come to see what these experiments were. The new medicine was very interesting. It was made out of perubalsam,<sup>23</sup> glycerin, hypermangan,<sup>24</sup> quinine, quinosol,<sup>25</sup> sodium iodide, ammonium chloride, and hexamethyltetramine.<sup>26</sup> All of this would be heated to 300 F., and the resulting gas would be applied to purulent wounds. The condensed water was applied to serious cases of stomatitis<sup>27</sup> and sores. The results were at least partially successful, but we were surprised at how well some of it worked. I worked there until October, while Mother worked in a doctor's office.

In September 1944 the transports started again. Our name was again on the transport list. First, five thousand men were to go, and then the women. We were scheduled to leave October 11. I could have stayed in Theresienstadt but did not want to leave Mother, so I volunteered to go with her. Whatever I tell you now cannot describe what we went through, so I will use few words.

The transport was terrible. We traveled in wagons, seventy people with whatever they had in one compartment. We sat on top of and underneath each other. The trip took three nights

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<sup>23</sup>Balsam of Peru: a thick liquid used in medicine, obtained from the tree *Myroxylon pereirae*, which is grown in El Salvador and parts of Central and South America. Fragrant and reddish brown, it has soothing and tonic effects on the body. Used as an applicant for treating certain skin irritations as well as an ingredient in cough medicine and a tonic for indigestion( The World Book Encyclopedia, B, vol 2, (Chicago: Field Enterprises, 1977), 47).

<sup>24</sup>Potassium permanganate, used for cleansing and disinfecting (Peter Loewenberg, M.D.).

<sup>25</sup>A liquid used to disinfect the mouth or throat (ibid.)

<sup>26</sup>Disinfectant liquid (ibid.)

<sup>27</sup>Trench mouth: inflammation of the oral mucosa; it may involve buccal and labial mucosa, palate, tongue, floor of the mouth, and gingivae (Dorland's 1585).

and two days. Nobody knew where we were going, but the more we traveled, the more we knew what our destination was to be. In the end, we came to Auschwitz.

Auschwitz was probably one of the worst places. It was called *vernichtungslager*, which means "killing ground." There I could not work as a nurse. You saw nothing but fences and barracks. When we arrived, everybody had to get out of the train. Your belongings stayed on the train. We never saw them again. Then we had to line up - men on one side, women on the other. The SS came and looked us over. Old people, mothers with children, and sickly looking women would all be sent to one side, and that meant the gas chamber. Mother should have gone too, but she said, "I'm going with my daughter. I can walk for six hours." By some miracle this saved her life because they believed that she could walk.

They sent us into a shower room where they took all our clothes. All our hair everywhere was shorn off. We were given one pair of pants and one dress of rags. We had to stand in line for hours. Then we were put into a barrack. We had no dishes, forks or spoons. Six of us ate out of one pot with our hands. There was no place to wash, no soap, and no toilet. If you needed to go, you had to take pieces of your clothing to clean yourself. You could only go once a day. We could not drink the water. Everybody was terribly thirsty, so we discovered that if we exchanged one slice of bread for raw cabbage, the cabbage would help the thirst.

Ten people had to sleep on a wooden plank three meters wide. Eventually we got three blankets for the ten of us. You cannot believe what that meant. Everybody in that situation thinks only of himself; everybody is fighting for life. Everybody wants a piece of the blanket. One time we changed barracks and were very tired after a whole day's work in a wet barrack. The *blockaltesters* - these are the worst and most brutal of any people I've ever seen - they are the

ones who either gave us or deprived us of favors; they steal what you have; they give you only half of your food and are worse than the Gestapo - she promised us blankets if we would get them ourselves. Everybody went and carried what we could carry, but this woman had us put the blankets at the barracks entrance, and nobody got them until the next morning.

If you lost weight you went into the gas chamber. You could not get sick because if you did, you would be killed. A physical exam meant only that you had to strip and the physician looked at you. Old, sickly, and thin, meager looking people went immediately to the gas chamber. The others went to work. People would go to work with a temperature of 40 C, which is 103 or 104 F. If somebody fainted, he would be beaten back to consciousness, mostly in the face.

We belonged to the group who could work, and ten days later we expected to be on a new work transport. Everybody was elated to get away from Auschwitz and the always threatening gas chamber. First we had to be examined by a physician who would judge whether or not we were able to work. If we had been thin, we would not have had a chance. Once again Mother's heavy legs saved her. She probably had edema from heart trouble. But when the doctors looked at my legs, they saw that both of us had heavy legs. Because we were able to establish the fact that heavy legs were a family trait, we got on the transport to the new work station.

We had to stay in Auschwitz four more days, and it was a terrible wait, but at least we knew we would get out. Of the two thousand people who had come with us, there were only fifteen left. Those days in Auschwitz were an eternity. We slept in terrible quarters - they had been stables before we slept in them. There were Russian female prisoners in those barracks who were very upset that we had been brought to their quarters and made it hard for us whenever they



could. We asked them if they knew where we would be going on transport, and they said we would probably go to heaven.

We had to be checked out one more time, and when Mother did not dress herself quickly enough, the doctor said, "*Mussulman*, you come to my attention. I'm getting terrible doubts about you again." But eventually the train came, and we got out. Seventy of us were put into one cattle car with two SS. Everybody got one bread, a little piece of sausage, and a slice of margarine. There was one bucket of water and one bucket to use as a toilet. Eventually the drinking water was mixed up with the toilet water and neither could be used anymore.

We traveled for three days and two nights without anything to drink. We could not get out. There was no more food, no light, and no windows. Seventy people were standing up. You cannot imagine what the conditions were. People would vomit right onto the floor between us and on us. We just were not human any more. The air was impossible to describe. We were totally *kaput* when we eventually came to Lenzing. This is a place not far from Linz, Austria.<sup>28</sup>

We belonged to the concentration camp of Mauthausen and were the first women in Mauthausen. There we were put into an old factory, but we were overjoyed when we heard that we each would get a wooden bed. They were actually bunks, but nobody cared. And everybody got two blankets. We got a basin, a drinking cup, and one spoon. After what we had been through in Auschwitz, this was a good for a time and made us happy. We got prison clothing. All of it had lice in it, so our whole camp was full of lice.

The commandant of the factory asked for a physician. There was one. She had no hair,

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<sup>28</sup>See Lehner Appendix, p. 13

just like us, and wore rags. As it was, we had traveled together in the same compartment, and I had talked to her for a while. She was an internist and had never done any surgery. Since I told her that I had worked in the surgical unit, she asked for me to be her assistant. I didn't know much, but we acted as though we knew something.

The women here had to work very hard. Most of them worked in a rayon factory, and there was a lot of sulfuric acid. It was really work for men, but the women were glad to do it. The men wore gas masks, but the Germans didn't give the women any. People were blind for days at a time because they didn't have any goggles. Others had stomach poisoning and were vomiting.<sup>29</sup> Many could not eat. Many had wounds on their hands which immediately developed into purulent sores. Other women worked in a mine, digging an underground tunnel a hundred meters below the surface. They brought up the stones in little carts.

The women got up at 3 o'clock in the morning. We would be counted at 4 o'clock, 560 of us. Then we got breakfast: a cup of coffee and 200 grams of bread. Later that was reduced to 100. At 5 o'clock, after breakfast, they went to work. It was an hour's walk, and in the winter it was terrible. We wore wooden shoes and not enough clothing. They worked until 9 o'clock in the evening. For lunch and dinner we got 70 cc. of watered down soup with one potato. We were very hungry.

The work in the factory was in three different shifts. The other shift was from 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock in the evening with half an hour of rest.

Mother worked as housemother because she was one of the oldest women in the house.

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<sup>29</sup>See Chapter \_\_\_\_\_, description of production of *biosyn wurst*.

The oldest at that time meant about forty-eight years old. The older ones had either died or been gassed. She had to clean up everything and wash it. I was then made the supervisory nurse of this particular barrack. I was lucky because I shared my room with a physician, and the room had a little stove. We cooked edible flowers that we found in the fields. We also sometimes found potato peelings in the trash cans, and we would bake them. Also, we found snails, and they made a pretty good meal. The only light in this terrible time was one man who, at Christmas time, brought us a little piece of cake. This was a great, great favor. Out of all these horrible people, there was one person who had that one bit of compassion. If the SS had caught him at it, he would have been gassed. Afterwards, a couple of times he brought us a slice of bread and even a cup of coffee. And later on, he did even more for us. He came over at night and told us what he heard on the radio. That helped give us some hope. He really knew where the Americans were. In fact, he told us to hide in his house when it became necessary to flee the barracks. But we didn't know who would reach us first. Happily we didn't have to do this because you never knew what would happen, but it gave us some peace.

My work as a nurse was very difficult. Sometimes we had no medicine and no instruments. There was only one room where we could treat patients. The women were all suffering from terrible diarrhea, many with fever. Then we received a few provisions of medicine - mostly charcoal, forty tablets for three hundred women with diarrhea. The women would actually fall on me to get these tablets. Of course, it didn't help. But just getting something gave them the feeling that they might get better. Many had purulent infections and came for help. We had nothing to help them, not even a piece of linen to put on their wounds. They didn't want to believe it. Then they helped themselves. The older ones from Hungary knew what to do with

the plants that they could put on their wounds, and truthfully, it sometimes helped a little bit. After a week we got some bandages and eleudron,<sup>30</sup> some charcoal and ichthiol ointment.<sup>31</sup> Our physician did get a stethoscope, one thermometer, one syringe, two pair of forceps, and two scissors. The thermometer was probably the most valuable and also the most potentially problematic instrument of all, and we were careful not to break it. It was the only one for 560 women. When things went well, the thermometer lasted for three weeks. When that broke, we often went for weeks without any. We did not even dare to ask for a new one. Sometimes we waited four or five weeks so they wouldn't know how many sick people we had. We hoped something would happen to end this misery.

The worst thing was that only a certain percent of my patients could be sick. Of the 560, I had 120 ill. Only forty were allowed. The others had to go to Mauthausen, and that meant gas, so I had to declare them fit to work if they were at all able to work, and that was one of the worst things. The women who were sick were too weak to send to a factory, but everybody knew they had to go if they wanted to live. A German doctor came to see that nobody pretended to be sick.

We put them in a sick room, which was actually a room with two beds, one on top of the other, and three single beds. It had a stone floor, a heater, and one window that you couldn't open. Usually it was very dark, and eventually they painted it black on account of the blackout. We had only some artificial light.

We had one table, and that was the examining table. Many came to get their wounds

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<sup>30</sup>An early sulfa drug, used to treat infections.

<sup>31</sup>A black ointment which was put on a developing abscess. Although it was supposed to help the abscess to open and drain, it irritated the skin, actually making things worse (Peter Loewenberg, M.D.)

dressed, to be examined, and to get their medication. There was no rest. They were coming all day long with all kinds of complaints, and it was hard to tell if they were really sick or not, especially during the times we did not have a thermometer. Their pulse was usually normal or just a little rapid, but we didn't have a real watch to count it, so we just had to estimate. We could not bear to write that they couldn't work, so, sick as they were, we sent them back to work. The worst was to certify somebody unfit for work. Everybody would have liked to stay one or two days, but only a small percentage could be sick. Sometimes we could keep them for one or two days, but then they had to go back.

One of the most frequent illnesses was a series of red, very painful spots on the legs. It was something between erysipelas<sup>32</sup> and erythema nodosum.<sup>33</sup> We took care of them with ichthiol ointment and salicylic acid or sulfonamide. We had a lot of people with diphtheria and other infectious diseases, but we just had to keep them going to work. You cannot imagine what the beds looked like. We had no robes or gowns to give them, so they just lay there in their rags on the straw. One half blanket was available, and we used it on those who needed to be covered, and borrowed clothes, most of them torn, for the others. The trouble was the toilet. We had one bed pan. All the other patients had to go in a bucket which was under the table. There was no water in this room. You had to go up three stairs to get some water. Nothing was sterile. There was not even any talk about that. After a while we got a small piece of soap to clean our hands. The syringe could not be boiled. Occasionally we just heated it, but usually it took all morning to

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<sup>32</sup>An acute superficial form of cellulitis involving the dermal lymphatics (Dorland's 577).

<sup>33</sup>An inflammatory reaction of the subcutaneous fat, usually occurring as a hypersensitivity reaction to multiple provoking agents, including various infections (Dorland's 578).

get some water heated. You ask what did we do with the syringe. Since we had nothing to inject into these patients, we just used it to make the women feel better. Everybody was so nervous; it was difficult to tell whether or not they were really sick. They wanted something for their suffering, so we gave them water injections.

We had some aspirin and gave it all kinds of medical names so that they thought we had some miracle medicine. We also dissolved it, and that made some miracle drops. We called it *Udenol*. Water with a little bit of salt, one aspirin, and a tiny bit of alcohol was the medicine of choice. Many women came for that every day for their heart or for their stomach or to sleep better or for other diseases. We just had to be careful not to give too much because we didn't know what the end result would be. It was absolutely nothing, but sometimes it helped.

To give an injection was much more difficult. You had to use a lot of persuasion to convince the patient that it helped. We did not actually give them injections; we pushed the needle under the skin and took it out again. Sometimes, when we gave them these injections they got better. I don't know why, but I think it was something they imagined, and then, when they came back for more, we had to perform the same sad procedure again.

We had two women with ulcers. With one we actually succeeded with our every day injections. She was so convinced that for two months she was okay. Then she came back for more injections. We had another woman with asthma and heart disease. She was heavy and elderly. She had pretty severe episodes of asthma, and we had to give her our famous water injections. That was terrible. Sometimes she got over it when I gave her one or two of these injections.

Our patients were never allowed to have surgery. A German doctor who came from time

to time to check on us would drain the worst abscesses. Even when an amputation of the finger was done, he just did it without any anesthesia on our examining table. If there was a big wound, they often got wound diphtheria, but the Germans were so afraid they would get diphtheria that they gave us some serum, and it healed quickly.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, a woman had to have an abortion on a fetus of five months. The woman doctor who was my boss had never seen a birth. One of our women had, and she and I performed the delivery. We did the best we could. I asked for some linens because this was a special case. They gave me a package of dressings, some sterile forceps, one pair of scissors, and some yarn so that we could bind the umbilical cord and hope to God that everything would be okay. But nobody can understand the fear and agitation. We tried to be as sterile as possible, but we didn't even have a bedpan. The mother was very weak, but she had no complications, and she went back to work. The doctor saw all this and was absolutely astounded. Sometimes you don't know how you get through these things.

January was our worst month. A short time after the abortion we had a very sad railway accident. There was high snow, and it was very dark. The supervisor had forced the women to go on despite the darkness and high snow. No one had heard the oncoming train. Lots of women had been hurt. Five women were caught by the train and pulled along. Four died immediately; one was very seriously wounded. She was brought to us in terrible condition, but after two days, she got a little better. She could even have taken a little nourishment if our dear German doctor had not interfered. He came to check on her but did not do much for her because he was convinced that she was not likely to be able to work for us, and with that, he gave her an overdose of morphine intravenously. The next day she died.

The drug of choice, and it was called the wonder medicine, was hypermangan.<sup>34</sup> We used it on everything from impetigo<sup>35</sup> to excema and furuncles.<sup>36</sup> We smeared a ten percent solution of the hypermangan on and just let it dry. In many cases it helped. Many women had stomatitis,<sup>37</sup> and we were successful with eleudron.

For two months the doctor with whom I worked and from whom I learned was very, very ill. She had three weeks of high fever, and every night she had convulsions. No doctor looked at her, and I did the best I could. For several weeks, the German doctor didn't come, so there was no doctor at all. During that time, I had to judge everything by myself. During this time Mother became ill with a fever higher than 39 C. I never knew what she actually had. There was hardly any medicine for her. Sometimes there was not even a thermometer. You cannot imagine what worries I had. I was responsible for 560 women. I had a lot of people with high temperatures and laborious breathing. It looked like pneumonia, but I could not make any diagnosis. I tried to give them eleudron, but I didn't have enough to give them a therapeutic dose, so in most cases I didn't have much luck. I also gave them novalgin<sup>38</sup> or quinine,<sup>39</sup> and that was better. As much as possible I tried to talk it over with the sick doctor. Two of the cases had a continuous

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<sup>34</sup>Potassium permanganate; has a germicidal quality that is used for cleansing and disinfecting (Peter Loewenberg, M.D.).

<sup>35</sup>A contagious purulent skin disease (Dorland's 824).

<sup>36</sup>A painful nodule formed in the skin by circumscribed inflammation of the skin and subcutaneous tissue (ibid. 669).

<sup>37</sup>Inflammation of the oral mucosa [trench mouth] (ibid.1585).

<sup>38</sup>Used as an analgesic (Peter Loewenberg, M.D.)

<sup>39</sup>Thought to have been effective against the flu (ibid.)



temperature of 40 C. or 104 F. and were delirious. All of them had all the symptoms of typhoid.<sup>40</sup> It was impossible to isolate them. We had to give them cabbage soup. Later, when the doctor was better, she was able to establish a diagnosis of typhoid. They called it “stomach typhoid.” We didn't have more than five of those. How all those people got well without medicine or diet I cannot understand. I think it was their will to live.

In the sick room, we also had people for whom there were no beds. We had sixteen patients in a room that was meant for five or six people. Then we put them in a room of 15' by 20', where they had to sleep in the cold, without enough covers and with no shoes. We had too many sick people. I didn't have enough hands to help them. We just took turns on the night shift. That meant that we stayed with the patients and slept only every third night, as we had to work the next day.

One day I had 120 girls who were unable to go to work. Then the German physician came and insisted that within eight days there would be only forty people who were allowed to be sick, or else I had to send thirty back to Mauthausen. So I wrote letters saying that they could work and sent them to Mauthausen. I was so depressed I just couldn't think. I didn't know what to do because this meant that the people would be gassed. But the patients knew this, and they helped me. Anybody who could walk at all went, and eventually, after two weeks, we had only forty that we could not send off.

Some patients had very large, painful, abscessed axillary glands. The German doctor would just incise the glands and drain them. He himself had only one scalpel and just a little bit

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<sup>40</sup>Drowsiness, anorexia, extreme weakness, and usually diarrhea. Usually ends in death four days to two weeks after onset (Dorland's 1780).

of chloroethyl,<sup>41</sup> and that way he opened up the infected glands. There was nothing else. I had to learn to do it, and I did it. It worked.

One day a transport with sixty women came from Auschwitz. They had walked one hundred kilometers through the snow, then were in an open train for eight days. They came in their bare feet. One woman had walked with no shoes, and both her feet were frostbitten. They had tried to bandage her in Mauthausen. I didn't have any room for her and, for the first two days, had nothing to help her feet. After three days, I was able to make some room for her, and the two of us had to look at those feet. It was terrible. I could hardly take it. I cannot imagine how the poor woman lived. One foot was totally black; the toes were dead. The other foot was partially black. We had nothing to help her pain. That poor woman suffered so. I didn't know what to do. I'd never seen anything like it. The physician didn't know what to do either. I thought we should amputate her feet, but we just put some ointment on them and hoped maybe something would help. After four days, the German doctor came again. We let him see what we had done, and he put some warm hypermangan on and also some marphanyl prontalbine<sup>42</sup> powder. Every second day we'd change the bandages. That medicine was unbelievably good. After terrible pain she got well. After five months, her feet were almost normal.

The same day that this girl got better, another fell on her arm. She had such pain that I could only think that her arm was broken. Her lower arm was fractured. Never in my life had I set and stabilized an arm fracture, but I did succeed in putting it back together and telling her not to move it. I put it on a piece of wood, connected the bone at her elbow, and made some kind of

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<sup>41</sup>Ethyl chloride, used to deaden pain.

<sup>42</sup>Sulfanilamide powder.

splint. Then we put a sterile solution of boric acid on linen rags and wrapped her arm in them. Next we put wood pieces with on it so she could not move her arm. After four days the doctor came, realigned the bones, and wrapped her arm in a cast.

While I was busy with the cast, one of the girls who had just arrived from Auschwitz came to me and said, "Don't tell anybody, but I'm a physician. I want to get into the camp, and I do not want to practice as a physician, but you can talk to me." I was so glad that I could now talk my problems over with somebody, and my responsibility was not quite as heavy. I told her that our doctor was sick and she just had to help me, and she did. Then, once again during visiting hours, somebody had an underarm abscess. I didn't have to incise it. This new girl did it for me. I thought it was a poorly done job, but my patient got better.

The other doctor was still sick with high fever. She had lost all her will to live. The new young doctor said immediately, "I can see what's the matter. She has tuberculosis." When the one who was sick mentioned some symptoms that were not indicative of tuberculosis, the new physician said that if it wasn't tuberculosis, it might be malaria. Then she left. Then the older doctor said, "This woman is not a physician." In Auschwitz many claimed to be physicians or nurses, which exempted them from heavy manual tasks or the gas chamber. This was so unethical as it involved patient care. These were irresponsible people, for they had to pretend when they treated people, and the patients were harmed even more. This also meant that my hope to get some help was fading. Nobody wanted to be a physician. In Auschwitz, if you were a doctor you were not in such danger of going to the gas chamber. In Mauthausen, you didn't want to be a doctor because you wanted to work. To me, these were people without a conscience because if they were doctors, they should have helped take care of the patients.

On the same evening, I had a very difficult case. One girl who already had a kidney infection started to run a high fever and was out of her head. I had no idea what to do and got this doctor who didn't want to practice medicine, but she didn't know what to do either. We took the girl into the clinic and just gave her hot compresses, and after a few days she actually got better. But in all these things we had more luck than sense.

A new disease developed which they called "hunger edema." The people had swollen legs and red, swollen faces. Eventually their stomachs and backs swelled. Those poor people were in terrible condition. There was nothing we could do for them but talk to them, try to give them a little support, and tell them that it would be over pretty soon. They cried. They cried in the clinic and always asked me, "How long can we live?" It was so difficult to give them an answer because there was no hope for these people. It could not last much longer. Pretty soon these people got diarrhea, and then the swelling would recede some. Then they looked even worse - nothing but skin and bones. When the diarrhea stopped, the edema came back. The ones that were in bed did not have hunger edema as often, but we could not put them all in bed.

We had one who had a perinephritic [surrounding the kidney] abscess which bulged out the size of a baby's head. The patient had a very high fever. The doctor, who was now better, tried to drain it, but without success. The condition was terrible. It was so awful! One day the German doctor came. He punctured the abscess again and got a lot of pus out. He promised he would come back the next day and drain it again. He said he would bring everything. What he brought was a scalpel, a little bit of chloroethyl, and a little bit of sterile bandage material. In his winter coat, the way he came from the street, under a local anesthetic, he made a ten centimeter incision into the abscess and the pus was drained out. We got two liters. He covered it with

sterile gauze and disappeared. Further treatment he just left to us. One doctor wouldn't help; the other was too sick, and as our doctor did not like to bother with surgical cases, I took over the care. Nobody wanted to help me. The next day I drained the wound and put a new bandage on. The patient was always swimming in pus. Then I tried to sterilize some water and clean her up. After four weeks, the pus stopped. The patient still had fever, but eventually it healed, and after six weeks was totally clear.

We then got two more rooms to take care of sick people. That helped. We obtained some pajamas for the patients, but most of them were full of lice. We also got a few bedpans; that was so necessary. A hepatitis epidemic started, but it didn't spread too far. We had five cases. One had pneumonia as well. The people cut themselves in the factory, and that, along with the sulfuric acid that was being used there, made for terrible purulent cellulitis<sup>43</sup> that, not infrequently, led to blood poisoning. The people perspired in the factory. Those who had infections on their hands actually needed surgery, but as I've said before, the Germans did not want to do anything for them, so all we could do was drain the infected areas. This took a lot longer and hurt more. It was also hard on the patients who had to go to work. They sometimes went for days with fevers.

Now came the big moment. We were freed. The plan had been to shoot us or gas us all, but I heard that the manager of the factory took his car and met the American Army and told them of the women in his factory. This influenced the high command to get to us two days earlier than had been planned. On Friday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of May, at 6:00 P.M. we heard the alarm. After

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<sup>43</sup>"An acute, diffuse, spreading edematous, suppurative inflammation of the deep subcutaneous tissues and sometimes muscle, which may be associated with abscess formation" (Dorland's 299).

silence of five minutes, we knew we were free. The SS ran away, and on Saturday we were given over to the Americans. You cannot imagine what that meant. Most of us were at the end of our strength. A few more days, and we would not have made it.

The Americans' first concern was for the sick people. They brought us food for these poor sick patients. After four days we were all put into a real hospital. We had thirty beds, linens for everybody, pajamas, water, medicine, anything we needed. It was a dream. How quickly these Americans took over. Everybody got an x-ray. Unfortunately, the results were very bad. Most of the patients had active tuberculosis. Only five people were healthy. The other women, about twenty, were not too bad. All the others had some tuberculosis. The twenty worst cases were immediately put in a sanitarium in Austria.

They all took care that we got clothes and dresses and brought us into better places to live. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June we started on our train back to Holland. After all we had gone through, it was like a fairy tale. First we went with seventeen Dutch women in a cattle car to Horsching, which is an airport. From there, the French Red Cross took us over. One of the physicians told us to take a train to Switzerland, and they would take care of us. That's what we did. We went to Konstanz-am-Bodensee and were received there with everything you could think of. We were brought into a hospital where we stayed for two days of rest and then went to the very best hotel in Insel Reichenau. The Germans were all sent out, and we were told just to go into their houses and take what we needed. So we got some shoes, dresses, and a coat.

All the food yards were at our disposal. We hadn't eaten so much food in six years. We stayed there for one week and then boarded a Red Cross train and went all through Switzerland, from Geneva to Lyons, France. At each station people brought all kinds of food, chocolate, and

cigarettes, and in Geneva, the Red Cross even woke us at night with flowers, cocoa, chocolate, and quiche. We stayed in Lyons three days and went from there to Valenciennes. We stayed there one night and went from there in another car to Brussels, where we stayed three days. You could hardly tell that there had been a war in Belgium. From there we went to a monastery in Holland and got our first Dutch papers. The next day we joined our friends in Amsterdam.

Trudi:

The first I knew that my mother and sister were alive was in May 1945, when I received this letter with the return address on a grey envelope:

*May 1945  
Return Address: T/5 Arthur C. Schwartz Jr. 8435217  
576th Mtr Amb Co  
A.P.O. 5 P.M.  
New York, N.Y.*

*Mother and sister found:  
Illa Loeb. Lenzing frauen krankenhaush ehemaliger Kranzentrationslager<sup>44</sup>*

*To Miss Freda Schackman [sic]  
Brother and Sister Shop  
2720 Oaklawn Ave.  
Dallas 15, Texas*

Contents:  
*Mr. and Mrs. Trude Schakno [sic]  
My mother is with me. Farther [sic] passed away.*

Letter from Trudi:

*My Dear, Dear Mom. My Best Sister Illa,  
It is so great that I can write to you that I do not know where to start. I hope your letter finds you back in Amsterdam. I do not know who Dr. Gruen is. Was he Father's physician? But it does not matter, as long as somebody helps you to recuperate. We never were successful in our search for you. We surmised that you went from Westerbork to Theresienstadt, but the Red Cross*

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<sup>44</sup>Trans.: Used to be in the women's infirmary, concentration camp Lenzing.

*or the HIAS<sup>45</sup> could not find you. How terrible that you were in Auschwitz. We saw now pictures and newspaper articles. How courageous you were. Anything we can do for you to help you to forget, we will do. Our thoughts and prayers were always with you. And this, today, was the best day of my life since we left Amsterdam.*

*Rudy is now in a train, coming from New York to Dallas, and does not know anything yet. With the same mail that your letter reached me, he writes that your name could not be found on the list of survivors. I sent you a telegram. As soon as we know where to reach you in Amsterdam, we will send you money, food, and vitamins, and possibly clothes. It is Sunday, and I cannot get any information from the post office.*

*In November 1944, we heard of Father's death. I don't have to tell you how hard it is for me that I did not see him again. He left a lot of his ethical being, and I still have the feeling that he is with us for advice and help. How proud he would be of both of you. Our rabbi held a memorial service for him, and many people here who never know him shared our sorrow and share now our joy.*

*I still am in contact with many of our family's friends in Europe. Rudy's mother's death was not unexpected. She must have known what was ahead of her. By your presence, dear Illa, again your empathy.*

*I'm sure that you want to hear of Bobby and his knew sister Evelyn Dinah. Yes, we are now 4. It took awhile, bet we had no time for a new baby before 1944. But she is a dear. She arrived on the 9th of June, three days after the invasion, three weeks too late! Both children are our life. Bobby is a sturdy little boy, medium big, funny, and everybody likes him. He's very dependable. We always talked about you to him, and he was able to share our joy. He immediately got his piggy bank to send you gifts and said that now Daddy has to put up with 5 women, which includes the dog. Evelyn weighs 20 pounds and can walk and says, "Daddy, how do you do?"*

*We are now American citizens and have already applied for your immigration on a preferred quota for relatives of citizens. It all now depends on getting transportation. Rudy was not drafted because in the fall of 1942 he developed tuberculosis of the kidney and had to rest a lot during the year.*

*About us. Our children's shop is growing every year. We're still in the same house where we share our living quarters with the store because I will not leave the care of the children to strangers. We have a saleslady and a housekeeper for the children, but soon they will have an 'Oma'<sup>46</sup> and an aunt like other children.*

*It is in the middle of the night, and I cannot wait for Rudy's train to arrive and tell him about all of this.*

*July 15, 1945*

*My dear family,*

*You cannot imagine what your letter meant to us, and it arrived here on Mother's birthday, on the 12th of July, and we celebrated in freedom. For the first few months we do not*

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<sup>45</sup>Hebrew Immigration Aid Society

<sup>46</sup>Grandma



*have enough money. Mother's jewelry has come back to us, and we have furniture for two rooms. But we don't have clothes and are waiting for your package. People get packages from Switzerland and we hope soon from America. Everything here is very expensive. I do not know what's going to happen to me, but I'm planning to work as soon as possible as a nurse. I won't make much money, but I need a diploma. After all, in the camp I practically worked as a physician. You might think I'm deranged, but deep in my heart, I would like to study medicine. What do you think? Is there any chance? Do you think that our uncle would help me? I know you think I've lost my senses after what we went through to plan for a future as a physician, but we're free now, and this is my great wish.*

*Illa*

From Mother:

*I'm so happy with your heartfelt letter. We need so much love, more than material things. We are not spoiled any more. You can even sleep well on the floor. And you can even eat spoiled potatoes. Please send pictures of my new little granddaughter. I'm trying to learn English quickly so that my grandchildren could understand me.  
Mother*

About 10 months to a year after my mother came here, we had our son's boy scout troop over for breakfast. She served them, and the boys made fun of her English. Nevertheless, she never spoke German again in her life.

*July 1945*

*Dear Trudy and Rudy,*

*Rudy, you really worry us. I hope you don't have any more pain. Gall bladder pains are terrible. I know about these pains as I have frequent attacks. Hopefully, you do not develop the mumps. This was what all the male Jews were hoping for before we were sent to the camp. You might think I'm nuts, but mumps destroys the sperm for some time, and if the men that lived in mixed marriages were sterile, they did not have to be sterilized. Amen!*

*Just now we got your letter and package. Maybe things will get a little better for you now. With all the rice and bread and potatoes that we eat, we actually are gaining weight. I weigh now about 120 lb. Our doctor says that there is no residue from the pneumonia.*

*I can not wait to see my new little granddaughter. Do not tell this to Bob. I do not want him to be jealous. Do you remember our cook? We visited her; she has now a strip joint. She would like Ellen to help her, and she would make all the money she would like. What do you think of Ellen's new profession? You see, you still have chances, but she would be a much better physician. She acts as my boss, but I'm glad she does.*

*I'm not as active now as I was. We prefer to stay home and read. Our room is full of flowers that friends sent us. Don't worry about sending us warm clothes. We are not choosy any more after we wore clothes that were alive with lice. We are so glad to have this room because*

*there are no apartments for aliens without country. We are a little better off since we lived here so long.*

*I made some hamburgers out of vegetables, red cabbage, potatoes, and a little bit of beef. Not bad at all! We need some vinegar. A bottle on the black marked costs 10 florins; butter 25 florins a lb. Coffee and tea are impossible to get. The tea that you sent we exchanged for fruit and cheese for their nutritional value. Do not worry about us. I am in good health, but I'll get a special ration of grits, tapioca, and bullion blocks. Thank you for the 260 florins you sent and the other money. We do not need this now, since we can not buy anything anyway. I have only one wish: to see you and be with you and talk to you.  
Many, many kisses from your old one*

Both children had mumps at the time. The surgery was scheduled, and the surgeon called. It was said that he had an allergy. But in retrospect, he had the mumps.

*July 25, 1945*

*My Dear Four,*

*Today was a beautiful day. We attended a Tchaikovsky concert at the famous Concertgebouw [sic]. We were entranced. Mangleberg has been replaced by Edward von Beinum. What is happening to letters from you? Others have more letters. Hopefully you receive ours, as we write every third day. We had a conference with lawyer Karlsberg, a sympathetic man who evidently worked with you too. He will contact you and is sure, if no new laws pop up, there will be no trouble for me to come to the U.S.A. and study. The most important thing for me is now to learn English, and I am applying myself with all my strength. I'm not happy about myself. I'm now almost 26 years old and still do not have a finished education. It upsets me to no end. I could try to get the nurses diploma, and in my circumstances, I cannot attain this under one and a half to two years. By that time I hope to be in the U.S.A. with all of you. Please write me what the possibilities to be a registered nurse are.... I know you will say I'm crazy, but I would like to study medicine. Dr. Groen, who is the internist who took care of our father, and has great influence, (he kept sending us packages to Westerbork) and other friends who watched me through these years are encouraging me.*

I wrote her back and said, "go!"

*August 7, 1945 [written in English]*

*My Dear Bob,*

*This is my first English letter to you. I think always that you are a little boy, and a can not understand that you can read this letter. When you were 2 years old, you were a very nice boy, and I went with you and your parents to the boat. You were on my arm, and you dropped my glasses to the ground there. Then you started to America, and I had never seen you, your parents, and your little sister Evelyn. This is about all today. Shall you write a letter to me? With many kisses for you and your little sister.*

*Your Aunt Illa*

*My Dear Bobbie,*

*I send you very much kisses for you and Evelyn. Do you like to see pictures? I also. We will go together.*

*Grandmother*

*Amsterdam, South*

*16-8-45*

*Oostertehautlaan 38*

*My Dear Shaknos,*

*We thank you for your loving letter. It was for us an unforgettable moment when Dina and Illa one nice evening suddenly appeared in our door. Even the day before they were positively identified as being dead. I am so glad that I can assure you that your mother is unchanged. Illa is naturally much more mature. My wife and I admire her positive thinking and her positive appearance, but also the energy with which she immediately starts to prepare her and her mother's future.*

*We are so happy that we can be their hosts for the first few weeks. Even in these terrible times we were able to survive. We will try to help them to forget the terrible experience that they have been through, and with our modest means, help them to get established. Unfortunately, there's no transportation from here to Amsterdam. This is very difficult for Illa, as of now, we were able to find them a very nice room in Amsterdam.*

*We made a contact with the lawyer Karlsberg, who still is the most knowledgeable, to help them to get to the U.S. You were right. We know now that my parents were sent on May 17, 1943, from Westerbork to Auschwitz, and there suffered a gruesome death. My father, luckily, passed away naturally in Westerbork. Your question what you could do for us was very sweet, but we're lucky. My brother, who lives since '37 in Los Angeles, can not do much for us as he has been drafted and is now with the 5th Army in Italy, but might now be on the way back. My sister was able to flee from here in '42 and landed with husband and child in the U.S. and she seems to get along okay. She lives in Murphy, North Carolina. She sends us wonderful care packages, and the first package came at the same time yours arrived here. So we will get along alright.*

*The Strauss Family*

On August 15, Rudy was in a coma, and I was at the hospital. Everybody was dancing in the streets. All streetcars and buses had stopped running, and I had to go home to my children because the maid was leaving. I had no way of getting home, and being at Baylor Hospital, I decided to go to the nursery. There I introduced myself to a father with 3 children whom I had never met and asked him if he had a car and would take me home to Oaklawn, and I would recompensate him by outfitting all three children from my children's shop. He did, and I got

home.

August 24, 1945

Dear Trudy and Rudy'

*The mail is terrible. You do not hear from us, and we do not hear from you. Many thanks for your first package from July 9th. Everything arrives irregularly. Let me tell you the story of your friends, the Dahls. She was underground with both the children. The little girl was 6 years old, and the little boy just a toddler. But the Gestapo found them, and the children were brought to Westerbork. Both developed severe illness, and Mrs. Dahl decided to leave her shelter and come to Westerbork. All three were sent to Bergen-Belsen. But then a miracle happened. She was exchanged into a German exchange camp at Bodensee.<sup>47</sup> The Red Cross took care of them there, and she is now with a brother from America back in Frankfurt. All her family has survived; she can not get back to Holland but is trying to join her husband. He survived when he fled from Holland and eventually landed in Cuba, where he is now again a lawyer.*

I heard from them in early 1946 and was able to facilitate their entrance into the United States. Some years later Traute succeeded as a librarian at Columbia University in New York.

*My friend Eva tried to facilitate my emigration from here to England, where I could enroll in a nursing school and graduate in three years. But I turned this down, as it would be better for me to go to the United States and be with you.*

*Now what's going on with Rudy? We are very upset that he contracted jaundice. I know that you feel terrible and probably can not eat very well. There is much of this infectious hepatitis in Europe with high fever and nausea, and it lasts four to five weeks. Please don't worry too much about us. We now have a beautiful room and walk and eat and sleep. We are trying to be reimbursed for the real estate in Wuppertal. Please try also from your end. There seems to be some groups in the United States that could be of help. We turned all this over to Father's lawyer and also claimed life insurance from the Physicians' Association, and we are also trying for some reimbursement for our furniture in Amsterdam. But at this point we can not even receive packages from England.*

September 4, 1945

*Thanks to God we got your telegram. It seems Rudy is over the crisis. Does he still have a temperature? Does he need surgery again? If we could only help you. Mother is perfectly*

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<sup>47</sup>Lake Constance: at the eastern end of the Swiss plateau, at the border of Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. In summer 1944 the "Kasztner Train" or "Rescue Train" carried 1,684 Jews were first taken to Switzerland, supposedly on their way to Lisbon via Spain ( Leni Yahil, The Holocaust: the Fate of European Jewry, trans. Ina Friedman and Haya Galai, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) 635).

*healthy. After what she went through, it's a miracle. She got some cigarettes from England, and it's pathetic how happy she is with these. I keep them for her and ration them out. Tomorrow it's Rosh Hashanah, and I'll leave her 2 cigarettes. We will go to the cemetery and for the first time again, to the synagogue. Will Bobby go with you since Rudy is still in the hospital?*

*We will have an old gentleman eat with us whom we met in Westerbork and Theresienstadt. I myself am running from one government office to the other to succeed in the restitution of our parents' rest home.*

*Illa*

*I went for a through physical. Since I still have stomach trouble, he gave me a liver function test. Everything worked out fine, but he charged me 100 florins, Hopefully this will be taken care of by our Commission of Concentration Camp Survivors. We found our old home bathtubs and lavatories that we installed ourselves. We could sell these, but it isn't smart, as the prices will go up. We found the lady who has Rudy's mother's fur coat, but she said she paid for it. We will go to the cemetery on the holiday where now both your children's grandfathers rest. Here is nothing known about transportation to the U.S., but a few go with freighters. I would not mind to go on a freighter, even if I'm the only passenger. I just want to be with you in the new year.*

*Your mother*

*September 11, 1945*

*We are glad to get your letters from the 30th and 31st of August and relieved that we did get no telegram and hope that this means that Rudy is not worse. It is unfortunate that he does not react to Penicillin. Hopefully the mustard gas will help.*

*I will tell you how we took care of our patients in Lenzing. Luckily his heart and lungs are in good shape and he's determination to get better. Please keep drinking; this is so important. When my patients and mother were desperately sick in Lenzing and had fever of 103F for three weeks, I was the only one in charge. We only had cabbage soup and dry bread. I bartered the soup for raw carrots and raw potatoes and made some soup and was so glad that they ate this. Make Rudy eat. And be convinced that he will get well. When he feels that, he will get well. Your attitude helps the patient.*

*Keep your head high; it will all work out.*

*Illa*

*September 18, 1945*

*My Dears,*

*Please write us about everything - how you live and everything about Dallas. We are now leading a real quiet life. Your sister is back home, as she is still too tired to work. There is not too much to do in our small home. I'm cooking our linens in a small cooking pot as there are no laundries available. Nothing works here, where in Belgium everything is normal. The harbor workers are on strike. Money has no value; only the black market operates at ridiculous prices. That's where the strikers make money the easy way. Some matches can be bought for one florin; a packages for 25 florins. It will be some time before things are normal here.*

*You won't believe that anti-Semitism has increased. We, who are stateless Jews, feel it*

*every day. Haven't we suffered enough? Dutch Jews and other Dutch people who returned from the concentration camps receive double rations and special food, but we'll make it.*

*There is a chance to be reimbursed for the contents of our home. Since you actually are entitled to one third of what Father owned, see if you can help us to get some money back for what has been stolen. The Germans stole everything, and we are trying to file this under "war debt."*

*Mother*

*Illa (whose name was changed to Ellen) and Dina Loeb were able to emigrate to America in 1946 and came to live in Dallas, Texas with Trudi and her husband, Rudy Shakno. Ellen Loeb received her medical degree from Southwestern University School of Medicine on June 2, 1952. While Dina Loeb worked as a librarian at Southern Methodist University, Dr. Ellen Loeb practiced hematology in the Wadley Center in Dallas until her death in 1980. On April 5, 1968, she became the DAR Americanism Recipient for her "outstanding achievements in America, her adopted country." <sup>48</sup>*

*In 1972 she was invited to speak at the Baylor Pharmaceutical Company in Wuppertal, Germany. As she addressed her distinguished audience, Dr. Loeb looked across from the lectern through the large windows facing her. After her lecture, she informed them that the house which was directly in her line of vision was that in which her father had practiced medicine before he had been forced to give up all he had and flee because he was a Jew.*

*Dr. Loeb passed away in 1980, and Dina died at the age of 94, in 1986.*

*Dr. Loeb's striped concentration camp uniform remains on display at the Dallas Memorial Center for Holocaust Studies.*

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<sup>48</sup>See appendix \_\_\_\_\_ Copy of DAR Americanism Award - Dr. Ellen Loeb.