

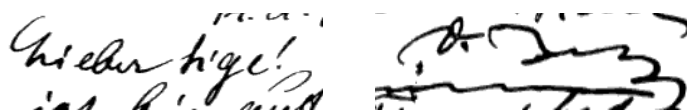
Appendix: Postcards from Europe: 1937 - 1944

Among my father's documents are ten postcards that had been sent from Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland between July, 1937 and November 1941. There is also an envelope which indicates that a message had been received from his brother Teddy and other relatives.

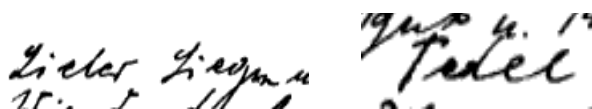
In addition there is a copy of a letter addressed to his sister Mareichen in Tel-Aviv, as well as two postcards from his brother Sale in Paris, one from a few months after the war started, but before the Nazi occupation of Paris, and the other written, but certainly not sent, just before the final liberation of Paris.

Identifying the Writers

The following images show the salutation and signature of Issac Fischleiber and Teddy Fischleiber. Issac called my father "Siege", whereas his brother Teddy calls him "Siegmund". The signature of Issac Fischleiber reads "D[einer] Issac, and Teddy signs "Tedel".

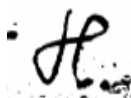


Issac Fischleiber



Teddy Fischleiber

On cards 3, 5, 6 and 7 a writer signs with what appears to be the letter "H", but it may be a symbol of some sort, especially given the text of postcard 3:



"H"

In postcard 3, which was sent from Warsaw and dated October 3, 1938, we learn that "H" and his father had been expelled from Leipzig. In postcard 4 we learn that Isaak and Teddy Fischleiber were expelled from Leipzig on October 28 so "H" can not be either of these two. The same initial/symbol also appears on cards 6 and 7 which were sent from Miedzyrzec.

If the "signature" is indeed an "H", as opposed to a combination of letters or a symbol, then this may have been written by Henek Fischleiber, who perished, along with his father Josef Fischleiber, a brother of Issak Fischleiber. Josef Fischleiber is mentioned in postcard 4 where we learn that Issac and Teddy were living with him. The same return address as on postcard 4 is also used on postcards 5, 8 and 10. If Henek is

Postcards from Europe

indeed “H” then, in view of the statement on postcard 3 that he and his father had been expelled from Leipzig, they most likely were renting the apartment.

For information on the siblings of Issak Fischleiber mentioned here, see above under “The Parents of Isaak Fischleiber.”

Summaries

- [card 1] 1938.07.08, Franzenbad, Czechoslovakia; from Issak Fischleiber.
We learn that *Isaak Fischleiber has returned from his trip to New York*. He asks my father to pay a person \$50 for the opossum furs that he had purchased from the seller.
That my grandfather had been in New York came as another great surprise to me.
- [card 2] 1938.08.08.15, Franzenbad, Czechoslovakia; from Issak Fischleiber.
He will go to Leipzig for a few days and will meet up with Teddy in Karlsbad, Czechoslovakia for the Jewish holidays. *He is in favour of my father marrying*. We learn that Sale Fischleiber, my father’s brother, has received a French residence card, valid for three years.
- [card 3] 1938.10.03, Warsaw; the postcard is signed “H”. The address is obliterated by the stamped postal mark so we do not know if it is the same as on postcard 4.
This is a postcard partially written in a coded language, e.g. “If this book from the hand of Nostradamus [the sixteenth century French astrologer] is not enough guidance, student bathe, without hesitation, your hot breast in the cool morning dawn ... [the dots appear in the original]”.
“H” further writes, “My father is also here; we had to leave Leipzig as we were, with hardly any time [to pack things]”. He speaks of making difficult[?] trips (*scharfe Trips [sic]*) with someone named Georg and again being a pioneer[?]with him.
Georg might be Georg Fischleiber, the son of Symcha Fischleiber, a brother of Isaac Fischleiber. George survived the war, along with his mother and a sister.
- [card 4] 1938.10.30, Warsaw; from Teddy Fischleiber. The address is Stojerska 16/80 which is presumably the address of Joseph Fischleiber. Postcards 5, 8 and 10 have variations of the street name.
“...we and all other Polish Jews had to leave within 24 hours On the 28th [the start of the expulsion of Polish Jews from Leipzig] civil servants came and without the opportunity to pack the most urgently needed

Postcards from Europe

things, we were escorted to the railway station ... Papa wants you to come immediately to Leipzig and store our furniture and belongings ... We, and also uncle Lev and [our] aunt are living with uncle Joseph”.

Joseph Fischleiber was a brother of Isaac Fischleiber; Lev might refer to Leiser Fischleiber, another brother of Issak Fischleiber. In the latter case “[our] aunt” would then be Fanny Neumann.

[card 5] 1938.11.08, Warsaw; first from Issak Fischleiber and then from a non-identifiable person..

Isaak had received a postcard, mailed on October 27, from my father. The second writer hopes that they will be allowed to return to Leipzig to arrange matters. They are not in a good position as they are only guests. If my father **finally makes a good match** the hope is that he can take better care of them and hopefully bring them to America. At the end of the text Isaac says something about mail, but can not give advice and then signs the card.

October 27 preceeded the date when Isaak and Teddy were expelled from Leipzig and thus my father would have addressed the postcard to Leipzig; it is not clear how Isaak would have received it in Warsaw.

I thought at first, based on the salutation and the reference to bringing them to America, that the second writer was Teddy. He may indeed be the author, but the writer does not sign Tedel. This part is signed “I C”, unless it is the Hebrew letter aleph in cursive. It is not the handwriting of “H” on postcard 3.

[card 6] 1938.11.20; from Issak Fischleiber and “H”.

Issac says that he will find it more peaceful in Miedzyrzec and be together with Teddy a lot more. When he hears from my father he will perhaps have some of the essentials brought here.

“H” writes in a style somewhat reminiscent of postcard 3: “I am driving in the jungles of Poland and if this is even possible, from now on nothing is impossible ... You in America do something”.

The postcard was written in Warsaw, but mailed from Miedzyrzec, and the returnee is M. Goldman. M. Goldman, must be Manja Fischleiber, a sister of Issac Fischleiber, who married Israel Goldman. The fact that Issac Fischleiber went to Miedzyrzec, combined with the name of his sister suggests that Manja was living there.

[card 7] 1939.05.02; from Issak Fischleiber and “H”.

Isaac has not received anything today so if my father is not sure that his father has received the money he should send 100 by telegram. “In London

Postcards from Europe

you will obtain [exchange?] a lot cheaper. Business is frozen as there are no buyers”.

“H” writes that papa [not identified] wants to run away very fast and wants to save, “[but] with the present situation, saving is not worth while; who will live to have it ... Have a nice trip”.

As with postcard 6 this one was mailed from Miedzyrzec, with the returnee being Goldman. There is a gap of over six months between the previous postcard and this one. It speaks of a postcard sent in April, 1939 and I assume that there had been others during this period.

What do “In London” and “have a nice trip” refer to? Did my father travel to Europe? He had just married in March.

[card 8] 1940.01.30; from Issak Fischleiber in Warsaw to Joseph Holländer (the father of Ruth Holländer) in Hilchenbach.



1940.01.30: Issak Fischleiber to Joseph Holländer in Hilchenbach

Isaac Fischleiber says that he has received the card from his “Dear relatives” and asks them to let my father know that he and Teddy are well. Isaac requests that Joseph Holländer ask my father to send affidavits for himself and Teddy. Isaac also speaks of writing my father himself.

The return address in Warsaw is the same as postcards 4 and 5 so Issak and Teddy had returned from Miedzyrzec to Warsaw.

Postcards from Europe

To properly understand this postcard one has to consider the historical and geographical background.^{DVD} The start of the WWII is usually dated to September 1, 1939 when both Germany and Russia invaded Poland and divided the territory almost equally between them. The aim of both occupying countries was the destruction of the Polish state and an ethnic cleansing of the territory. The Germans annexed the western part of Poland, which contained many ethnic Germans, as part of Germany proper and created the “Central Government”, forcing ethnic Poles and Jews from the annexed territories to resettle there. Both Warsaw and Miedzyrzec were located in this Central Government region. The affixed stamp, which partially covers the printed, presumably Polish, stamp simply says “Deutsche Reich”. This in turn implies that, at least for postal purposes, communication between Warsaw and Hilchenbach in Germany proper was possible.

The card was then sent from Hilchenbach to my parents in New York and so became part of my father’s document set. Note that Jews in Germany proper were still able to use the postal service, in particular they could send mail to the U.S. which was not yet at war.

[card 9] 1940.03.09. This is the date that my father wrote on an empty envelope, so I do not know if this refers to the date it was sent or the date it was received.

The text (in English except for, apparently, the German abbreviation “u.” for “und”) on the envelope reads, “From Teddy, uncle Jo[seph Fischleiber] and aunt Tang[?]. I can not identify this last person. Note that Isaac is not mentioned among the writers.

[card 10] 1941.04.08 (according to the postage stamp); from Lotte Fischleiber [Charlotte Friedmann, the wife of Joseph Fischleiber]. The address is the same as on postcards 4,5 and 8. The printed postage stamp now reads, “General Government”; see above on postcard 8.

She complains that my father had received innumerable letters from them, but that he had not accomplished anything for them, He is to visit her aunt, who lives in New York. The aunt is to send papers (probably visas) via a certain person in Washington, D.C.. The latter sends them money each month via the Dresdener Bank, but unfortunately not much can be bought with it. My father is to send a telegram once the papers have been sent.

[card 11] 1941.11.17; the postcard was held up by the British censors (in Bermuda, which was a transit point, I believe) and only arrived on New York on March 3, 1946. The name of the sender is Maria Marczav in Warsaw, who was perhaps the name of the Polish woman where the sender was stay-

Postcards from Europe

ing. Unfortunately, the name of the person who wrote most of the text is covered by stamps.

The writer asks my father to ensure that there are no disruptions in the sending of packages even if there is no acknowledgement. The person has sent letters on September 23, October 30 and November 12. My father is to only send coffee and bitter chocolate because “everything else is of little value for me.”. There is also a request to send greetings to an uncle Wolf.

There is also a short message by a second writer, but it too is covered by stamps. Partially visible under the stamps is “Naftal[i?]”.

Because of the stamps -- which I did not want to attempt to remove -- I can not identify any of the people. The Hebrew name “Naphtali” sometimes corresponds to the given name “Hirsch”, but I did not find any relatives with this name.

This is the end of the letters from Germany and Poland. I do not know if my father received the letters mentioned in postcard 11. Three weeks later, on December 7, 1941 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour and the U.S. entered the war, putting an end to any communication. In the summer of 1942 the Nazis carried out mass deportations to the death camps and the Warsaw ghetto uprising of April 1943 resulted in more Jewish deaths. None of the people mentioned in the above letters appears to have survived until the end of the war; the only possible exception being “George” of postcard 3.

[card 12] 1940.05.30. From Sigmund Fischler in New York to Mariechen Fischleiber in Tel-Aviv. This letter was in an envelope marked, “Returned for additional postage”, so it may not have been sent.

The letter deals with the problem of delivering a visa to Issac Fischleiber and Teddy Fischleiber. My father says that he had had a letter from the U.S. government stating that the visa was in Berlin and that the consul was ready to send the visa to any place that Issac was allowed to go to. My father sent a cable to Issac on May 25 telling him to write the consul. Since Italy was no longer allowing transit passengers, my father suggested that he go via Romania. My father writes that he knows that Issac is sick and that he has not heard from him.

Since Poland was occupied by both the Germans and the Russians, there was no longer a Polish state. It is thus unlikely that the U.S. continued to have diplomatic services there and normally a person has to obtain a visa in person. Since Issac Fischleiber was considered

Postcards from Europe

to be a Polish Jew the Germans would not have allowed him to travel to Berlin.

Two Postcards from Sale Fischleiber in Paris

Although WW II officially started on September 1, 1939, the Germans did not attack France until May 10, 1940. Paris was occupied on June 14, well after the first postcard was written. The Parisian uprising against the Germans started on August 20, 1944 and the surrender date was August 25. I imagine that mail service to the U.S. was not established for quite a while which explains why it was only on October 26 that Sale wrote.

[card 13] 1940.02.12. From Sale Fischleiber in Paris to Sigmund Fischler in New York.

Sale received the card that my father sent and says that he was glad to have news about Issac and Teddy. I had assumed that it would have been impossible to send a letter directly from Paris to Warsaw, but Sale says that he hopes to be in contact with them. In addition he says that he ran into Herbert Fischleiber who showed him a letter that he had received from his parents in Warsaw and that they are in good health. He is waiting to hear about my birth [which took place on the 22nd]. Sale is working a little, but the essential is that he is still alive.

Herbert Fischleiber [HERB] was the son of Joseph Fischleiber, the brother of Issac Fischleiber.

[card 14] 1944.10.26. From Sale Fischleiber in Paris to Sigmund Fischler in New York.

Sale is happy to be able to send my parents news. He has been able to get along until the present, but his health is not the best and what he needs is to go to the country. He has not had any news about Teddy.