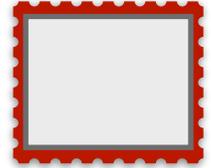
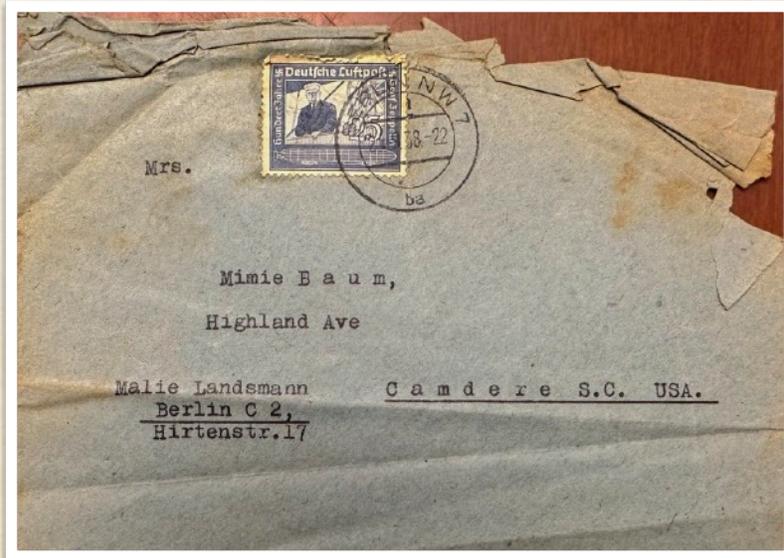

Sending for Help | Letter 1



This letter was posted five years after the Nazis come to power
... three years after enactment of the Nuremberg Laws
... one year until the war begins in Europe.

My dear cousin! [...]

I am the daughter of the Luser and Lustgarten family from Tarnow. I have been married in Berlin since 1921 and my name is Malie Landsmann, neé Laufer-Lustgarten. I was called Laufer on my mother's name because my parents weren't officially married in Poland. My father's name was Luser Lustgarten. Mrs. Annie Hausse is my late father's sister. You dear cousin are the daughter of my father's sister, whose name was Luser Lustgarten. [...]



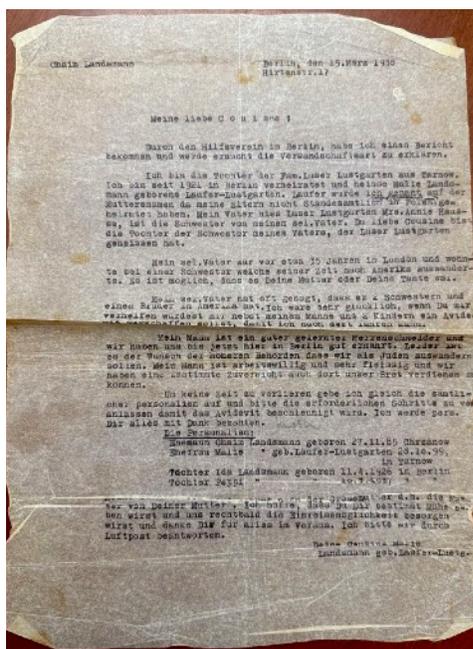
My husband is a well-skilled men's tailor and until now we have made a living here in Berlin. Unfortunately, it is the wish of the higher authorities that we as Jews should migrate. My husband is willing to work and very hardworking/diligent and we have a certain confident that we will earn our bread there as well.

In order to not lose any time, I am giving you the official names of the people and I ask you take the necessary steps to that the affidavit can be accelerated. I will personally pay you everything with thanks. [...]

[I have two daughters, Ida and Peppi.] My daughter Ida is named after her grandmother is the mother of your mother. I hope that you will definitely take the trouble and that you will immediately take care of the necessary things for the trip, and I thank you in advance for everything. Please answer me by airmail.

Your cousin, Malie Luser

Discussing the Letter



Malie's letter to Minnie, dated
March 15, 1938

This is the first in the collection of letters between Malie Landsmann and her cousin Minnie Tewel Baum. At the time of writing, it would have been clear to Malie and her husband Chaim that life in Germany was about to become impossible.

In 1933, five years before this letter, the Nazis seized power. In this same year, they stripped all naturalized Jewish citizens of their German citizenship—a move that likely impacted Chaim and Malie, who were both born in Poland. In 1935, the Nuremberg Race laws laid the groundwork for the systemic persecution of Jews as a racial category.

Even before *Kristallnacht* (the Nazi pogrom of November 9-10, 1938), these laws and increasingly destructive persecution compelled Malie to reach out to her American relations in hope of attaining immigration visas for her family.

Key Themes:

Family, Relationships, Networks, Migration, Affidavits, Sponsors, Law (American and German), Urgency



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Discussion Questions:

1. What is Malie's relationship with Minnie Tewel Baum? What does Malie's introduction tell you?
2. What does the fact that Malie sends this letter to a relative she has never met tell us about her situation?
3. What does Malie ask for? What is she hoping Minnie will do for her?
4. Describe Malie's family in Germany—who are they and what will they all need to emigrate?
5. What financial, legal, and logistical challenges do Malie and Minnie face?

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