Large print guide

# The Holocaust Galleries

Please do not remove from the Galleries

IWM
IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUMS

This guide contains the text for the object captions in these galleries.

# Jewish Life

Leonhard Wohl was proudly patriotic. He was first conscripted into the German Army in 1908 and re-joined when the First World War began in 1914. He fought on both the Eastern and Western Fronts and was awarded the Iron Cross First Class. In this **photograph** of his unit, Leonhard is sitting at the back, on the far right.

The Wohl family were active members of their town's small Jewish community. They attended weekly services at their local synagogue and Leonhard was responsible for the upkeep of the Jewish cemetery. The family used this **prayer book** and velvet **table cover** for their celebration of *Rosh Hashanah* (Jewish New Year).

This **photograph album** records visits to Leonhard's brothers and sisters in different parts of Germany. It also contains images of the family at leisure. In one picture a small group stands in front of the sign for the family business, M Wohl. The business was named after its founder Moses Wohl, Leonhard's grandfather.

In 1903, anti-Jewish violence erupted in the Russian town of Kishinev. Over the course of three days, 49 Jews – including children – were killed and hundreds of women were raped. The authorities stood by as homes, shops and synagogues were destroyed. This **photograph** records the resettlement of children orphaned by the pogrom to Palestine.
Jewish Museum London

This **travel typewriter** represents a vibrant culture of music, literature and theatre written in the Yiddish language. Yiddish has its roots in Hebrew, German and other European languages. It was central to many Jews' self-identity. By the late 1930s, there were an estimated 13 million Yiddish speakers worldwide.
Jewish Museum London

This **bottle** is from the factory of the family-run Haberfeld distillery in Oświęcim, Poland. Liquors from the distillery were well known across the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Founded in 1804, it was the town's largest business by the early 1900s. Alfons Haberfeld, who ran the company in the 1930s, was also the leader of the local Jewish community.

# Fighting for Power

## A foundation of violence

In 1923 Hitler led an ill-fated attempt to overthrow the government. This became known as the **Munich Putsch**. Hitler had planned to take control of the Bavarian state government before marching on Berlin. However, the uprising was quickly suppressed and he was arrested. He was sentenced to five years in prison for treason, but was released after just eight months.

Ongoing antisemitism led to Jewish men being frequently labelled as traitors and cowards. The Reich Federation of Jewish Front-Line Soldiers responded by issuing this **leaflet**. It highlights the patriotism and sacrifice of Jewish Germans during the First World War in a bid to end anti-Jewish propaganda. Efforts to combat antisemitism with such facts were rarely successful.

This **caricature** claims that it was 'the Jews' who were responsible for Germany's defeat in November 1918 and for establishing the new and hated democracy. Many Germans could not accept having lost the war and looked for someone to blame. They labelled

those who negotiated the peace terms after the First World War as the ‘November criminals’.

The SA’s distinctive **brown uniform** earned its members the nickname ‘brownshirts’, and set it apart from other paramilitary groups. The **shirt**, **breeches** and **marching boots** were all modelled on military designs. The SA offered unemployed veterans and disillusioned young men an opportunity to channel their anger and aggression.

By 1932, the SA had over 400,000 members – four times more than the German Army. It was organised into regional groups. Each was distinguished by the colour of their collar patches and later by the band around their **cap**. Across Germany the SA was responsible for protecting Nazi political meetings and disrupting those of their opponents.

The Nazis wanted the SA to advance their ideology as well as give them fighting strength. By publicly wearing their uniforms, SA members displayed their devotion to Nazism. The membership badges on their **ties**, and their **armbands** and **belt buckles**, all bore the party’s symbols. Like most Nazi organisations, the SA also had its own insignia.

This **cap** carries the symbol of the German Communist Party (KPD). The KPD was a major political opponent of the Nazis. Its members were regularly involved in street battles with the SA and other rival political parties. Many Germans feared the KPD more than they did the Nazis. They believed that communism threatened both their wealth and way of life.

Hitler began work on ***Mein Kampf*** (*My Struggle*) while in prison for his role in the 1923 Munich Putsch. It became the most important written work of the Nazi movement. Both a memoir and a manifesto, it gave violent expression to Hitler's hatred of Jews and communism, and laid out his vision for a racially pure Germany.

## Instability and crisis

Words and images became weapons in Germany's violent political struggle. **Posters** were important campaigning tools. They bombarded voters with eye-catching symbols and powerful slogans that appealed to people's fears and desires. In the crucial elections of 1932, the Nazis produced more propaganda than any other political party.

None of the political parties on the **ballot** in

November 1932 won a clear majority. The Nazis received 11.7 million votes, but this was not enough to form their own government. Their biggest rivals – the Social Democrats (SPD) and German Communists (KDP) – had more seats when combined, but would not work together to combat the growing Nazi threat.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, courtesy of The Abraham and Ruth Goldfarb Family Acquisition Fund

The Nazis adapted their messages to fit different audiences. They knew that broadening their support base was critical to their electoral prospects. Campaigns after 1930 played down antisemitism, but it still featured in Nazi propaganda. This **poster** is aimed at rural voters and reinforces stereotypes connecting Jews with money.

President Hindenburg's advisors shared the Nazis' hatred and mistrust of the KPD and SPD. They thought that if Hitler was allowed into power he would be easier to control and could be used to destroy their common enemies. They convinced the reluctant president to appoint him **chancellor**. It was a terrible misjudgement that merely gave Hitler the authority he needed.

The Nazis promoted the partnership between President Hindenburg and the newly appointed chancellor, Hitler. Images of them together appeared in **Nazi propaganda** in time for the elections of March 1933. They presented this union as a bridge between the conservative politics of war-hero Hindenburg and the new, dynamic style of Hitler and the Nazis.

Eighteen-year-old Gerda Cimbal wrote this **letter** to her English pen pal Mollie McEvoy at the height of the Nazis' struggle for power. It reflects the anxieties felt by many Germans at the time, such as unemployment. Gerda writes that she is hopeful she will be able to find work because she is so young.

**Possibilities for art**

In this **photograph**, a *hanukkiah* holding candles for the Jewish religious festival of *Hanukkah* sits in the home of Rabbi Dr Akiva Posner and his wife Rachel. On the back of the image Rachel wrote, '*Hanukkah* 5692 (1932). The flag says, "Death to Judah". The light answers, "Judah will live forever".'

The German capital was one of the most socially liberal cities in Europe. It was at the heart of a thriving

international arts and music scene. Its cabarets used performance as political commentary. Berlin was also an important hub for growing movements in gay rights, women's rights and sexual liberation.

### The inner circle

## A New Order

### Thinking with the blood

Francis Galton was a British eugenicist. He pioneered the use of statistics for studying inherited characteristics across generations. This **poster** outlines the purpose of his Anthropometric Laboratory, which opened in London in 1884. More than 10,000 people volunteered to have their vision, hearing, lung capacity, reflexes, strength, arm span, height and weight measured.

The eugenics movement was founded in the UK by Francis Galton. In his book ***Hereditary Genius***, published in 1869, Galton argued that both mental and physical characteristics were inherited in the same way. Inspired by the work of his cousin Charles Darwin, Galton believed that humans could be selectively bred to improve the species.

***The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century***, by British-born writer Houston Stewart Chamberlain, became the handbook for antisemitism in the early 1900s. Chamberlain reduced all of history to an ongoing battle for survival between the so-called German and Jewish races. Members of the Nazi elite, including Hitler, admired Chamberlain and were deeply influenced by his work.

Eugen Fischer was a German eugenicist. In 1913 he published ***Die Rehobother Bastards*** (*The Rehoboth Basters*), a study of descendants of European men and African women in German colonies. This work later influenced his involvement in the Nazi programme to sterilise children born to African and German parents. Fischer believed 'racial mixing' would cause the downfall of European civilisation.

This 1936 edition of ***The Study of Human Heredity*** was published after the Nazis came to power. Its authors expressed gratitude to the regime for putting their ideas about race hygiene into practice. Two of its writers, Eugen Fischer and Fritz Lenz, held key positions in the Nazi scientific establishment.

More than five million people attended the 1911 *Internationale Hygiene Ausstellung* (*International*

*Hygiene Exhibition*) in Dresden, advertised in this **poster**. It included displays on race hygiene. By this time there was mounting evidence to discredit such ideas. But the trauma of the First World War helped revive them, particularly among Germans.

In the US, 'race scientists' were alarmed by what they saw as the decline of American 'racial stock'. They blamed this on an influx of immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, as well as relationships between black and white Americans. They advocated laws banning interracial marriages.

## Ideas into action

The word 'Aryan' historically had multiple meanings. For the Nazis, it referred to a white European 'master race' in Germany and Scandinavia – tall, strong and fair-skinned, with blonde hair and blue eyes. Race scientists believed that physical appearance was a reflection of racial purity. They used this **bust** to see if a person's skull dimensions matched their 'Aryan ideal'.

**Hans Hauck** was the son of a French-Algerian soldier and a German woman. Nazi propaganda falsely claimed that children like Hans were born to German

women raped by French-African troops stationed in the Rhineland and the Ruhr after the First World War. From 1937, an estimated 500 of these teenagers were identified and forcibly sterilised.

Dr Robert Ritter was a child psychologist and specialist in 'criminal biology'. He was convinced that genetics were responsible for criminal behaviour. In 1936, he was appointed director of the Ministry of Health's Research Unit for Racial Hygiene and Population Biology. While there he oversaw a project to classify and document Roma communities in Germany.

Ritter and his team forced more than 20,000 Roma to submit to racial evaluations. Those who refused were threatened with being sent to a concentration camp. From 1938, all Roma over the age of six were required to register with the police. Men, women and children were photographed and fingerprinted.

'Race scientists' used instruments such as these **calipers** and this **eye chart** to measure skull diameter, nose width and eye colour. They believed that they could use these physical characteristics to classify people into racial groups. They ranked these groups into hierarchies based on their own racist assumptions.
The Wende Museum

Race propaganda promoted images of the 'Aryan ideal' in different ways to different audiences. These were published both before and after the Nazis came to power. ***Volk und Rasse*** (*People and Race*) was one of many journals publicising ideas of German-Aryan racial superiority. This publication was marketed to educated, middle-class Germans.

The 1933 ***Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring*** legalised the forced sterilisation of people diagnosed with certain conditions. This included epilepsy, blindness, deafness and mental illness. The most common diagnosis among the 300,000 Germans sterilised was 'feeble-mindedness'. The law also allowed for the sterilisation of alleged alcoholics.

**A single party state**

The Nazis presented Hitler as Germany's saviour and developed a cult of personality around him. Devotees flocked to his mountain retreat in Bavaria to get a glimpse of their leader. ***Deutschland Erwacht*** (*Germany Awake*) was an album that contained 150 pages. There were more than 225 images that people could collect and add to it.

Hitler was regularly captured in film and photographs as the focus of public events. In this **image**, a camera vehicle follows his car through crowds on the National Holiday of the German People in 1936. Goebbels ensured such scenes were carefully recorded. Any portrayals considered to make Hitler appear weak, such as **photographs** of him wearing glasses, were strictly forbidden.

*Der Führer Spricht* (*The Leader Speaks*) is a series of posed **images** taken by Hitler's official photographer, Heinrich Hoffmann. They presented Hitler as he wished to be seen – as a gifted and passionate speaker. His precisely choreographed speeches used dramatic gestures to build to a frenzied climax. They became a key part of his appeal.

The Nazis staged **mass rallies** designed to intimidate and inspire. The SA and SS carried standards that bore the slogan 'Germany awaken'. These were topped with decorative **finials** bearing the swastika – the symbol of the party – and the eagle. They reinforced the idea that the Nazis were bringing Germany's long-awaited national revival.

## Nazifying Germany

On 1 April 1933, the Nazis staged a nationwide boycott of Jewish-owned businesses. Armed SA men stood guard outside shops. Menacing **notices** with slogans such as, 'You bought from Jews! We are watching!' intimidated shoppers. International criticism meant the boycott was cut short to just one day.

The boycott was an early attempt by the Nazis to deprive Jews of their livelihoods. The SA posted **signs** to advertise the event. Most displayed the message, 'Germans defend yourselves against Jewish atrocity propaganda, buy only at German shops!' Hans Levi tore this **poster** for the boycott off the wall of his father's factory in Stuttgart.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Hans Levi

In April 1933, the German government passed legislation restricting the work of Jewish lawyers. This **photograph** was taken shortly after these regulations came into effect. It shows lawyers in Berlin queuing to check if their licenses have been revoked.

**Michael Siegel** was a respected lawyer who lived with his wife and two children in Munich. In March 1933, he went to the police on behalf of a client who had been detained in Dachau concentration camp. The police beat Siegel before marching him barefoot through the streets, wearing a sign saying that he would never complain to the police again.

Jewish war veterans were initially exempted from the Nazis' discriminatory laws. This was largely through the intervention of President Hindenburg. In July 1934, he created the Honour Cross for all men who served during the First World War. Jewish veterans such as Ernst Fernbach were also eligible to receive this **medal** and **certificate**.

***The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*** was an antisemitic Russian text published in the early 1900s and widely translated. It was claimed to be evidence of a secret meeting between Jewish leaders conspiring for world domination. Although exposed as a forgery in the 1920s, it became an important piece of anti-Jewish propaganda for the Nazis.

Museums brought Nazi propaganda to a wider audience. This **catalogue** accompanied the exhibition *Der ewige Jude* (*The Eternal Jew*). The

viciously antisemitic display was designed to encourage support for the intensifying persecution of German Jews. In just three months it attracted more than 412,000 visitors, including school groups.

The Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment issued strict **guidelines** for the press. Journalists and editors were supplied with news content and instructions on how it should be interpreted. Anyone who did not comply could be sacked or arrested. The Nazi Party also had its own paper to carry its message, the *Völkischer Beobachter* (*People's Observer*).

The Nazis used new technologies to extend the reach of the regime's voice. They helped people buy radios by making models like the ***Volksempfänger*** (people's receiver) more affordable. They also installed receivers in public spaces, such as schools and workplaces, to encourage communal listening.

On 10 May 1933, students ransacked libraries for **books** they considered 'un-German'. They burned works by Jewish, left-wing and liberal authors in public ceremonies across Germany. Books by authors critical of Nazism were also targeted. These organised events were ritualistic spectacles. They

were accompanied by the wielding of flaming torches and the chanting of oaths.

Lilli Karger received this **letter** from the president of the Reich Chamber of Music. It prevented her from working in any areas under his authority because she was Jewish. The 'synchronisation' of music in line with Nazi goals was especially important for the party. They believed that this great German cultural tradition was being corrupted by 'the Jews'.

## Race laws

The Nuremberg Race Laws prohibited anyone now defined as 'a Jew' to marry or have sex with a non-Jewish German. Such relationships were considered 'race defilement'. Many Germans informed on those they suspected of this new crime. A 1935 **poster** published by *Der Stürmer* called for the death penalty for such 'race defilers'.

The Nazis believed Jewishness was a racial, not a religious, identity. Failing to find any scientific evidence for this, they were forced to use religious practice as a basis for their **legal classification**. A person was defined as 'Jewish' based on how many observant Jewish grandparents they had.

The antisemitic ***Juden Raus*** (*Jews Out*) was advertised as a 'thoroughly enjoyable party game for adults and children'. Players moved their pieces around the board in order to round up Jews for deportation to Palestine. The first player to remove six people won. Senior Nazi leaders criticised the game as they believed it trivialised their policies.
The Wiener Holocaust Library collections

***Der Giftpilz*** (*The Poisonous Mushroom*) was a children's book published in 1938 by Julius Streicher, editor of *Der Stürmer*. The book claims Jews are like poisonous mushrooms – difficult to recognise, but potent threats to the health and survival of the *Volk*. It aimed to teach children how to identify Jews within German society.

Even before the Nazis came to power, antisemitism in Germany was expressed in offensive and racist caricatures. Everyday objects, such as **beer steins**, **bottle stops** and **pipes**, referenced crude physical stereotypes. Similar objects were produced in countries across Europe.

The antisemitic content on the front page of ***Der Stürmer*** (*The Striker*) appeared in display cases across Germany. A 1934 edition revived the notorious

'blood libel' – the perverse lie that Jews used the blood of murdered Christian children in religious rites. The next year, editor Julius Streicher boasted of receiving 11,000 letters a week denouncing Jews.

**One community**

The ***Volkswagen*** (people's car), was a KdF initiative to develop a more affordable vehicle for Germans. The Nazis called it 'a car for everyone'. People were encouraged to invest part of their salary each week to save up for one. More than 300,000 people submitted a savings card in exchange for a car, but none was ever received.

The *Winterhilfswerk* (Winter Relief Fund) encouraged Germans to support members of the *Volk* in need. On the annual Day of National Solidarity, thousands of people took to the streets with **collection tins** to gather donations. Social pressure to participate and compulsory contributions taken out of wages led to people resenting the scheme.

Most of these **badges** are souvenirs from the KdF (*Kraft durch Freude*, meaning 'strength through joy'), a Nazi organisation that provided leisure activities and package holidays for German workers. Others

commemorate charity initiatives or attendance at events such as the Oktoberfest beer festival. The badges publicised the wearer's participation in the national community.

## Nurturing the national community

This **poster** reads, 'Healthy Parents, Healthy Children'. It reflects the extent to which ideas about race hygiene filtered down into the everyday lives of Germans. These ideas connect the health of individuals and their families with that of the national community.

For the Nazis, motherhood was a woman's primary responsibility to the *Volk*. 'Racially desirable' women were awarded the **Mother's Honour Cross** based on the number of children they had – bronze for four or five, silver for six or seven, and gold for eight or more.

The figures of a farmer and his wife on this **candelabra** overlook the swastika and the insignia of the SS. The idea of 'blood and soil' was important to Hitler's sentimental view of German history. It linked the German *Volk* to the land of a romanticised rural past.

Hitler is **pictured** with a boy dressed up in an SA uniform. He was often photographed with children,

whom he considered to be the soldiers of the future. In 1938, he said, 'This generation of youth is learning nothing other than to think German and act German... and they won't free themselves for the rest of their lives'.

This **schoolbook** contains notes on *Rassenkunde* (race science). It belonged to a young Jewish girl from Cologne. *Rassenkunde* became a key part of German education. Countless Jewish students had to sit through lessons about the supposed superiority of the 'Aryan' race and the inferiority of 'the Jews'.

This **teaching aid** was used to illustrate different qualities of three 'European races'. Each turn of the disc reveals a set of characteristics, including personality, hair colour and body shape. For the Nazis, the Nordic race in the centre was part of the Aryan master race and at the top of their racial hierarchy. The Wiener Holocaust Library collections

**Indoctrination of youth**

**Children's books** taught Nazi values of obedience and conformity, and told stories about the movement's heroes and history. Some, like ***Trust No Fox on the Green Heath and No Jew on his Oath***,

introduced children to antisemitic stereotypes of Jews as bullies, cheats and predators. It was written by 18-year-old Elvira Bauer.

In addition to toy soldiers, children played with **miniature SA bandsmen** and **figurines of Nazi leaders**, including Hitler and Hermann Göring, commander of the German air force. Some of the toys had moveable arms that could be posed to give the Nazi salute.

Hitler Youth member Werner Lehmann sent this **letter** to his American pen pal in January 1937. Alongside descriptions of his Christmas holidays, Werner wrote in broken English, 'The Jews live in our country like guests...they had take us away our independent way of thinking and had infected our race. Therefore we don't like them'.

Children in the Hitler Youth wore **uniforms** to show their place within the *Volksgemeinschaft*. Every member of the national community was expected to be part of a Nazi organisation for his or her entire life. After membership of the Hitler Youth became compulsory, parents could be fined or arrested if they prevented their child from joining.

The Hitler Youth aimed to instil Nazi values in boys aged 10 to 18. It worked to militarise them, creating a future generation of German fighters. Each member was issued with a **dagger** inscribed with the words 'blood and honour'. Prospective members, no matter how young, had to pass medical and fitness tests.

## A State of Terror

### A culture of suspicion

The SA opened Oranienburg concentration camp outside Berlin in March 1933. Rumours about what happened there swiftly made it notorious, both in Germany and abroad. Its first commandant, Werner Schäfer, wrote this **book** in 1934 to counter negative foreign press. He included as evidence supportive letters from British fascists who had visited the camp.

Dachau concentration camp opened at an abandoned munitions factory outside Munich in March 1933. It became the 'model camp' where SS guards were schooled in the use of violence to control prisoners. They used labour as a form of punishment. Jewish inmates, like those in this **photograph**, were subjected to the most back-breaking work.

The Nazis considered homosexuality to be a threat to the national community. **Richard Grune**, an openly gay artist, was persecuted under pre-existing laws targeting homosexual men. He was arrested and sent to Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Gay men in concentration camps suffered abuse from both the SS and other prisoners.

Women could not join the SS and had to be approved before marrying a member. Himmler issued an order to ensure 'up-breeding' of the organisation. It required the Office of Racial Policy to issue a **racial health certificate** to any potential bride. From 1935, men applying to the SS also had to prove their Aryan descent.

The Nazis did not feel that the law should be impartial. They wanted the legal system to be part of their network of enforcement. This judge's **robe** bears the Nazi insignia. Many judges were sympathetic to the views of the Nazis and fell willingly into line with the regime.

Once admitted to the SS, men were expected to devote body and soul to the organisation. They were supposed to remain physically fit and mentally committed. Alongside **sports clubs**, the organisation

also had its own **newspaper**, *Das Schwarze Korps* (*The Black Corps*).

Most **SS men** were passionate and committed Nazis who valued their reputation for ruthlessness. Their numbers grew from 290 in 1929 to over 50,000 by 1933. By 1934 the SS had replaced the SA in stature and importance. In the same year, they assumed complete control of the concentration camp system.

Every SS member had to swear a personal oath to Hitler, pledging to give their lives for him if required. Their motto, 'my loyalty is my honour,' was engraved on the SS **service dagger**. The 'death's head' insignia on their **cap** indicated their willingness to die for their cause.

**The propaganda games**

In preparation for the Olympics, the Nazis ordered the arrest of Berlin's criminals and 'asocials'. Since they considered 'Gypsies' to be potential criminals, police were ordered to forcibly move over 600 Roma to a makeshift campsite in **Marzahn**. The campsite was next to a sewage dump and was guarded by the *Kripo* (criminal police).

Propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels commissioned film-maker Leni Riefenstahl to produce a documentary about the games. ***Olympia*** emphasised the beauty and strength of the athletes, and promoted Nazi ideas of Aryan supremacy. It won Best Film at the 1938 Venice Film Festival, beating Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.

Berlin's **streets** were decorated with swastikas and Olympic flags throughout the games. These temporarily replaced the antisemitic posters, placards and newspapers that usually decked the city. German Jews were banned from flying the national colours, so flew the Olympic logo instead. Elsewhere in Germany, beyond the view of tourists, violence and discrimination against Jews continued.

Sachsenhausen was the first custom-built concentration camp. Its distinct **design** meant that prisoners could be watched at all times by the SS. It could also be easily expanded to hold the Nazis' growing list of enemies. Original plans for the camp anticipated a capacity of between 8,000 and 10,000 prisoners held in 50 barracks.

Just 25 miles north of the sold-out Olympic stadium in Berlin, the Nazis' network of terror was

expanding. In this **photograph**, prisoners from a nearby concentration camp are constructing Sachsenhausen, a major new camp outside the city. They were working there at the same time the Olympic cauldron was being lit.

## Roma Life

This **jewellery box** was used by Josefine Winterstein. Josefine sold wicker baskets woven by her husband, Johann. With their three children, Josefine and Johann moved seasonally across western and central Europe in their caravan selling their baskets. Like other Roma families in western Europe, they returned to their more permanent home near Würzburg in winter. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Rita Prigmore

Julius Heilig, a German-Sinto, proudly served his country in the First World War. His **service record** shows that he was awarded the Iron Cross 2nd Class in January 1917 in recognition of the 23-year-old's bravery. Many Roma fought in the conflict, often giving their lives for their countries.

These popular **postcards** and **collectors' cards** are from the early 1900s. They both expressed and

confirmed the mainstream view of the Roma as outsiders. Some people thought the lifestyle that such images presented was romantic, while others thought it aimless and rootless. The artists who illustrated these cards were not Roma themselves.

Most Roma groups spoke both the language of their own country and the traditional language, Romanes. These **pages** from a German-Romanes dictionary are from the year 1755. Different dialects of Romanes developed as Roma communities settled across Europe. There was a rapid growth in written forms of the language throughout the 1700s and 1800s. University and State Library of Saxony-Anhalt, Halle

Gabriel Reinhardt was a talented German-Sinto musician. He played in a band called Eckstein with his four brothers. The group specialised in Hungarian 'Gypsy' music. Gabriel (left) and his **band** played across Würzburg, Germany, during the 1930s. His family had a long musical tradition and ran an instrument repair business.

This **brooch** was worn by Gheorge Cioba. It represented his status as *Bulibasha,* the chief of a Romanian Roma group called Kalderash or Kalderari. Each different group within the Roma community

had its own customs. Some were named after their specialist trades. By tradition the Kalderash were coppersmiths.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

In many European countries the authorities treated Roma as criminals. In Germany, **identification certificates** were introduced from 1922. These captured biographical details, fingerprints and a photograph in the same way as criminal records.
This certificate was issued to Eduard Höllenreiner, a 32-year-old German-Sinto, in 1928. He had to carry it at all times.

This is the English-language edition of the German children's book ***Ede und Unku***. It tells the story of the friendship between Ede (Eddie), a working-class German boy, and Erna 'Unku' Lauenburger, a German-Sinti girl. In the novel, Unku challenges common prejudices about Roma that Ede holds.
The book includes photographs of the two children.
University of Liverpool

# Growing Isolation

## Ever more constrained

From 1934, German Jews were excluded from performing in concerts and theatrical productions, except those organised by the Jewish *Kulturbund* (Culture League). Although supervised by the Reich Ministry of Propaganda, *Kulturbund* performances proved very popular with their Jewish audiences. This **membership card** belonged to Frieda Rosenthal. Each stamp marks an event that she attended.

Laws that barred Jews from day-to-day activities increased their sense of isolation and fear. Dora Francken did not feel safe developing this **photograph** until she had left Germany. She is standing beside notices outside a swimming pool at Blaubeuren. One reads, 'No entry for Jews', the other, 'Dogs not admitted'.

From early 1935, local Nazi members put up their own signs in public places in towns and villages. This **street sign** from Eisenach reads, 'Jews are not wanted in our district'. Although such signs did not

legally prevent Jews from entering places, they fuelled the cruel culture of persecution.

As the Nazis' paranoia grew, they introduced measures to make people identifiable as Jewish. Men were required to add 'Israel' to their name and women were required to add 'Sara'. Joseph and Louise Bloch applied for the compulsory name changes with these **letters**. This humiliating policy further separated Jewish people from the rest of the German population.

A law passed in 1938 required German Jews to apply for a new version of their *Kennkarte* (identification card). This ***Kennkarte*** and **passport** are both stamped with the letter 'J' for *Jude* ( Jew). This mark was part of ongoing attempts to formally segregate Jews from the rest of society, making them identifiable to whoever saw the documents.

When anti-Jewish restrictions stopped Siegfried Engelhardt from going to school, he became an apprentice bicycle mechanic. Having assumed his boss, Schulz, knew he was Jewish, he requested time off for a religious holiday. In these **letters**, Schulz dismissed the teenager for being *Nichtarier* (non-Aryan), yet described him as 'punctual' and 'honest'.

Russian-born Alexander Sirot lived in Hamburg and worked for Bäko-Werk managing the sale of baking products. In 1938, Bäko-Werk fired Alexander in order to rid its workforce of Jews. Unable to find work in Germany, he chose to emigrate. In his **travel pass**, Alexander was classified by the Nazis as *staatenlos* (stateless).

**Without means of existence**

Ludwig Neumann owned an industrial clothing company in Essen. His business suffered when suppliers pulled out of contracts and customers decided to buy from 'Aryan'-owned shops instead. Ludwig was forced to sell the business to fellow Essen clothing manufacturer, Joseph Herbring, for a fraction of its value.

Jewish doctors and dentists were identified by **signs** outside their medical practices. From July 1938, Jewish doctors were only allowed to treat Jewish patients and Jewish patients were forbidden from seeing 'Aryan' doctors. They were turned away by **signs** like *Arischer Zahnarzt* (Aryan Dentist) and *Für Juden Keine Ordination* (No Prescription For Jews).

Some shop owners put up **signs** to declare that they were a 'German Christian business'. They did this to affirm their 'Aryan' status and to protect their property from attacks by antisemitic thugs. For Jews, this made regular daily tasks, such as shopping for food or clothes, more uncomfortable.

Brothers Arthur and Julius Simson owned the company that manufactured these **pistols**. The local Nazi governor imprisoned both men on dubious charges and transferred ownership of their company to the state. In 1936 it was renamed **Gustloff Werke**, in honour of Nazi Wilhelm Gustloff, who had been assassinated by a Jewish student.

In February 1939, a new law required Jews to surrender all precious stones and metals to the government without compensation. Some people managed to deposit their valuables abroad to protect what few assets they had left. Marek and Grete Kellermann asked London-based shipping agents to keep this **bracelet** safe for them.

**Wrenched back and forth**

Philipp Kraus owned an antiques shop in Munich. Throughout the 1920s he had defended himself

against repeated antisemitic accusations of profiteering. In 1936 he received a tip-off that he and his family were in danger. They fled their home, carrying only suitcases, and secured **boat tickets** to Haifa in Palestine.

Julius Siegel was a First World War veteran and partner at a top law firm in Munich. Worried about the threat posed by the Nazis, he and his family left Germany for Palestine in 1934. Palestine, then under British control, was a desirable destination for German Jews. However, tighter restrictions on immigration were soon introduced.

Some families who left managed to take large or delicate household objects with them. This **wall clock** was brought to the UK by 16-year-old Franz Steiner. The **table** belonged to the Kaiser family. Relocating objects such as these was challenging and expensive. It was not an option open to everyone.

Arnold Urbach was one of thousands of Polish Jews expelled from Germany in October 1938. On reaching the border he was sent back to Germany by the Polish government, which refused to recognise his Polish citizenship. Following an unsuccessful attempt to cross into the Netherlands, Arnold left

Germany for Scotland on an agricultural worker's visa. He brought this **trunk** with him.

The Nazis put administrative measures in place to prevent Jews leaving the Reich with valuable possessions. Käthe Boronow drew up this **list of belongings** for herself and her daughter Ruth. It records the basic household items and clothes they were allowed to take. Käthe made these simple **cloth bags** for Ruth to use at boarding school in England.

Theodor and Else Schindler lived with their children Gretel and Kurt in Hamburg. Their lives became harder when Theodor was forced to sell his business and the family moved into a small flat. After three years contemplating emigration, they left for England in 1938. Unlike some families, they were able to bring many of their **household belongings** with them.

**Nowhere to belong**

In July 1938, representatives from 32 countries met at Évian-les-Bains in France to discuss the growing refugee crisis. This **photograph** shows delegates Henry Bérenger (France), Myron C Taylor (US) and Lord Winterton (UK). While most countries expressed

sympathy for Jews in the Reich, only the Dominican Republic offered to accept additional asylum seekers.

The failure of the Evian conference to change immigration policies was noted in the Nazi Party's newspaper. Its headline on 13 July 1938 read, 'No one wants to have them'. This **cartoon** was published in the British *Daily Express* three months later. It reflects on the failures of the international community to offer asylum to refugees.

## The Reich expands

Waves of brutal antisemitic violence erupted in the days after the *Anschluss*. In these **photographs**, Austrian Jews have been dragged into the streets by local people and Nazi Party members to be abused and humiliated. These events drew large crowds of onlookers. The cruelty unleashed on Austrian Jews took senior Nazis in Germany by surprise.

The public attacks against Jews in Austria were more extreme than anything yet seen in Germany. The **photograph** above shows a tailor's shop in Vienna vandalised with antisemitic caricatures. The graffiti threatens anyone attempting to clean the storefront with a 'holiday to Dachau'. Two thousand Austrian

Jews were arrested and sent to the concentration camp after the *Anschluss*.

On 10 April 1938, the Nazis organised a public vote on the integration of Austria into Germany. The vote aimed to legitimise the *Anschluss* by confirming it had popular support. This **ballot** is one of an overwhelming majority cast in favour of the union. Neither Jews nor Roma were allowed to vote.

Much of the support for the *Anschluss* came from people who identified as 'German by blood'. They united under the slogan '***Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer***', meaning 'one people, one nation, one leader'. There was little international opposition to the *Anschluss*, which many people abroad viewed as a natural union.

In this **photograph**, SA members post a sign reading 'Not one penny to the Jews' on a shop front. In Austria, laws were quickly passed with the aim of excluding Austrian Jews from public life. Their businesses were boycotted, closed or 'Aryanised', and Jewish employees were dismissed.

### Peace at any cost

While in Munich, British prime minister Neville Chamberlain sought additional assurance from Hitler that the two countries would not go to war again. The two leaders signed the **Anglo-German Declaration**, a peace pledge between both nations. Believing he had secured 'peace for our time', Chamberlain proudly waved this paper in front of cheering crowds after arriving back in Britain.

This **photograph** shows German soldiers parading through the annexed Sudetenland on 3 October 1938. Although the Munich agreement removed the immediate threat of war, Hitler's confidence only grew. He correctly assumed that Britain and France would not use force to resist further German expansion. Five months later, Germany invaded the remaining Czech provinces.

## A Violent Escalation

### A senseless fury

**Joseph Goebbels** seized on vom Rath's death to demand violent revenge against all Jews in the Reich. Further orders from senior Nazi Reinhard Heydrich

established how these 'spontaneous' actions should happen. Although instructions were sent to local Nazi leaders, the pogrom was ultimately chaotic and lawless. It was the first state-sponsored mass violence against Jews in Germany.

**Herschel Grynszpan** was enraged when he learned his family had been evicted from Germany to their native Poland because they were Jewish. Seeking revenge, the teenager shot German diplomat Ernst vom Rath in Paris. Vom Rath's death two days later was used as an excuse for the violence unleashed against all German and Austrian Jews.

This **synagogue** in Berlin would have kept registers of its congregation, including births, marriages and deaths. Before destroying synagogues, mobs were ordered to seize these records. They were transferred to the Nazi intelligence agency, the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD), and used to help trace and arrest local Jews.

The pogrom was particularly brutal in Vienna. The rioters were emboldened by a deliberate lack of police intervention. Despite orders forbidding it, many Jewish-owned businesses – like this **shoe shop** – were looted. Dozens of Jews in Vienna were

reported to have died by suicide during the pogrom and in its aftermath.

Religious items were deliberately targeted by the mobs during the pogrom. This ***tallit*** (prayer shawl) was found among debris in Vienna on the morning after. Germany's only remaining Jewish newspaper published requests seeking replacement items. This allowed religious services to continue – but only where the Nazis permitted.

This ***Siddur*** (daily prayer book) belonged to Georg Berg, a devout Jewish man. When Nazis invaded his family farmhouse, they defaced the book's front cover and pages with manure. As this was a holy book, this would have been deeply offensive to Berg. Acts of desecration were widespread during the pogrom. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Jill Berg Pauly

Many Jewish families were torn from their beds in the early hours of the morning by Nazis who had broken into their **homes**. As they watched helplessly on, their furniture was smashed, their valuables stolen, and their beds slashed with knives and axes. Some family members were also physically beaten.

Across the Reich, police and fire crews allowed Jewish properties to burn. These firemen in the German town of Ober-Ramstadt only tackled the flames from a torched synagogue to prevent them spreading to the 'Aryan'-owned house next door. This was captured in a **photograph** taken by Georg Schmidt, a staunch anti-Nazi.

This **Jewish school** in the small German town of Korbach was one of many set on fire during the pogrom. Jewish schools had been safe places for children. Their destruction was devastating for students and parents. Laws introduced after the pogrom banned Jewish students from all state-run schools.

The Nazis blamed Jews themselves for the violence that was done to them. They were fined one billion Reichsmarks to pay for the damage done to their own property. A punishing 20 per cent tax was imposed on all of their reported assets to cover this sum. As elsewhere, Jews in Bremen were also forced to clean up **the wreckage**.

This **group** of Jewish men was forced to march through their hometown of Regensburg carrying a sign that read, 'Exodus of the Jews'. Locals jeered

them along the route to the nearby train station. From here, around 30 of the men were taken to Dachau, while others were sent to the local prison.

Many Germans were ashamed by the level of violence and destruction. Among **newspaper** reports were accounts of 'Aryan' Germans arrested by police in Berlin for condemning the attacks. The Nazis decided that instead of stopping the violence, they would move it off the streets and away from public scrutiny.

The pogrom sent shockwaves across the world and made international headlines for weeks. American and British **newspapers** expressed horror at the dramatic turn of events in a 'civilised' nation. Many publications compared it with the barbaric pogroms of the Middle Ages.

Approximately 7,500 Jewish-owned businesses, like this **shop** in Berlin, were destroyed. Stock was often stolen against official orders. Nazi minister Hermann Göring was furious about the overall cost of the damage. He feared that insurance payouts and the lost opportunities to 'Aryanise' these businesses would affect the German economy, which was already short of money.

This **synagogue** was one of more than 1,200 damaged beyond repair during the pogrom. Before the buildings were destroyed, some Jews were forced to listen to or read antisemitic propaganda from the *bimah* – the place from where the Torah is read. Synagogues were at the heart of Jewish community life. As the buildings were wrecked, this community life was shattered too.

## A wave of arrests

This **photograph** shows the roll-call of Jewish men sent to Buchenwald after the November pogrom. The camps were unprepared for the huge influx of prisoners and became vastly overcrowded. Many of the new prisoners had been rounded up from streets, trams and cafes – as well as their own homes. They were still wearing their civilian clothes but their heads had been shaved.

Prisoners were allowed to send **postcards** to family or friends. These helped create an illusion that the men's imprisonment was legal, but the content was heavily censored. The postcards were often the first news families received about their loved ones' whereabouts. Sometimes this was weeks after they had been detained.

# Seeking Sanctuary

## The problem of refuge

This **identification card** was issued to 11-year-old Werner Mark, who left his home in Magdeburg the day after the pogrom. He was accompanied by his mother to the German border, but continued his journey to England alone. His older brother Erich, who had arrived in England nearly four years earlier, met him in Harwich.

After the November pogrom, 19-year-old Max Wolf was sent to Buchenwald. The photograph on his **identity card** was taken at the time of his arrest. He was still wearing his civilian clothes but his head had been shaved. His father secured Max's freedom, but on the condition that his son left the country. Max was issued this **certificate** confirming his release.

Jewish refugees increasingly flocked to Shanghai, as entry did not initially require a visa and entire families were typically allowed in together. These **passports** belonged to Friedrich and Lilly Bettelheim. With their two-year-old son Karl, they were among 1,500 refugees settled in Shanghai by the end of 1938. By 1939, this number had grown to more than 17,000.

In their desperation to leave, some people applied to many countries for visas. Alfons Lasker wrote a series of **letters** to lawyers and aid organisations about his ongoing attempts to secure entry to Britain, Palestine or the US for his three daughters. Despite his dedicated efforts, he was ultimately unsuccessful in finding anywhere that would accept them.

Adolf Blond was held for ten months in Dachau and Buchenwald as a political prisoner. During that time, his family worked tirelessly to secure a visa on his behalf. British authorities required all prospective immigrants to have medical examinations. Blond was issued this **certificate**, which confirmed he was not 'physically or mentally defective in any way'.

The first *Kindertransport* reached Britain on 2 December 1938. It included more than 200 children from a Jewish orphanage in Berlin that had been destroyed in the November pogrom. The children in this **photograph** had just arrived at Harwich. The Essex port would be the main entry point for the thousands of children who followed.

Desperate parents flooded aid organisations with appeals for help. Bertha Salomon had secured work in the UK as a domestic servant, but could not leave

her daughter Felizia behind. She sent this **letter** to the Central Office for Refugees, with a **photograph** of the 13-year-old, in a plea to find a placement for the young girl.

This **pamphlet** offers advice to foster parents on how to provide support for child refugees in their care. The children's experiences varied. Some found support and affection from their carers, while others faced maltreatment and neglect. Separated from their families and in unfamiliar surroundings, many were lonely and desperately unhappy.

Each child needed a sponsor to give a **guarantee** declaring they had enough funding for the child's care, education and eventual return. Most people in Britain thought the crisis would pass and that the children would go back to their parents. The children were offered temporary refuge, not permanent asylum.

**Sending children away**

Fifteen-year-old Annie Bankier brought this **English-German dictionary** with her. Unlike most child refugees, she spoke English already. Despite this, she found adjusting to life in the UK hard, eventually

having a nervous breakdown. Many children experienced severe culture shock when they arrived in their new homes.

Milena Roth was born into a large, close-knit family in Prague. Every Sunday she visited her grandparents. This **photograph** of six-year-old Milena with her parents and grandfather captured her last visit before she left for the UK in July 1939. Her mother packed her **suitcase** with family mementos, including linens embroidered by Milena's grandmother.

Isak Hutter bought this **coat** for his 14-year-old son Otto. Like many parents of *Kindertransport* children, Isak did not know when he would see his son again. He bought the coat several sizes too large so that Otto could grow into it. Otto's mother Elisabeth embroidered his name into the lining at the neck.

Steffi Leyser's father gave her this **wallet** for her travel documents. He had received it as a boy as a gift for his *bar mitzvah*. Steffi's favourite uncle gave her this **puppet**, which was one of the few items she was allowed to choose and pack for herself.

**Bea Siegel** (right) boarded a train at Munich station in June 1939. Six years earlier, on 10 March 1933,

Bea's father Michael had been beaten and publicly humiliated. When he arrived home, she had gone to greet him but all she found were his torn and blood-stained clothes outside the closed bathroom door.

Lina Hirsch converted to Judaism when she got married. She wore this **wreath** on her wedding day in 1921. When the Nazis came to power, she was advised that divorcing her husband might offer her some protection, but she refused. She gave the wreath to her daughter Ruth when the teenager escaped to England in 1938.

This **identity document** was issued to 15-year-old Lore Michel from Cologne, who was travelling to London to join her brother Walter. Lore believed England was just a stop in her journey to the US. Her parents Friedrich and Ännie were preparing to emigrate there and had planned for Lore and Walter to join them.

Musician, journalist and scientist Walter Finkler often travelled for work and would bring back presents for his daughter Evelyn. He hid them in coat pockets for her to find. This **toy dog** was his parting gift to her before she left Vienna on a *Kindertransport* at the age of eight. Evelyn's carers did not want her to wear

anything German – the toy dog was the only thing she brought with her that she was able to keep.

Edith Jacobowitz's parents Else and Wilhelm were arrested by the Nazis in May 1939. Edith and her brother Gert were denied permission to visit them before leaving Germany for Belfast that August. In this **letter**, Edith asks her uncle in the US to help her parents, who were still imprisoned several months later.

Richard Kaufmann travelled to Britain from France, where he had been staying with his aunt and uncle. His parents remained in Karlsruhe, Germany. They issued the **announcement** of their son's *bar mitzvah* in their local paper and sent it to him as a souvenir.

Karoline hoped to join her children and asked Dori to write to her in English so she could practise her language skills. In this **letter**, Dori explains that 'wee' is a Scottish term for small. Younger children like Herbi often lost their first language as they adjusted to their new surroundings, making communication with their parents more difficult.

Dori and Herbi were initially housed near each other. Karoline gave Dori this **darning mushroom** to

mend clothing, and in a letter wrote, 'How I would plead with you Dori to take care of Herbi...make certain that you darn his socks'. Not all siblings lived together. For parents, this intensified anxieties about their children's wellbeing.

Ice-skating was a popular pastime during the freezing winters in central Europe. Like many children, Herbi packed **ice skates** in his suitcase. He had already outgrown them by the time winter arrived, but in a **letter** to his parents he described going to an ice rink near his foster home in Scotland.

Most of the *Kindertransport* left from major cities in the Reich. Children from smaller towns had to find their way to these cities, many travelling long distances at additional cost. This **form** gives details of Dori's journey and instructions on where she had to travel in order to join the transport from Prague, over 200 miles away from her hometown.

Ruth only began to enjoy school once she arrived in England. This **workbook** shows her transition from German to English education. Back in Dachau, Ruth and Raimund were once instructed by a teacher to paint a venom-spitting snake with the caption 'Jews feed on lies and are destroyed by truth'. Their

parents had forbidden them from completing the assignment.

In **letters** to her husband's former student, Bea Paish, Vera described how difficult she found the separation from her children. She explained that she wanted to hide her anguish from them. She also gave updates about her efforts to secure sponsorship in the UK by finding work as a domestic servant.

This **photograph** of Hans, Vera, Ruth and Raimund in their garden was taken around 1930. Ruth is holding her **teddy bear**, which she named 'The Bear'. Nine years later, The Bear accompanied her on the journey to England.

Child refugees were not allowed to take anything new or valuable with them. Vera bought Ruth this **dressing gown**, but immediately soaked it in the bath. That way, if officials inspected their possessions they would think it had been used. This plan was successful. When Ruth's luggage was checked, the dressing gown was not taken from her.

Ruth and Raimund were met at Liverpool Street Station in London by their guarantors, Frank and Bea Paish. The children called the Paishes Uncle

Frank and Aunt Bea. Ruth put together this **album** comprising **photographs** of her and her brother Raimund with the couple, their three young children and their cousins.

In a letter to her parents, Ruth described how she and her friend Jane often played the recorder together. Her father Hans, a blind composer, sent his daughter **sheet music** of duets he had written for the girls. On the cover was a drawing by her mother that reveals how Ruth's parents imagined her life in England.

Each child was allowed to bring two knives, forks, spoons and teaspoons. Ruth and Raimund were given these family heirlooms engraved with the initials of their maternal grandparents, Martin and Hildegard Ephraim. The siblings were also given family albums to take with them, which included the last **photograph** taken with their grandmother.

Creativity was a central part of life for the Neumeyer family. Hans was a music teacher and composer, while Vera gave lessons in therapeutic dance. Every year, Vera would direct Ruth and Raimund alongside children from her classes in a drama production for their families and friends. This **book of plays** contains some of her handwritten stage directions.

Leonhard and Clara Wohl, having secured passage to Chile, expected to leave Berlin in September 1939. Before leaving, they packed a **trunk** with some of their treasured belongings. It held Clara's **purse**, and Leonhard's **prayer cap** and **shawl** with an accompanying personalised **bag**.

Ilse wrote this **poem** for her three younger sisters – Kate, Eva and Ulli. It expresses her longing for their family to be reunited. Ilse fled to South America with her husband and young son in 1937, and missed her family desperately.

Siegfried and Irma Diamant began preparations to leave Austria in October 1938. Seven months later, they arrived in the UK with their young daughter Charlotte. Each one of these **documents** was a part of the intricate emigration process this one family had to undergo to secure a visa to the UK.

**Shelter through domestic service**

Refugees not only had to find somewhere to go, they also needed permission to leave. These **exit visas** guaranteed that Edith and Franz Sternschuss could leave Prague and travel to Italy. Edith, a trained lawyer, secured work in domestic service

and journeyed on to England. Franz, waiting for sponsorship, had to stay behind.

As Nazi persecution intensified through 1938 and 1939, Jews in the Reich tried frantically to find employment in British households. They posted advertisements in British newspapers, including *The Jewish Chronicle* and ***The Times***. They sought jobs for themselves or for members of their families too old to qualify for the *Kindertransport*.

Norbert and Augusta Überall desperately wanted to join their daughter, Irina, in England. They sent her their belongings, including this ***matzah* cover**. Used at Passover – a Jewish festival commemorating the liberation from slavery in ancient Egypt – it is embroidered with the words, 'This is the bread of affliction that our forefathers ate in the land of Egypt'.

Hortense's parents tried to prepare her for what they thought her life in England would be like. Her father taught her to play bridge, a card game he knew the British enjoyed. Her mother bought her a cookbook and an evening dress. She also gave her some of the family's tea set, including this **teacup**, **saucer** and **spoon**.

Kate Wohl came to Britain when she was 19 years old. Her two younger sisters had already arrived on a *Kindertransport*. Kate used this **recipe book** as a cook in Germany and then as a refugee domestic in Britain. The first recipe she added in English was for an apple cake.

Hortense worked for the Hunts, a family similar to her own. In this **letter**, her father describes how he and his wife shared the Hunts' interests, like hunting and dog breeding. He thanks them for allowing Hortense to enjoy their property – which resembled the one they used to own – and for their kind treatment of his daughter.

Hortense's father Georg Heidenfeld was a doctor who served as a medical officer in the German Army during the First World War. His practice was based in the family's large home in Breslau. Georg and his wife Stefanie hoped that the whole family would be able to join Hortense abroad.

**Those who remain**

Rudolf Pereles wrote this **letter** to the woman taking care of his son Edward. Rudolf was certain he would not see his boy grow up. While many parents were

grateful their children were safe, they were devastated at being parted from them, knowing they had no chance of escaping themselves.

The ***St Louis*** left Germany carrying more than 900 refugees in May 1939. On arrival in Cuba, visas for those on board were revoked. The ship was ordered to leave, moving on towards the US where its passengers were refused entry. It eventually returned to Europe, where those on board found temporary refuge in Britain, Belgium, France and the Netherlands.

On 30 March 1939, 13 Czech Jewish refugees were denied entry into the UK after arriving on a privately chartered plane at Croydon Airport. **Photographs** of Oskar Goldberg being forced back towards the aircraft appeared in British newspapers the next day, leading to public outrage. The British Committee for Refugees from Czechoslovakia gave the required guarantees and the group was allowed to stay.

British-controlled Palestine was the preferred destination for most Jews from the Reich. But from 1939 the UK government severely restricted Jewish settlement there. They limited immigration to 75,000 people over five years. In this **photograph**, Jews in Jerusalem protest against these regulations.

The *Kindertransport* were coordinated by individuals and organisations within the Reich and refugee aid committees in Britain. Some priority was given to children who were orphaned or homeless, and to those whose parents were in concentration camps or no longer able to support them financially.

## War

### Savage domination

The speed of the German advance took Polish forces by surprise. The army destroyed Polish towns, while the air force devastated cities in bombing raids. Poland was defeated within a month. This **border post** was torn down, as the dividing line it marked ceased to exist.
The Silesian Museum in Katowice

These **photographs** were taken during Operation 'Tannenberg', a German campaign targeting civilians after the invasion of Poland. More than 20,000 Polish civilians thought to be resisting – or capable of resisting – the German occupation were murdered within weeks. By the end of the year, the number of people killed had risen to 60,000.

Soldiers particularly targeted Jews wearing traditional styles of dress. In one of these **photographs**, a Jewish man is being humiliated by having his beard cut off as soldiers and civilians look on. In the other, elderly Jewish men are forced to clear up damage from German bombing in their hometown of Piątek.

German forces wrecked Jewish property, particularly synagogues, as they advanced through Poland. This **railing piece** is from the Great Synagogue at Łódź, which was burnt to the ground in November 1939. The fire destroyed all of the synagogue's sacred Torah scrolls, the holiest objects in the Jewish religion and vital for religious worship.

Across Nazi-occupied Poland, **decrees** notified the Jewish population that they had to wear a white **armband** with a blue Star of David around their right arm. This made them instantly identifiable as Jewish and singled them out for ridicule and abuse. There were severe penalties for anyone caught not wearing the star.

Germans ordered Polish Jews to register with the police, creating a census of the Jewish population. This **registration form** was completed in German by the authorities. It records a 13-year-old boy still living

with his parents. He has been forced to sign the bottom of the form himself and give his fingerprints.

## Mass expulsion

Adolf Eichmann oversaw an ill-fated plan to create a 'Jewish reservation' at Nisko. This was marshy, inhospitable land on the eastern edge of German-occupied Poland. Paul Frank was among the 5,000 Jews sent there in October 1939. In this **postcard**, Paul tells his family how glad he is that they have avoided his fate.

The Nazis' long-term plans relied on moving people they considered German into their new territory in the east. These people would colonise the land and exploit its natural resources. In this **photograph**, resettled German farmers harvest grain in the Warthegau, an area of Poland annexed to the Reich.

Hundreds of thousands of Jews fled Nazi terror by escaping eastwards into Soviet territory. It was not an easy journey to make. Many families were separated when the border closed in December 1939. Mother and daughter, Sala and Fryda Freiwald, sent this **postcard** from Nazi-held Kraków to relatives in Soviet-occupied Lwów asking for news.

Anticipating imminent victory in the war, the Nazis revisited a plan to deport European Jews to the French colony of Madagascar. This **cartoon** from a Nazi magazine imagines the plan in action. Although leading Nazis believed millions of Jews could be deported to Madagascar, they did not care how they would survive. The idea was eventually abandoned.

## The widening war

The German authorities on the Channel Islands required Jews to register with the police. This is the **registration form** completed for Therese Steiner. As an Austrian, she had been prevented from travelling to England. Even before the occupying forces arrived, the British government categorised her as an 'enemy alien'.

By the time the Germans occupied the Channel Islands, most British Jews had left. Their properties were taken over by administrators and sold to 'Aryan' owners. Louis Feldman's clothing shop, *Louis et Cie* in Jersey, was sold to his store manager Miss Hawkins. She wanted to protect the business for Louis and sent this **letter** offering to purchase it.

Registration was the first step in controlling the lives of Jews. This **notice**, issued in a Paris suburb, informed Jews living there that they were required to register with local authorities. Jewish people were also issued with **identity cards**, like these given to Beatrix Frank and her young son Steven Frank in Amsterdam.

Across France, both French and German authorities seized control of Jewish-owned properties. They aimed to profit from their sale as had happened earlier in Germany and Austria. This **legal notice** records the sale of buildings formerly owned by French Jews, described as *Israélites*. These sales were handled by French notaries working alongside the collaborationist Vichy government.

When rationing for food and clothing was introduced in occupied countries, Jews were subjected to harsher restrictions than the rest of the population. **Ration cards** were stamped with words such as *Juif* and *Jood* ('Jew' in French and Flemish or Dutch). Some shop owners refused to accept these cards.

Many thousands of Jewish people in France and Belgium had recently arrived as refugees from the Reich, or as immigrants from eastern Europe. They were required to register not only as Jews but as 'foreign

Jews'. This **foreigner's identity card** was issued by Belgian authorities to Polish-born Tauba Sztejnberg.

## From exiles to 'enemies'

In 1939, the Council for German Jewry opened a refugee camp in Kent for Jewish male immigrants from the Reich. Known as the **Kitchener Camp**, it housed men who had been released from concentration camps on the condition that they left Germany immediately. When war broke out, many wanted to help fight the Nazis and attempted to join the British Army.

Nazi propaganda suggested the war was being engineered by Jews. Even prominent figures such as British prime minister Winston Churchill were supposed to be part of this conspiracy. In this **postcard**, Churchill appears as an antisemitic stereotype when turned upside down. The Polish text encourages readers to question Britain's motivation for opposing the Nazis.

Jewish families in Britain were anxious to assist relatives in Nazi-occupied Europe. Despite their best efforts, aid organisations were restricted in what help they could offer. The British Red Cross sent this

**letter** to Stanisław Imich, informing him that it could not post parcels to his son Jan in Poland.

Hermann Gutmann was one of 2,500 young men on HMT *Dunera*, sent by the British government for internment in Australia. The ship was overcrowded and conditions were terrible. On arrival, Hermann was detained in Camp Hay. He kept a **diary** while there between June 1940 and October 1941. The UK also interned Jewish refugees in Canada.

With Britain at war, thousands of these **posters** were put up in public places. German-speaking refugees were particularly vulnerable to accusations of helping the enemy. This **circular** gives advice on coping with these new circumstances. Tribunals determined if German and Austrian 'enemy aliens' should be interned or not. This **notice** summoned Thea Lewinski to her hearing.

## Medicine and mass murder

Hitler entrusted the **order** authorising the euthanasia programme to Philipp Bouhler and Karl Brandt. Both men were given responsibility for coordinating the large system put in place to arrange the murders. They were helped by selected medical professionals.

The euthanasia order was the only time Hitler personally signed documents linking him to mass murder.

The Nazis attempted to stigmatise disabled people by highlighting their supposed financial cost to the state. This was initially designed to encourage public support for compulsory sterilisation. The Nazis' Office of Racial Policy distributed this **magazine** in 1938. It claims that 'this hereditarily ill person will cost the national community 60,000 Reichsmarks'.

These **nuns** worked at Liebenau psychiatric hospital. Around 700 patients were transported from there in unmarked **buses** to be killed. Six care homes across Germany were used for the euthanasia programme. On arrival nurses took some patients to small gas chambers disguised as showers. Others were given lethal injections.

Dr Ernst Gassen was a married father of two who worked as a doctor near Leipzig. In 1937 he was struck off for opposing the Nazis. He became extremely depressed and was eventually sent to an asylum. From there he was transferred to the Hartheim euthanasia facility where he was murdered.

# Outcast

## The idea of the ghetto

Reinhard Heydrich, Head of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA), issued this ***Schnellbrief*** on 21 September 1939. The document laid out his instructions for leaders of the *Einsatzgruppen* in occupied Poland. Heydrich ordered that preparations should be made for the concentration of Jews from the countryside into designated parts of cities. He gave no detail about the nature of long-term plans.

Heinz Auerswald, a lawyer and member of the SS, was the German head of the Warsaw ghetto from April 1941. **Hans Biebow**, a former coffee importer, was the German head of the Łódź ghetto. Both men liaised with *Judenrat* (Jewish council) officials to manage day-to-day administration in their respective ghettos.

The Nazis used the fear of epidemics as a reason for isolating Jews within ghettos. They believed that Jews, particularly those who lived in eastern Europe, were carriers of deadly diseases. This **pamphlet** and **leaflet** warn of the 'dangers' that the Nazis imagined Jews in the ghettos posed to surrounding populations.

Ghettos were part of ongoing German efforts to impoverish Europe's Jews. In some places, Jewish people were forced to exchange their money for worthless **ghetto currency**. In Łódź, Nazi administrators were convinced that Jews in the ghetto were hoarding money and valuables. They withheld critical supplies to try and force its surrender.

**Ghetto tourism**

The German Ministry of Propaganda escalated its campaign of antisemitism after the outbreak of war. ***Der Ewige Jude*** (*The Eternal Jew*) was a propaganda film released in 1940. Using **footage** shot in the Warsaw and Łódź ghettos, it portrayed Jews as parasitic vermin. Similar material was also used in weekly newsreel footage shown to German civilians.

These **photographs** of Roma families in Radom are from an album that belonged to a German soldier. In May 1940, 3,100 Roma living in Germany were forced to move to ghettos in the *Generalgouvernement*. The policy was applied to Roma who did not have an 'Aryan' spouse or had not been working for a minimum of the last five years.

Willy Georg was a corporal in the German army. In the

summer of 1941, at the request of a commanding officer, he entered the Warsaw ghetto to take photographs. Georg's camera was confiscated by members of the SS, but he hid four rolls of film to protect their content. He did not see the commanding officer again and was unclear about why he had asked for the **photographs** to be taken.

As Nazi forces advanced east, they mounted a sustained attack on both Jewish people and Jewish culture. For most of them, the sight of impoverished and malnourished Jewish people – that the Nazis' own policies had caused – confirmed antisemitic stereotypes that they had been exposed to since the Nazis came to power in 1933. Some German troops enthusiastically **photographed** this persecution.

**Between the Germans and the *Judenrat***

The structure of each ghetto's internal administration was largely left to the discretion of individual *Judenräte*. In Łódź, this structure was very complex and assumed control over virtually all aspects of residents' lives. This **sign** was from the housing office. Allocating housing was one of the biggest challenges for the councils, particularly as overcrowding worsened.

Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

This **poster** shows the ranks within the *Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst*. Its members did not wear a full uniform but were usually given a **cap** and a **brassard**. The *Ordnungsdienst* were formally part of the *Judenrat* but commanded directly by non-Jewish police and the SS. Although they were not armed, they had batons that could be used to force compliance.
Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

The Nazis wanted to reshape the territory and people of eastern Europe in the image of the Reich. Non-Jewish Polish people were moved into spaces left vacant by Jews who had been forced into ghettos. 'Ethnic Germans' were given the properties vacated by Poles. This **identification card** was issued to an 'ethnic German' who relocated to Łódź in occupied Poland.

This **identification card** was issued to Juda Ber Rozenbaum in the Piotrków ghetto. This was the first ghetto established by the Germans, opening just a

month after the outbreak of war. By January 1940 all Jews in Piotrków had been moved within the ghetto's boundaries. The arrival of Jews from other towns and cities meant its population almost doubled to 18,500.

***Gazeta Żydowska*** was a Nazi-authorised newspaper for Jews in occupied Poland. It became the main means for people to find out about what was happening in other ghettos. This 24 December 1940 edition from Kraków includes information about the sealing of the Warsaw ghetto and the 'Aryanisation' of Jewish-owned businesses outside the closed-off area.

**Chaim Rumkowski** reported directly to **Hans Biebow,** who was the German head of ghetto administration in Łódź. Biebow wanted the ghetto to be as productive as possible by using its residents as cheap labour. While the workers starved, Biebow became rich by pocketing profits from the ghetto's factories. He supplemented this with property stolen from Jews.

The Nazis issued **Kennkarte** (identification cards) to people living in occupied Poland. These were designed to make different 'groups' immediately identifiable to the occupying authorities. Jews and Roma were given yellow cards, while other Polish

people were given grey cards. German passports for Roma were revoked and their *Kennkarte* were marked with a black letter 'Z' for *Zigeuner* (Gypsy).

This **pocket watch,** engraved with the words 'for faithful service', was given to a member of the Łódź *Judenrat* in 1940. By the middle of the year, the *Judenrat* had around 3,500 employees working in a range of departments. Despite its size, its powers were very limited and it could do virtually nothing to deal with the ghetto's biggest problem – the scarcity of food.

This **badge** was worn by a member of the *Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst* in the Częstochowa ghetto. As well as guarding ghetto perimeters, the *Ordnungsdienst*'s responsibilities included suppressing smuggling operations and curbing street begging. They were widely resented for the special privileges they received and because they were sometimes forced to use violence against fellow ghetto residents.

In most ghettos, the Germans ordered *Judenräte* to establish a police force known as the *Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst* (Jewish Order Service). This **identity pass** was issued to Noech Fleiszakier, a member of the *Ordnungsdienst* in Busko-Zdrój in the Radom District.

It allowed him to enter areas not accessible to other Jews and to remain on the streets after curfew.

## Guarded walls rise

This **proclamation**, dated 12 November 1941, announced the establishment of a 'Jewish district' in Nowy Sącz. It outlined the places where Jews were allowed to move around and warned that anyone caught outside these areas without special permission would be executed. It also threatened anyone caught helping or hiding Jews with the death penalty.

At first, Jews from nearby areas were centralised in local ghettos. Over time, ghetto populations grew as people were deported from other countries. This brought together individuals from a wide range of different backgrounds who spoke many different languages. This hand-made **advertisement** from the Łódź ghetto offered tuition in German, Russian, Polish, French and English – as well as maths.

Nazi regulations banned the use of all languages other than German in official documentation. In some ghettos, these rules extended to all personal post as well. This was intended to make mail harder

to write and easier to monitor. This **advertisement** from the Łódź ghetto offered the writing of letters, postcards and forms in German 'quickly and cheaply'.

The ***hanukkiah*** was used in the Tarnów ghetto between March 1941 and September 1943. Irena Ehrlich vel Sluszny used this **sewing needle case** to hold lipstick when she lived in the Warsaw ghetto. Such items helped ghetto residents retain a sense of their previous lives.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Irena Urdang deTour

All personal mail sent from the ghettos was subject to censorship. This **letter** was written by 11-year-old Wlodka Blit in the Warsaw ghetto. She sent it to her uncle Roman Blit in New York City on 6 November 1941. Sections have been removed by the Nazis' censors. An accompanying **note** from the British censor states that they were not responsible for this letter's 'mutilation'.

Large ghettos were sealed with surrounding **walls** that divided streets – and sometimes even buildings – in half. In Warsaw, the walls' construction was initially done by Jewish bricklayers. They were

replaced by non-Jewish Poles when the Germans realised Jewish workers were leaving loose bricks to facilitate smuggling and escape.

This **postcard** was sent from Warsaw to Trieste on 30 March 1940, before the ghetto was officially announced. The sender requests money to assist with securing the necessary paperwork to emigrate. As rumours of ghettoization spread, Jews in the affected areas desperately sought ways of fleeing. Large numbers of people escaped to the area of eastern Poland occupied by the Soviet Union during this period.

Roma deported from the Reich were moved into specially designated sections of the ghettos. Heinrich and Amalie Birkenfelder were sent from Ludwigshafen in Germany to Radom in occupied Poland with their four children in May 1940. This **photograph** of their daughters Sonja and Senta was taken in the ghetto. The couple had a fifth child who died shortly after birth due to the conditions in the ghetto.

The ghetto population in Łódź increased after an additional 25,000 Jews and 5,000 Roma were deported from the Reich in November and December 1941. This **plan**, drawn shortly afterwards,

outlined the number of people designated to each district. By the end of the year, over 200,000 people lived crammed within 2.5 square miles.

The men and women in this **photograph** were sent from Vienna to the Opole Lubelskie ghetto in June 1941. The population doubled from 4,000 to 8,500 when Jews from across Austria and occupied Poland were sent there between 1939 and 1941. People arriving in ghettos from different cities and countries often formed their own social groups and self-help initiatives based on where they had come from.

By April 1941 there were around 92,000 children in the Warsaw ghetto. Those who were abandoned or orphaned were among its most vulnerable residents. This **photograph** was taken in the summer of 1941, when starvation was rapidly worsening. Welfare provisions could not keep pace with the situation and emaciated children became a common sight on the ghetto's pavements.

Insufficient food supplies led to the growth of **smuggling** and black markets. Children small enough to escape through gaps in the ghetto walls smuggled in food for their families or worked with larger networks in exchange for extra provisions. In

some ghettos these activities thrived and were even tacitly or unofficially accepted by the Jewish councils.

The scale of the textile industry in pre-war Łódź earned it the nickname 'Manchester of the East'. Skilled Jewish shoemakers were an important part of this sector. As the Nazis developed the city's ghetto, they redeployed these people and their equipment in the service of the war effort. This **cobbler's last** and **hammer** are of the type that shoemakers in Łódź used.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

By the middle of 1941, official rations in the Łódź ghetto only provided residents with a daily maximum of 900 calories. It was difficult to survive on this amount of food alone. Those in employment were sometimes able to secure larger amounts or purchase extra quantities. This **ration card** for additional food was issued to Icek Szwajcer for his work in a tailoring workshop in the ghetto.

This **badge** was worn by a 'weigher' in the *Gemüseabteilung* (vegetable department) in Łódź. All products entering or leaving the ghetto passed through the *Transferstelle* (transfer office). The Germans used food supply as a way to control

residents. Anyone unable to secure food through work or unofficial channels faced starvation. Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

These children are eating in a **public kitchen** in the Warsaw ghetto. The kitchen was established by the *Żydowska Samopomoc Społeczna* or ŻSS (Jewish Social Self-help Organisation) to provide starving residents with a daily meal. Most of their funds came from Jewish groups in the US. Public kitchens became important community centres and hubs for political and cultural activities.

Food became so scarce that people ate whatever they could find, even if it was rotting. Ghetto authorities tried to prevent this by disposing of anything deemed inedible. In Łódź **decaying potatoes** were buried in chlorine to further discourage people from eating them. Inhabitants of the ghetto – especially children – were so hungry that they ate them anyway.

The Jewish policeman in this **photograph** guards the gate of an apartment under quarantine because of typhus in May 1941. German authorities ordered

that entire buildings should be quarantined wherever the disease was reported. The sanitation teams sterilising people's homes often stole personal belongings while the residents were forced to stand naked in public awaiting disinfection.

This hand-made **notice** from the Łódź ghetto advertised basic pharmacy services alongside products such as iodine and ammonia. Larger ghettos like Łódź had medical facilities such as hospitals, but access to medicines was very restricted. This reduced the ability of medical staff to treat the growing number of patients. Some medicine was available on the black market, but only for those who could pay for it.

This **album** was presented to Łódź ghetto chairman Chaim Rumkowski by the Sewing Machine Department in 'commemoration' of its work from 1941 to 1942. Each page contains a skilful collage of coloured paper, text and photographs. The quality of the work suggests that the unknown maker of the album was a designer before the war.

This **pattern** is for a ***Feldbluse*** (field shirt), one of the items of German military clothing manufactured in the Łódź ghetto. The type of goods produced in

ghetto workshops changed as the Germans' military situation developed. Workers made jump suits for parachutists, padded caps for Panzer crews, snow uniforms for the *Wehrmacht* and **straw boots** for soldiers in winter.

As well as producing uniforms and accessories such as **buttons** for the German war effort, people in the ghettos used **sewing machines** to produce goods to trade on the black market. The high prices demanded for these products meant that only those with enough wealth, items to trade or bartering power were able to secure food through these channels.

This **sign** is from a workshop in the Łódź ghetto, which came under the governance of the *Judenrat*'s Central Office of Labour Workshops. This office dealt with the organisation of all production in the ghetto. There were over 100 workshops and factories under its control. The largest departments were tailoring, shoemaking, textiles, metalwork and straw shoe making.
Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

This **identification card** belonged to Łaja Ber, who was employed as a seamstress by the Council of Elders in Tailoring Department No.2. The Tailoring Department offered lessons to children and young people, teaching them skills to secure work in the ghetto. Ten per cent of jobs were reserved for children and teenagers. Their age did not protect them from the conditions or the long hours.

This **picture** was drawn in pencil by Kuba Guterman, who was a child in the Płock ghetto. The accompanying Yiddish text reads, 'A German and a Jewish policeman chase Jews to work'. The most feared SS officers in Płock were based nearby in a former seminary. Jews were dragged into the building and beaten – sometimes fatally – with whips, clubs and iron rods.
Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

This forced labourer's **identification card** belonged to Alter Fridman, who lived in the Piotrków ghetto. Thousands of residents worked in factories outside the ghetto producing glass, wood and alcohol for local businesses. Most had no previous experience in these areas and had to develop the skills on the job.

The work was hard and Jewish labourers were badly treated by the management.

The Germans restricted the use of electricity and heating in ghettos. This had deadly consequences over the freezing winter months. Power cuts were common, disrupting day-to-day life. An optician in the Warsaw ghetto wrote this **letter** expressing his frustration at the impact the irregular power supply was having on his work.

**A new war**

After the German invasion in 1939, many Jews in occupied Poland had fled to countries across the eastern border, believing they would be safer. When this territory came under German control following Operation 'Barbarossa', Jews who had sought refuge there were subject to the Nazis' antisemitic policies. In this **photograph** a woman in Riga has been forced to wear the yellow star and sweep streets.

This **armband** belonged to Zbyszek Kelhoffer, who lived in the Borysław ghetto and worked as a forced labourer in the Beskiden Oil factory. Zbyszek had fought for both the Polish and Soviet armies, before being captured by the Germans. He escaped and fled

back to his hometown where he was recaptured and made to move into the ghetto.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Barbara Kelhoffer Bieganiec

This silver **ring** was made from a spoon for 14-year-old Isaak Racs by a jeweller in the Riga ghetto. It was intended to commemorate the murder of Isaak's mother and three younger brothers in a massacre on 8 December 1941. They were among 25,000 residents of the ghetto who were taken into the nearby Rumbula forest and shot by *Einsatzgruppe A* and local collaborators.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Jack Ratz

Religion was central to the worldview of many residents in the ghettos. Being able to pray helped to bolster morale, provide comfort and sustain a degree of continuity with former lives. This **Torah fragment** was used in the Warsaw ghetto and the **prayer book** was used in Łódź. The **photograph** shows a Passover seder in the Warsaw ghetto.

This **brassard** was worn by a member of the funeral service in the Marysin district of the Łódź ghetto. Marysin was known as the 'green lung' of the ghetto.

Alongside parks and open spaces, it held the city's main pre-war Jewish cemetery. This remained operational, although not everyone who died was buried there.
Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

These **documents** and **banns** are from the wedding of Michal Szaldajewski and Hena Mendrowska in the Łódź ghetto in 1941. Some rabbis began to resist marrying young couples, worrying that the deteriorating situation would create additional problems for those who were married. They were also concerned that the realities of the ghetto would make it difficult to follow some principles of Jewish law.

The Nazis generally banned any form of Jewish religious observance in the ghettos. Despite this – and at great personal risk – inhabitants sought clandestine ways to practise their faith. This **picture** of the *Cohen Gadol* (High Priest from the Holy Temple in Jerusalem) was drawn for *Rosh Hashanah* (Jewish New Year). The Hebrew text wishes the unknown female recipient a good year.

These two **programmes** are from concerts given in the Łódź ghetto in April 1941. Despite the worsening conditions, inhabitants of many ghettos developed a wide range of cultural activities. Most major performances in Łódź were held in the House of Culture, a 400-seater venue established by Chaim Rumkowski. Alongside concerts, it hosted choral recitals and revue theatre.

This hand-made **coffee shop sign**, written in Polish and Yiddish, advertised 'sweet and hot coffee all day long'. Although the quality of the product varied widely from place to place, coffee shops offered a link for people to the café culture of their pre-war lives. There were more elite cafés for those who could afford them.

***Funeral for the Hawker's Wife*** was one of five drawings produced by Benjamin Rozenfeld at the request of the Warsaw ghetto's secret *Oneg Shabbat* archive in 1942. It was drawn in ink, charcoal and crayon. Benjamin, who was a painter and sculptor before the war, wrote extensive **notes** for the archive explaining the work.

In this **photograph**, pallbearers are carrying a corpse to the Jewish cemetery in Łódź. Unlike in other

ghettos, there were no mass graves in Łódź and every individual was buried in their own plot. Families unable to pay for a funeral often left bodies in the streets to be collected. Funeral costs were then paid by the *Judenrat*.

**The ghetto town of Theresienstadt**

These **documents** record the deaths of elderly ghetto residents Salomon and Margarete Bohm, who had been deported to Theresienstadt from Germany. Jewish senior citizens from the Reich represented a large percentage of the population of the ghetto. They were particularly vulnerable to growing levels of overcrowding, starvation and disease.

Friedl Dicker-Brandeis, a textile designer from Austria, was deported to Theresienstadt with her husband Pavel. She used most of her baggage allowance to bring art supplies, which she used to teach hundreds of children. Her classes were both a therapeutic activity and a creative outlet. The children's **work** testified to their own experiences of life in the ghetto.

As part of Heinrich Himmler's attempt to deceive the world that Jews evacuated to Theresienstadt were allowed to live in peace and safety, a bank

and currency were established. In reality the bank was a way of taking money from new arrivals and the currency was worthless. This **savings book** belonged to Alice Heidenheim, a deportee from the Netherlands.

As the situation in Theresienstadt temporarily stabilised in 1942, cultural activities flourished. Bedrich Wachtl produced **paintings** of daily life, but unlike other artists he had not worked professionally before the war. Alongside art, there was a stream of musical compositions, including Yiddish folk songs. An opera, *The Emperor of Atlantis*, which satirised Hitler, was written but never performed.

## Committing to memory

The *Oneg Shabbat* archive grew to over 35,000 pages. These documents reflect the massive diversity of experiences and perspectives within ghettos. They were put into metal **boxes** and milk containers and hidden under ghetto buildings. The archivists collected information during the day and wrote it up at night.
Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

**Henryk Ross** and **Mendel Grossman** were employed as photographers by the *Judenrat* in Łódź. Although from early 1942 they were forbidden from taking any personal photographs, both risked imprisonment by regularly venturing out into the ghetto to record ghetto life. They hid the negatives in the hope that one day they would be developed and bear witness to what they had seen.

Zvi Kadushin, a teacher and amateur photographer, secretly documented life within the Kovno ghetto. Such photography was prohibited and punishable by death. He sometimes used a concealed camera, shooting through the buttonhole of his coat. This **photograph** was taken as Jews were forced to move their belongings through the ghetto. Zvi's shadow is visible in the lower right-hand corner.

This **document** from the *Oneg Shabbat* archive reports on news of the *Einsatzgruppen* massacres in eastern Europe. It was written by Arie 'Jurek' Wilner in October 1941. Emanuel and his team were among the first to realise that the ghettos were part of a wider radicalisation of Nazi policy across Europe. Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

# Massacre

## Surrounded by assassins

Soldiers from the *Wehrmacht* also participated in massacres. For men like Anton Brahsch, the war was an ideological crusade. In a **postcard** sent to his uncle in Hamburg, Brahsch writes, 'We will beat the enemy and slaughter the Jews wherever they are!' Not all soldiers shared Brahsch's views and a few even spoke out against the mass shootings.

This **report** by Karl Jäger, a senior officer in *Einsatzgruppe A*, contains a tally of the Jewish men, women and children killed in Lithuania. In August 1941 he recorded nearly 25,000 deaths. The Nazis typically tried to legitimise their murder of Jews as a 'security measure' against partisan activity. But Jäger made no such attempt, claiming that the 'Jewish problem' in Lithuania was 'solved'.

In this **photograph**, members of the German *Ordnungspolizei* (uniformed police) Battalion 101 relax in occupied Poland in the summer of 1942. In the centre is Vera Wohlauf, the pregnant wife of commander Julius Wohlauf. She attended several of Battalion 101's mass shootings of Jews. Wives and

girlfriends who watched the shootings sometimes stole clothes and jewellery from those murdered.

Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski received this **Eastern Front Medal** for service in the Soviet Union between October 1941 and April 1942. It was awarded for the first winter of the campaign. During these months, von dem Bach-Zelewski oversaw the actions of *Einsatzgruppe B*. By the end of 1942, this unit had killed at least 134,000 Jewish men, women and children.

Orders to kill Jews came directly from the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) in Berlin. *Einsatzgruppen* commanders submitted regular reports about their 'progress' to the RSHA. These documents were widely circulated to senior Nazis. Franz Stahlecker, who led *Einsatzgruppe A*, produced this **map** along with his report. In it he describes Estonia as being '*judenfrei*' (free of Jews).

Some of the killers chose to use **pistols**, complaining that rifles hurt their shoulders when repeatedly fired. This type was used by the *Ordnungspolizei* (uniformed police). Such weapons were also used to administer what they called a '*Genickschuss*' (shot in the neck) to anyone found still alive after the first round of shooting.

The advancing Nazi forces were emboldened by ongoing antisemitic indoctrination. Sustained propaganda claimed all Jews were part of the feared Bolshevik movement. The Nazis described this as the 'Judeo-Bolshevik threat', emphasising it on **posters** at home and abroad. They used this imagined threat to justify their ruthless actions as necessary for Germany's survival.

Men from the German police participated in the massacres. This **leather jacket** was worn by an officer of the *Schutzpolizei*, a branch of the uniformed police. In Germany, the *Schutzpolizei* maintained public order and directed traffic. In eastern Europe, they took part in mass shootings. They were often so close to their victims that their uniforms became soaked with blood.

This **jacket** was worn by a Nazi officer in charge of a *Schutzmannschaft* (local police) unit. By 1942 the Nazis had recruited more than 300,000 local men across occupied Soviet territories to help massacre Jews. These men were offered money for participating, but were also motivated by long-standing personal antisemitism nurtured by Nazi indoctrination sessions.

German soldiers were forbidden from taking photographs of mass shootings. Despite this, some of them used their own cameras to take photographs. These **images** were taken in July 1941 at a massacre of Jewish men at Fort VII in Kovno, Lithuania. Such photographs were sent home to Germany, which helped to make the shootings public knowledge.

This **jacket** was worn by a Nazi officer in charge of a *Schutzmannschaft* (local police) unit. By 1942 the Nazis had recruited more than 300,000 local men across occupied Soviet territories to help massacre Jews. These men were offered money for participating, but were also motivated by long-standing personal antisemitism nurtured by Nazi indoctrination sessions.

Men from the German police participated in the massacres. This **leather jacket** was worn by an officer of the *Schutzpolizei,* a branch of the uniformed police. In Germany, the *Schutzpolizei* maintained public order and directed traffic. In eastern Europe, they took part in mass shootings. They were often so close to their victims that their uniforms became soaked with blood.

This German **poster** declares that the US, UK

and Soviet governments are puppets operating under Jewish control. This belief formed part of the Nazis' paranoid theories about a global Jewish conspiracy. The poster claims that Bolshevism must be demolished to 'destroy the Jewish plot against the existence of the German *Volk*'.

Often, the first group of Jews taken to a killing site were given **shovels** and forced to dig their own graves. After they were shot, the same tools were used to throw earth over their bodies before the next group was murdered. The surrounding dirt was littered with the **casings** of the bullets that had killed them.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Yahad-in Unum

People being rounded up for execution were usually told that they were being 'resettled' and packed clothes and other household items to take with them. Although the Nazis confiscated most items, some remained scattered around the graves. This **child's shirt** is from a murder site in Ukraine, and this man's **shirt collar** is from Latvia.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Yahad-in Unum Yad Vashem Museum Artifacts Collection, donated by Ewelina Puezek, Katowice, Poland, and by Rosa Moreyn, Tel Aviv, Israel

People tried to keep hold of their most treasured items, such as this **pendant**, until the very end. As it became clear what was happening, many threw **wedding rings** onto nearby ground in desperate attempts to stop them falling into the hands of their killers.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Yahad-in Unum Yad Vashem Museum Artifacts Collection, donated by Ewelina Puezek, Katowice, Poland, and by Rosa Moreyn, Tel Aviv, Israel

**15–17 December 1941**

On a freezing winter's day, 4,000 of Liepāja's Jews – mainly women and children – were taken from their homes to the nearby fishing village of Šķēde. They were made to undress in the biting wind and led to the edge of a sand dune. While elderly women and children kept their underwear on, young women were forced to strip completely. Facing the Baltic Sea and with their backs to their German and Latvian executioners, they were shot.

**16 October 1941**
In the early morning, over 1,000 Jews from Lubny and the surrounding area gathered after receiving

'resettlement orders' from the German Army. They were assembled into columns and told they were being taken to a nearby village. On the way to their supposed destination, they were led to an isolated waiting area. From there, they were taken in small groups to a nearby ravine in front of a rope factory and shot. Their murderers were men from *Einsatzgruppe C* supported by German policemen and local collaborators.

**11 July 1941**

A few weeks after the German invasion, Jewish men in Vilnius were assembled by *Einsatzgruppe B* and Lithuanian police and marched to Ponary forest. On arrival they were made to undress and hand over valuables. They were then taken to pre-dug pits and shot. Gunfire from the killings was heard into the evening across the area. By the end of July, 5,000 working-age men had been killed at the site. In the months to come, women and children would follow.

**29–30 September 1941**

On the morning of Yom Kippur, traditionally the holiest day of the Jewish year, nearly 34,000 of Kiev's Jews were assembled by *Einsatzgruppe C*. Most were women and children. They were marched to Babyn Yar, a place where 100 Roma had been killed just

days before. On arrival they were made to undress and taken to the bottom of the ravine. Each group was forced to lie on the bodies of those that had been killed before them and then shot.

**1 August 1941**
On a summer's day in Chișinău's recently established ghetto, 450 starving young men and women volunteered for labour. They had been deceived into thinking they would be given food in exchange for work. In the intense heat, they were marched to a large anti-tank ditch in the nearby village of Visterniceni. The men carried boxes containing what they thought were tools but was actually ammunition. Romanian soldiers assisting *Einsatzgruppe D* used this ammunition in the massacre that followed. The women were shot first, then the men.

## Policy

### On behalf of the *Führer*

The Obersalzberg in southern Germany was Hitler's mountain retreat and the Nazis' second seat of government. Hitler's house, the Berghof, looked onto the Untersberg Mountains. Legend claimed

that these mountains held the grave of Charlemagne, emperor of what Hitler believed was the first German Reich. Hitler thought he could harness mythical power from this historic location.

**The conference by the lake**

The Wannsee Conference was planned for 9 December 1941, but was rescheduled at short notice. This **letter** to attendees explains this was 'because of sudden events which...made it impossible'. These events were America's entry into the war and the launch of a major Soviet counter-offensive around Moscow. Attendees were invited to a 'discussion to be followed by breakfast'.

The meeting was held at a villa in Wannsee, an affluent suburb of Berlin. The villa's promotional brochure advertised 'completely refurbished guest rooms, a music room and games room (billiards), a large meeting room and conservatory, a terrace looking out onto the Wannsee, central heating, hot and cold running water, and all comforts' – good food, wine, beer and cigarettes.

## Annihilation

This **typewriter** came from the office of SS *Gruppenführer* (Lieutenant-General) Arthur Seyss-Inquart, *Reichskommissar* of the occupied Netherlands. It was used to type orders relating to the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, as well as anti-Jewish decrees. Seyss-Inquart participated in the deportation of 107,000 Jews from the Netherlands between 1942 and 1944.

The Nazis forced Jewish adults and most children to wear an identifying **badge** or **armband**. From 1941, they made wearing the **yellow star** compulsory for Jews in Germany and most occupied territories. It marked people out for segregation and discrimination and made them easier to target during roundups and deportations. Jewish people were usually forced to pay for the stars themselves.

### On the edge of a volcano

In November 1941, the Nazis deported 5,000 Roma to Łódź and forced them to live in an area of the ghetto known as the '**Gypsy camp**'. Less than two months later, they sent them to the death camp at Chełmno and killed them. This group were among

the first people the Nazis murdered using gas.

Kuba Guterman, a six-year-old boy in the Płock ghetto, made this **drawing** of a transport. The Nazis used extreme violence to carry out ghetto clearances. This intimidated residents into submission. In the first deportation from Płock, residents were roused from their beds and assembled at dawn. Anyone who did not comply was beaten or killed.
Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

Margarethe and Lili Hendrich were issued these **deportation notices** during the final 'liquidation' of the Łódź ghetto in July 1944. They were instructed to report to the ghetto's central prison at 9am to be 'resettled for work'. The mother and daughter had been sent to Łódź from Prague with their family in October 1941.

This **worker's identification card** belonged to Zdzisław Swider, a doctor in the Łódź ghetto. The unemployed were among the first to be selected for deportation, so having a card like this could be the difference between life and death. Employment did not guarantee survival, however. Zdzisław died in the

ghetto on 21 February 1944.

Halina Olszewski witnessed the deportation of Janusz Korczak and the orphaned children. She documented it in this **drawing** the following year. Halina was determined to use her art as evidence of Nazi crimes and the suffering they caused. She secretly documented scenes of camp life after being deported to Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1943.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection

Jews in Mizocz mounted an uprising against the ghetto's liquidation in October 1942. After a short battle, those who had not been killed or fled into hiding were rounded up. They were taken to a ravine south of Rovno and shot. These **photographs** document their murder. Most of the 700 victims were women and children.

## The righteous

Jews trying to flee or hide relied entirely on the help of others. They needed people they could trust, who could provide food and shelter or secure false papers. In most cases this came at a price. But thousands of individuals did give assistance freely and at great personal risk.

## The world watches on

In June 1942, the *Daily Telegraph* published one of the first **articles** about the extermination of Polish Jews. They used information supplied by Szmul Zygielbojm. The press carried inconsistent coverage of Nazi atrocities against Jews throughout the war. Few newspapers gave much space to such reports and those that did rarely made it front page news.

Couriers working for the Polish resistance smuggled out information in a hidden compartment of this **cotton reel**. The information was passed to the Polish government-in-exile in London. By the summer of 1942, intelligence gathered by resistance networks across occupied Europe had revealed the extent of Nazi crimes to the wider world.
On loan from The Polish Underground Movement (1939–1945) Study Trust, London

Gerhart Riegner was the World Jewish Congress (WJC) representative in Switzerland. In August 1942, he sent messages to colleagues in Britain and America after receiving information about Nazi plans to murder millions of Jews. They confirmed the rumours about a systematic plan. British MP and WJC representative Samuel Silverman sent this **telegram**

with Riegner's message to Rabbi Stephen Wise.

Riegner's information was initially viewed with scepticism. The US State Department asked that its contents be kept secret until they were verified. It was eventually released to the press by Rabbi Stephen Wise, a prominent US Jewish leader, on 24 November 1942. The news appeared in hundreds of **publications** the next day, but never on the front page.

Victor Gollancz was a British publisher and vice-president of Eleanor Rathbone's National Committee for Rescue from Nazi Terror. His 1943 pamphlet, ***Let My People Go***, warned that 1–2 million Jews had already been killed in Europe and 'unless something effective is done...6 million Jews will all be dead'. Within three months of publication, around 250,000 copies had been sold.

***Rescue the Perishing*** is one of many pamphlets written by British Member of Parliament Eleanor Rathbone offering practical solutions to the crisis in Europe. Frustrated by the UK government's inaction, she founded the National Committee for Rescue from Nazi Terror in March 1943. The Committee lobbied on behalf of refugees and those trapped in Nazi-occupied Europe.

This **letter** was written to Dora Yates, a curator at the University of Liverpool and scholar of Romani history and culture. Its author, Lady Eleanor Smith, describes the testimony of a Dutch refugee deported to Germany for forced labour. The boy told her that while he was in Germany, '40,000 Gypsies were rounded up and gassed to death'.
University of Liverpool

Jürgen Stroop was a ruthless SS officer and veteran of the Eastern Front. He was tasked with destroying all resistance within the Warsaw ghetto. He compiled a report, originally titled *The Jewish Quarter of Warsaw is No More!* It included **photographs** documenting his brutal suppression of the uprising. Stroop later presented his report directly to SS leader Heinrich Himmler.

This **photograph** was taken by Warsaw resident, Zbigniew Borowczyk. Spectators on the 'Aryan' side of Warsaw gathered to watch the uprising from vantage points outside the ghetto. Smoke from the burning buildings could be seen for miles. The armed resistance in the Warsaw ghetto was the first popular uprising in a city in Nazi-occupied Europe.

Ghetto photographers Henryk Ross and Mendel

Grossman captured images of the mass deportations from Łódź. They include **photographs** from a ghetto clearance in September 1942, called the 'Szpera' (from the German word for 'curfew') by ghetto inhabitants. The SS targeted hospitals, homes for the elderly, schools and orphanages. Anyone without a job was at risk.

## Into hiding

The Nazis encouraged betrayal by offering rewards to anyone who provided information on rescue operations or Jews in hiding. Those caught helping Jewish people faced harsh penalties. Four people listed on this **public notice** from Kraków were executed for providing assistance to Jews.

A large number of Lwów's Jewish population hid in the city's sewer system during the German occupation. After the liquidation of the Lwów ghetto in June 1943, more than 500 people tried to escape through the sewers. The **manholes** were heavily guarded, and most people were caught and shot.

Karl Bettelheim and his parents fled from their home in Vienna to Brussels, and from there to Shanghai. They lived in the city's heavily populated 'restricted

area' alongside over 20,000 other European Jews. Karl collected **matchbook** covers used by his father, who was a heavy smoker. The covers feature anti-American propaganda promoted by the Japanese forces that occupied Shanghai.
Loaned by Karl Albert Bettelheim, PhD, FRCP

Anna Wiechec was a Polish widow living in Kraków. In 1943, she took in a Jewish woman and her five-year-old daughter Marysia. Each morning, the pair left Anna's flat. When they returned each night, Marysia set the table with her **silver spoon** and fork – all that remained of her previous life. One day they left as usual, but never returned.

**Dolf Asscher** was incarcerated with his family in Westerbork transit camp. His mother was able to secure their release by using a Dutch contact to support an invented story. Together they claimed that she was only 'half Jewish' because she was born through an illegitimate relationship between her mother and a non-Jewish man. After their release Dolf returned to school.

Rachel de Groot was a 15-year-old in hiding in Amsterdam. She made jewellery using this **tin** to hold the beads. On 8 April 1944, Rachel and her

parents were discovered and arrested. They were sent to Westerbork transit camp, and from there to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Rachel was killed on arrival. The bracelet she had been working on remained unfinished.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Louis de Groot

Many children were hidden by being given identities as Christians. This **rosary** was given to Lida Kleinman, a Jewish child who had been baptised while hiding in a Catholic orphanage. Living under the aliases Marysia Borowska and later Maria Woloszynska, Lida was also taught prayers so she could convincingly pass as a Polish Catholic.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Lidia K. Siciarz

Paul Sondhoff was 18 years old when he was sheltered by his elderly piano teacher in Vienna. He had to hide in a cramped cupboard and kept his mother's **toy bear** as a reminder of his previous life. Jews hiding in concealed spaces had to remain still and silent for hours each day to avoid detection.
The Foster family on behalf of Paul Sondhoff

Henri Obstfeld was two years old when his parents

left him in the care of Jakoc and Hendrika Klerk. Locals were told that his parents, who were in hiding elsewhere, had been killed in the bombing of Rotterdam in 1940. His parents sent him **story books**, which were the only form of contact they had with their son during the war.

Alicia Rottenberg escaped from the Warsaw ghetto in 1943 and went into hiding on the 'Aryan' side of the city. She escaped again during a raid in which her two cousins were murdered, and left Warsaw for Milosna 240 miles away. She wore this **dress**, which had belonged to her mother, during her time in hiding.

Some people escaped the ghettos and found protection in nearby forests, joining or creating their own partisan groups. **Idel Kagan** (left) was only 14 years old when he escaped the Nowogródek ghetto in Belarus through underground tunnels. He fled to the Naliboki forest, where he joined partisans led by the Bielski brothers. This group sheltered and protected hundreds of Jewish people.

Alexander Katzenbogen drew this **image** of three fellow partisans in the Naroch forest, Belarus. Alexander had been an art student in Vilnius when the Germans occupied. He drew scenes of everyday

life during his confinement in the ghetto. In 1943, he escaped and joined the partisans, helping to lead the all-Jewish *Nekama* (Revenge) brigade.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, the Abraham and Ruth Goldfarb Family Acquisition Fund

This **photograph album** belonged to the Pasternak family. After the German Army invaded their hometown, 18-year-old Irena Pasternak moved to Kraków with her parents. When they were discovered with forged papers, they were forced into the Kraków ghetto, where Irena died of pneumonia. Her mother and father escaped the ghetto, but committed suicide after they were caught again.

Some Jewish people in larger cities used forged papers to live in the open under false identities. They were known as 'U-boats'. These **identity cards** belonged to a German Jewish woman living in the Netherlands. One bears her real name, Rosa Dalberg-Buchthal, while the other carries her false identity, Anna van Driel.

On 16 July 1942, 13,000 Jewish people were arrested in a raid targeting foreign-born Jews living in Paris. This was organised by the Germans, but carried out by French police. **Buses** took those arrested to

assembly points. Over 8,000 people were held with no water and few toilets in the sweltering Vélodrome d'Hiver before being sent to transit camps.

Deportations from the Slovak Republic began in March 1942. Sigmund and Karoline Koniec were taken from their home in Bratislava to a camp at Žilina. In June, they were transported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Their children, Dori and Herbi, received this **message** from a former neighbour telling them of their parents' deportation.

**Photographs** of Hans and Vera Neumeyer, and family friend Julius Kohn. Hans and Vera were deported from Munich in the summer of 1942. Hans was sent to Theresienstadt, a ghetto and transit camp, and Vera to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Julius was deported from Munich to Auschwitz-Birkenau in early 1943.

Ruth Neumeyer had been sent to England on a *Kindertransport* before the war. This **correspondence** was the last she received from her mother Vera. Four months later, a **message** from her grandfather confirmed that he no longer knew where her parents were. Ruth contacted the Red Cross asking for help locating her parents and received this **letter** in reply.

In January 1943, Leonhard and Clara Wohl sent this **message** to their daughters, who had found refuge in England before the outbreak of war. It was the last message Eva, Käte and Ulli received from their parents. On 19 February, Leonhard and Clara were deported from Berlin to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Georgy Halpern is **photographed** here with other young residents at the home in Izieu. The children were captured in a raid by the *Gestapo*. They were sent hundreds of miles away to the transit camp at Drancy. From there, they were taken to Auschwitz-Birkenau and killed.

Georgy was Julius and Serafine Halpern's only child. These family **photographs** were taken shortly before he was placed in the children's home in Izieu in an attempt to keep him safe. Georgy sent his parents **letters** describing his school lessons and adventures in the French countryside. He also sent them **drawings** of ships and castles.

This **dress** belonged to Sidika, a young Romanian girl deported with her parents from Cernauti to the Bershad ghetto in Transnistria, where she died. From 1941, the Nazis' Romanian allies carried out a programme of annihilation against the country's

Jews. But as the war progressed and their military situation worsened, they halted deportations.
Yad Vashem Museum Artifacts Collection, donated by Bella Markus, Tirat HaCarmel, Israel

Tilde Modiano worked with Lucillo Merci in the Italian consulate in German-occupied Salonika, Greece. With Consul-General Guelfo Zamboni, they helped Jews escape to relative safety in Italian-occupied Athens. Tilde gave Lucillo this **yellow star**, which she signed, and **card** as a memento of their work. Tilde was arrested and deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1943.

Hermine Petschau was a 78-year-old Austrian woman living in Prague. In July 1942, she received this **notice** telling her that she was to be deported. She was told to report at the assembly point at 4pm on 13 July. These **gloves** were among the possessions she packed to take with her to Theresienstadt.

Anna Maria 'Settela' Steinbach was the daughter of a Sinti trader and violinist. In May 1944, 'Gypsies' were targeted in a round-up across the Netherlands. The Steinbachs were taken to Westerbork transit camp and transported east, together with 244 other Sinti. A Jewish prisoner filming under orders captured this **image** of Settela as the train departed.
Film © EYE Filmmuseum, the Netherlands

In April 1942, Marie Bader received this deportation **summons**. She was taken from Prague to Theresienstadt, and from there to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Her daughter Grete, who had come to England before the war, tried to get a Red Cross **message** to Marie. She did not know that her mother had already been murdered when the message was sent.

Marianne Grunfeld, Auguste Spitz and Therese Steiner were Jewish refugees living in Guernsey when the Germans occupied the Channel Islands in 1940. They were sent to occupied France in April 1942. On 20 July, they were forced to board a freight train that took them to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Their names appear on this **transport list**.

**Taking people away**

By February 1943, more than 270,000 pairs of **shoes** from the death camps had been sent to Nazi agencies for redistribution. They were transported through depots at Auschwitz and Majdanek camps. Beneficiaries included the Hitler Youth – across the Reich, German teenagers wore the shoes of murdered Jews.
Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim

This **train carriage** is of the type used in the deportation of Belgian Jews. Up to 100 people were crammed into sealed cars, which were heavily guarded. Journeys were long and deportees usually had no access to fresh air, food or water. A single bucket was provided as the toilet for the whole carriage.

Deportees were instructed to pack a **suitcase** with their belongings. These were confiscated by the Nazis on arrival at the death camps. While people were murdered, the things they had brought for supposed new lives 'in the east' were being sorted for redistribution. Slave labourers pulled suitcases apart to check for hidden valuables.
Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim

## Killing Centres

### The murderers

**Christian Wirth** oversaw the construction and management of Belzec death camp. He used his experience in the Nazis' euthanasia programme to devise the entire procedure for mass murder at Belzec. Wirth went on to manage the expansion and development of gas chambers at Sobibor and

Treblinka. He was known as 'Wild Christian' and 'Christian the Terrible'.

**Odilo Globočnik** headed Operation 'Reinhard', the plan to murder approximately 1.7 million Jews in occupied Poland. He received orders directly from SS leader Heinrich Himmler. Globočnik's personal instructions ensured the programme of mass murder was carried out at ferocious speed. He frequently boasted of his 'achievements' to other Nazis.

**Hans-Heinz Schütt** was a book-keeper at Sobibor. He had previously worked in an administrative role in the 'euthanasia programme'. At Sobibor he was also the 'cashier', handing people worthless 'receipts' in exchange for their money and valuables. Schütt was rarely violent but played a key role in deceiving new arrivals and concealing the camp's true purpose.

**Ernst Zierke** supervised parts of the day-to-day murder operations at Belzec. As a nurse in Grafeneck and Hadamar euthanasia facilities, he had experience in state-organised killings. During his time in Belzec he worked on the unloading ramp, managed the undressing stage and tried to keep people calm so they entered the gas chambers without panicking.

**Lorenz Hackenholt** was considered a gassing expert because of his work in all six euthanasia facilities. He designed and operated the gas chambers at Belzec, using a stolen engine from a Soviet tank to deliver the fatal carbon monoxide gas. The Nazis placed a satirical plaque above the building's door that read 'Hackenholt Foundation'.

## Dual-purpose camps

Moisej Martoschenko was one of thousands of auxillary guards who assisted the SS in the death camps. Many of these guards were given special training at Trawniki labour camp, earning them the name 'Trawniki men'. They were known within the system as 'Ukrainians' but came from all over the Soviet Union. Martoschenko's **service card** shows he worked in Treblinka.

Over-consumption of alcohol was common among Nazi mass murderers, despite warnings against it from Heinrich Himmler. Staff at the death camps maintained a ready supply of **beer**, wine and spirits. They supplemented these reserves with alcohol stolen from victims' luggage. They also drank regularly in bars in nearby towns.

This **collar badge** was worn by an SS guard at Auschwitz concentration camp. The skull insignia marked him out as a member of the *Totenkopfverbände* (death's head units). The *Totenkopfverbände* were a separate unit within the SS with their own command structure. They had overall responsibility for implementing the mass murder of Jews in the camp system.
Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim

These **sketches** from 1943 show the arrival of a transport at Auschwitz-Birkenau. A young boy is separated from his father during a selection. While the father is taken for slave labour, the boy is considered unfit to work. Like most young children, he is led with his mother towards the gas chambers.

These **designs** show the plans for Auschwitz-Birkenau in October 1941. They were revised in 1942 as the arrangements for Auschwitz in the 'final solution' evolved. The new plans included four permanent gassing installations called 'crematoria'. This **drawing** of Crematoria II at Auschwitz-Birkenau was modified to include an undressing room and gas chamber, as well as ovens for corpse disposal.

The Nazis disguised the gas chambers in Auschwitz-

Birkenau with **shower heads**, like this one from Crematoria II. Once the doors were locked, SS men emptied **tins of Zyklon B** pellets through hatches in the ceiling. They became toxic on contact with air. Zyklon B was sold as a pesticide patented by Degesch and sold by Testa and Heli in Europe.
Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim

Hermann Höfle co-ordinated the transports to the death camps during Operation 'Reinhard', the murder of Jews in occupied Poland. In this secret **telegram** from January 1943, Höfle recorded the numbers of people murdered at Belzec (B), Sobibor (S), Treblinka (T) and Lublin-Majdanek (L). Höfle's estimate was 1,274,166. His telegram was intercepted by British intelligence.
On loan from The National Archives, UK, HW 16/23

**Strangled by gas**

This **photograph** shows a group of men before they were killed in the death camp at Chełmno in German-annexed Poland. At Chełmno and the Maly Trostenets camp in Belarus people were crammed into the back of mobile gas vans and suffocated by carbon monoxide poisoning. The vans were then driven to pits where the dead bodies were unloaded by *Sonderkommando* and buried.

The Nazis wanted the death camps to be as far as possible from inhabited places, but near to railway lines. This **railway spike** was part of a spur line that connected Treblinka death camp to the railway network. The spur was constructed by the Germans to ensure that the process of mass murder was as efficient as possible.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of the Estate of Robert L. White

The death camps were surrounded by dense **barbed wire**. In some camps this was attached to fence posts, in others it was nailed directly into the trunks of surrounding trees. The fences were intended to both prevent escape and hide what was happening. In parts of the camps, barbed wire fences were entwined with tree branches to ensure total privacy.
From the collections of the State Museum at Majdanek in Lublin, Poland

At Belzec, the Nazis disguised the gas chambers as a 'Jewish bathhouse' with flowers and this **Star of David** at the entrance. They sometimes handed people **soap** and even towels. Women were told they needed their hair cut for disinfection. This was done with blunt **scissors**. The hair was sent to Germany and used in the manufacture of industrial felt.
Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim

Young slave labourers walked among the crowd handing a **strip of fabric** to each person so they could tie their shoes together as a pair. People were told it would make the shoes easier to find after their shower. In reality it made it easier for the Nazis to redistribute them to people in the Reich.

The Nazis forced people to deposit money and jewellery with the 'cashier' before undressing. In return, the 'cashier' gave them **concrete tags** as 'receipts' so they could collect their valuables after their 'shower'. He told them to ensure they kept the tags safe. This maintained the illusion that those entering the chamber would live to see their belongings again.
From the collections of the State Museum at Majdanek in Lublin, Poland

The gas chambers were disguised as public showers. This **tile** is from the wall of a chamber at Treblinka. It came from a large Polish ceramics manufacturer under the control of the German occupiers. Beige wall tiles covered the lowest two-thirds of the room and terracotta-coloured tiles were installed on the floor. The doors were made of steel and insulated with rubber.
Object from the collections of the Treblinka Museum

## The sole witnesses

## Futures lost

Objects from the collections of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim
E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland
Museum of the former German Death Camp Kulmhof in Chełmno-on-Ner, Branch of the Martyrdom Museum in Żabikowo
State Museum at Majdanek in Lublin, Poland

People with pre-existing medical conditions brought their medications with them. This insulin tin is from Copenhagen. It was used to treat diabetes and occasionally schizophrenia. Securing insulin was very challenging for people with diabetes and few diabetics survived in the ghettos.

Among the personal items that people brought with them, such as coins and penknives, were the armbands or yellow Stars of David they had been forced to wear. These were removed from clothing by slave labourers after it had been taken. Labourers who left any visible traces of the stars were murdered.

Wilhelm Drill, a 69-year-old doctor, was deported from Vienna to Włodawa in occupied Poland on 27 April 1942. He wrote a **name tag** to identify his luggage. He included the Nazi-imposed middle name of 'Israel' and his home address in Vienna. Wilhelm was murdered in Sobibor.

Many people brought grooming and hygiene products such as toothbrushes and toothpaste with them. Objects carried by men, such as razors, were cleaned up in workshops at the death camps and redistributed to members of the SS. Products carried by women, such as lipstick, were discarded. Perfume was sometimes used as hand wash.

People brought items of sentimental value alongside the practical things needed for day-to-day life. They had to hand over jewellery but were usually allowed to keep wedding rings on their fingers. Some people pressed these into the ground outside the gas chamber building to stop them falling into the hands of their murderers.

For observant Jews, religion was at the centre of their world. They brought the items they would need for religious practice in the new destinations for which they were told they were bound. The

Nazis' programme of annihilation led to some Jewish people questioning – or losing – their faith. For others, it became an important part of dealing with what was happening.

People being deported had no information about the lives they were supposedly destined for. Among the items they packed were practical objects they thought they would need. These included plates, bowls, and cutlery to eat with, and buttons, thimbles and thread to mend their clothes.

Alongside more practical items, people packed games like dominoes and dice. They brought them for use on the journey and to pass the time when they arrived wherever they were going.

**Screams and then silence**

The death camps were designed to kill people and destroy their remains. Very few of the men, women and children who were sent to them ever came out. The Nazis only kept what they believed had value. This included clothes, jewellery, hair – and the **shoes** that those murdered had walked in.

# Enslavement

## The Birkenau camp

The SS kept thorough records of prisoners held in Auschwitz. These **registration photographs** were taken by fellow prisoners under SS orders between 1941 and 1943. They photographed people from three angles, displaying their camp number and nationality. Those sent directly to the gas chambers on arrival went unrecorded.

Friedrich Michel and his wife Ännie fled from Germany to Amsterdam in 1940. They hoped to travel on to the US but were unable to do so, despite having visas and tickets. In 1943 they were sent to Westerbork transit camp. Friedrich took this **spoon** with him and used it during his four-month internment. He engraved it with his block number.

Dutch Jews directed to report to Westerbork transit camp were given **instructions** telling them they needed to undergo an examination on arrival. The form also provided them with a list of items they were allowed to pack. It included underwear, blankets and a spoon. This process kept up the idea that they were being resettled for work.

Beatrix Frank and her three sons were among 4,924 Dutch Jews deported from Westerbork to Theresienstadt. Most Dutch Jews were sent directly from Westerbork to Auschwitz-Birkenau or Sobibor. Beatrix was issued with this **work card** after securing employment in the laundry at Theresienstadt. Her job enabled her to secretly wash herself and her sons in hot water.

Jewish authorities at Theresienstadt, operating under German orders, finalised this **transport list** of 2,503 men, women and children. The people named on it left on 18 December 1943 and arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau the next day. This was one of 27 transports from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz-Birkenau between October 1942 and October 1944, carrying more than 40,000 Jews.

**In the KL**

These **wooden panels** are part of a barrack that housed forced labourers at a camp in Velten, Germany. Concentration camp barracks were very basic structures. Many were originally designed as stables. They became so overcrowded that prisoners had to sleep three or four people to each bunk. Hygiene was poor and disease widespread.

Concentration camps were designed to prevent escape. They were surrounded by tall fences with electrified barbed wire. Any prisoner seen approaching these fences was executed. Fences were monitored by armed guards on raised outposts. This **fence post** from Auschwitz-Birkenau was part of a perimeter that stretched for almost 12 miles. Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim

The triangles on this **chart** indicated different prisoner categories. Red triangles identified political prisoners, pink triangles homosexuals and black triangles 'asocials'. 'Asocials' included beggars, alcoholics, prostitutes and Roma. Jews wore two triangles forming a yellow star, unless they were also considered to fit into another prisoner category. Treatment of prisoners varied according to their category.

**By their hand**

The concentration camp SS were expected to conduct themselves with strict military discipline. They wore uniforms, including **caps**, while on duty. Guards were supposed to use their training to ensure that camps were not only punishing, but productive. In reality this rarely happened as prisoners were too malnourished to work effectively.

Male guards were armed with **guns** and **whips**. They were trained to use them to intimidate inmates and enforce discipline. Their heavy military **boots** also became weapons. Male and female guards would kick and stamp on unarmed and emaciated prisoners, sometimes causing fatal injuries. Prisoners were virtually powerless against SS violence.
Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen /
The Brandenburg Memorials Foundation

SS guards were expected to maintain elite standards. Strict rules governed how they should behave. **Instruction booklets** such as *Richtig-Falsch* (*Right-Wrong*) showed how to guard prisoners in different situations. Excessive violence or murder was supposedly forbidden, but this practice was generally ignored.
Collection of the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, property of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland

Concentration camp guards received ongoing training in Nazi ideology. This was designed to ensure they showed no sympathy towards prisoners – particularly Jews. Guards were made to watch crude antisemitic films, such as *Jud Süss,* advertised in this **handbill**. These films sometimes provoked

immediate violent acts against prisoners by guards.

The number of prisoners in concentration camps grew over the course of the war. This created a demand for more SS guards. **Otto Hörgelow** joined the SS in 1937 but was not sent to work at a concentration camp until 1940. At 45 years old he was too old to fight, but served in various camps between 1940 and 1945.

## Deprived of everything

SS officer Karl Huber wrote this **letter** to senior official Odilo Globocnik seeking a bathtub for his six-week-old son. Huber specifically requested an item from Operation 'Reinhard' – the code name for the murder of Jews in occupied Poland. Huber would have known he was asking for a bathtub belonging to a murdered child.

This **letter**, marked as secret, requests '10 medium-sized suitcases' for two *Einsatzgruppen* mobile killing units. While death camps became the main method of Nazi mass murder from 1942, mass shootings continued. At the time this letter was written, ghettos in the Soviet Union were being emptied and the remaining Jews shot by *Einsatzgruppen* units.

The Secret State Police in Vienna sent this **letter** to the Head Office of Operation ' Reinhard' in Lublin. It requested clothes for 700 Polish people who the Nazis believed could be 'Germanised' (made into Germans). At the death camps, slave labourers removed yellow stars and any identifying marks from stolen clothing before it was redistributed.

**V1 flying bombs**, or 'Doodlebugs', were produced in underground factories by prisoners from Mittelbau-Dora. Thousands of slave labourers, including Jews, worked long hours in dark and dangerous tunnels. Death rates were exceptionally high. More people died making the V1 bombs than were killed by them. V1s were fired at England from June 1944.

Nazi officials moved the production of V1 flying bombs and V2 missiles underground. Tens of thousands of prisoners used **pickaxes** to enlarge tunnels in the Harz mountains near the Mittelbau-Dora satellite camp. Exhausted prisoners fell from the scaffolding, or were killed by falling rocks. By March 1944, one in three prisoners was dead.
Loaned by the Buchenwald Memorial Collection

## This prolonged living death

Daily prisoner rations usually consisted of thin soup, tasteless 'coffee' and a small piece of bread. This bread was often made with sawdust. Prisoners collected their rations in **bowls** like this. If a prisoner's bowl was lost or stolen they received no food. Distribution of food was supervised by prisoners called *Blockälteste* (block elders).

Securing additional **bread** was critical to survival. A black market developed within the camps in which starving prisoners would desperately trade items for extra portions. When prisoners died others took bread rations from their bodies. Thefts of bread from fellow prisoners worsened as starvation intensified. Some people became so desperately malnourished that they resorted to cannibalism.

Prisoners were forced to assemble for *Appell* (roll call) every morning and evening. They had to stand completely still for hours in all weathers while the SS counted them. This **photograph** shows an exhausted prisoner being held up by two fellow inmates. Prisoners identified as too weak at *Appell* could be selected for murder.

Henri Pieck, a prisoner in Buchenwald, secretly painted daily life in the camp. In this **picture** he shows a row of exhausted and sick inmates in the infirmary. The infirmary was a dangerous place for both Jewish and non-Jewish prisoners. The SS murdered anyone taken there who they considered incurably sick or injured.

This **log book** from Natzweiler in occupied France records prisoner fatalities. Although 'official' causes of death were listed in such books, these were generally lies. In reality, those named were more likely to have died through overwork, malnourishment and squalid living conditions. The SS placed little value on the lives of Jewish people and rarely recorded their deaths.

From 1941, SS doctors sent sick prisoners to be killed at 'euthanasia' centres under secret order '*Aktion 14f13*'. The same centres had previously been used to murder disabled people across the Reich. This is a **list** of prisoners sent from Gusen concentration camp to the nearby Hartheim euthanasia centre to be murdered.

Almost 21,000 Roma lived in the 'Gypsy family camp' in Auschwitz-Birkenau. This was a fenced-off area

where Roma families were kept together. These **pages** list some of their names. Thousands of those in the camp died through starvation or disease. Despite being met with physical resistance, the SS brutally liquidated the camp on 2 August 1944, murdering or relocating its remaining residents.

Fifteen-year-old Austrian Roma Johann Stojka and his brother Karl were sent from Auschwitz-Birkenau to Buchenwald. The rest of their family were sent to other camps. During his time in Buchenwald, Johann risked his life by writing this book of **poems**. The poems describe his ongoing hunger and maltreatment during his time in Buchenwald.
Kazerne Dossin Memorial, Museum and Documentation Center on Holocaust and Human Rights, Mechelen

Eva Hamburger spent her 21st birthday as a slave labourer in Barth, a subcamp of Ravensbrück. Her friend Klara Rakos carved this **mini cello** in secret as a present for her. Before the war Eva had aspired to be a professional cellist in Budapest, like her mother.

Prisoners talked about food constantly. This '**cookbook**' was written in Ravensbrück by Edith Salzberger and her friends. It includes some of the

recipes that they daydreamed about, such as cheese dumplings. Exchanging special or memorable recipes helped these women to remember their homes and families, and sometimes their religious traditions.
Sydney Jewish Museum, donated by Edith Peer

**Taken for biological Experiments**

Professor **Carl Clauberg** experimented on hundreds of Jewish women at Auschwitz to find a non-surgical method of mass sterilisation. One of these women was newlywed **Sylvia Amar**. The gynaecological experiments she was subjected to left her unable to have children. Many women died as a result of the trials.

Concentration camps provided doctors with the opportunity to try and prove Nazi racial and genetic theories on human test subjects. SS doctor Josef Mengele particularly valued experimenting on twins. These **letters** from elite research institutions thanked Mengele for sharing his 'research' in this area. Mengele's work killed hundreds of twins in Auschwitz.

In Dachau, Dr Sigmund Rascher performed

experiments for the *Luftwaffe* (German Air Force). He used prisoners to investigate the effects of altitude and hypothermia on the body. His data helped the *Luftwaffe* plan for long-range missions and bail-out procedures. These **photographs** show a man badly affected by low air pressure in a high-altitude experiment.

In Ravensbrück, medical staff tested antibacterial drugs on female prisoners. They were looking for ways of treating diseases affecting German soldiers in combat, including typhoid, yellow fever and malaria. These secret **photographs** show prisoners whose legs have been deliberately wounded and infected with bacteria, dirt and shards of glass.

Josef Mengele was chief doctor for the 'Gypsy family camp' at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Mengele took a particular interest in Roma and performed experiments on children there. He created a '*Kindergarten*' for those he found scientifically interesting. These are the **ID photos** of siblings Johanna and Erdmann Schmidt. Both died as a result of Mengele's experiments.

The growth in concentration camp populations led to shortages of standard issue striped uniforms. The SS

responded by using clothing stolen from new arrivals. These items were usually given distinctive markings. A red stripe and the letters KL (*Konzentrationslager*, concentration camp) were painted on the back of this **jacket** issued to a prisoner in Majdanek.

Prisoners found without their **cap** could be killed. SS guards sometimes amused themselves by throwing a prisoner's cap towards the perimeter fence and shooting the prisoner as they retrieved it. During roll calls prisoners had to remove their caps on demand. They were expected to do this in complete unison and were beaten if they failed to do so.

Securing footwear was critical to prisoners' survival. The crude **wooden clogs** issued by camp authorities were heavy and uncomfortable. They were usually ill-fitting, leading to blisters and cuts that could easily become infected in the filthy conditions. Despite this, clogs offered at least a little protection and were better than no shoes at all.

Forcing new arrivals at concentration camps to wear **uniforms** was part of the effort to dehumanise them. Little consideration was given to sizing and the shirts and trousers issued were often too big or too small. The stripes on the clothing were supposed to make

prisoners instantly recognisable, particularly when they were working outside the camp.

The concentration camp system stripped individuals of their identity. Names were replaced with numbers sewn onto prisoners' uniforms. These **stencils** were used in Sachsenhausen. Letters on the coloured triangle indicated a prisoner's nationality. This 'T' stands for *Tscheche* (Czech). At Auschwitz, prisoners had their number tattooed on their forearms.
Memorial and Museum Sachsenhausen /
The Brandenburg Memorials Foundation

Eva Hamburger was sent to Barth, a sub-camp of Ravensbrück. On arrival she was registered as prisoner number 81640. She wore this **number** and **red triangle** on her uniform during her time in the camp. The red triangle was combined with a yellow triangle or strip of fabric to indicate that a prisoner was Jewish. The majority of the prisoners at Ravensbrück and its sub-camps were female.

## Camps in the community

The Carl Walther Company was one of the first to cooperate with the SS. In late 1942 it established a factory inside Neuengamme concentration camp, near Hamburg. Prisoners working for the company

produced **rifles** for the German army. The Carl Walther Company paid the SS for the slave labourers. The labourers received nothing.

Mauthausen concentration camp was built next to a quarry. Malnourished prisoners were forced to carry **granite blocks** on their backs up 186 stairs. Those who fell could be crushed by the stones they were carrying. Those who faltered were beaten or shot. SS guards pushed many prisoners into the quarry to their deaths.
Mauthausen Memorial

In many concentration camps, prisoners judged to have broken rules were sent to the *Strafkompanie* (punishment company). Prisoners in these companies were forced to do the hardest labour on reduced rations. This **punishment company register** is from Natzweiler. Many of the prisoners listed did not survive. The SS drew a line through the names of those who died.

Fatality rates varied considerably between concentration camps. Mauthausen had one of the highest death tolls. This **metal ID tag** was worn by Symche Zinger. Symche worked in the quarry at a sub-camp, Gusen. He was one of at least 90,000 prisoners who died in Mauthausen and its sub-camps.

This was around half of the prisoners sent there.
Mauthausen Memorial (OS 0192)

These **counterfeit British banknotes** were produced in Sachsenhausen by Jewish prisoners as part of Operation 'Bernhard'. The Germans intended to drop them over Britain to create financial chaos. In the end a lack of available aircraft meant that this never happened.

Gustloff Werke Weimar was a weapons manufacturing company. It replaced its existing workforce with slave labourers and opened a sub-camp near Buchenwald in 1943. These **tags** were issued to prisoners working there. Private businesses that ran sub-camps used their employees to guard and supervise prisoners. These employees were given training by the SS.
Loaned by the Buchenwald Memorial Collection

People living near concentration camps were witnesses to prisoners' suffering, but rarely offered any objections. Nazi officials in Mauthausen did receive a **letter of complaint** from local farmer, Eleanora Gusenbauer. She wrote that seeing SS guards murdering prisoners was distressing. She requested that these 'inhuman acts' are done 'elsewhere where one does not see it'.

Most main camps spawned dozens of sub-camps. This **map** shows more than 40 sub-camps attached to Dachau in 1944. The furthest of these, Moschendorf, was located nearly 175 miles away. When prisoners from Dachau's sub-camps became unproductive, they were usually sent back to the main camp to be killed.

## Breakdown

### Now in the Nazi trap

A month after the German invasion, all Jewish people in Hungary were forced to wear **yellow stars**. This was one of many anti-Jewish laws passed in rapid succession. Jews were deprived of what few rights they still had and their property was taken. Shortly afterwards, they were isolated within ghettos before being deported.

This **tablecloth** belonged to the Steinmetz family. They cut up its yellow lining to make the stars they were forced to wear. The size and shape of yellow stars were regulated, but people had to improvise using whatever materials they could find. In Budapest, Jews were forced to live in houses that were also marked with stars.

## A new fury

Before the German occupation, the Hungarian government had conscripted tens of thousands of Jewish men into the Labour Service to support the army. They claimed that Jews did not make reliable soldiers. Between 1941 and 1942, the military introduced measures to mark out Jewish labourers. The letter Z on these **badges** stood for *Zsidó* (Jew).

The Germans saw young Hungarian Jews as a much-needed source of slave labour for their struggling war effort. Eva Hamburger survived several selections at Auschwitz-Birkenau before being transported to Barth concentration camp on Germany's northern coast. She was forced to work in armaments production and made this **ring** out of aluminium scrap.

## The silent world

As a prisoner at Auschwitz for two years, Rudolf Vrba saw preparations for the annihilation of the Hungarian Jews. He escaped in April 1944, wearing this **belt**, to try and warn the world. The belt had belonged to a fellow prisoner named Szaja Unglik. Rudolf inherited it after Szaja's murder and kept it as a token of good luck.

This ***Schutzpass*** (protection pass) was issued to Margit Gold and her two-year-old son Tibor in September 1944. Margit's husband Johann had already been sent away to a Hungarian labour battalion. Jews in possession of these passes were, for a time, treated as foreign nationals awaiting repatriation. They were exempted from deportation.

Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg arrived in Budapest in mid-1944 to try and save as many Jews as possible. Members of his staff used this **typewriter** to create thousands of *Schutzpässe* (protection passes). As Sweden was a neutral country, it was technically able to provide this protection to people. Although these passes were not always honoured by the Nazis and their collaborators, they saved thousands of lives.

Once free, Rudolf Vrba and fellow escapee Alfréd Wetzler wrote a detailed account about the killing operations at Auschwitz-Birkenau. In June 1944, parts of the report were broadcast by the BBC World Service. The US War Refugee Board later published an English-language version, which included maps and **diagrams** of the camp. It prompted little action.

Jewish people in Budapest made desperate efforts to

contact whoever they could for help or information. These **postcards** were sent between members of the Dobai family seeking news about each other's whereabouts. János Dobai, aged 11 years old, and his mother were eventually able to secure protection in a Swedish government building.

**János Hajdu** was six years old when the Germans entered Budapest in April 1944. In June, he and his mother were forced to move into a property designated for Jews called a 'yellow star house'. In October his mother was sent away to work as a slave labourer and János was put into hiding with a non-Jewish neighbour by his aunt Iby.

Foreign diplomats and representatives of humanitarian organisations used their status and influence to help Hungarian Jews. They issued protective documents and set up safe houses in the so-called international ghetto. Jews with certificates of protection supplied by neutral countries were mostly contained in this area.

Some victims were buried in mass graves across the city, including at the **Dohány Street Synagogue**. The synagogue had been the centre of Jewish life in pre-war Budapest. The bodies were exhumed by the

Soviet Army shortly after they took control of the city in January 1945.

As the Soviet Army encircled Budapest, the Arrow Cross went into Jewish hospitals and took patients, doctors and nurses to be murdered. Those too ill to move were killed in their beds. This **photograph** was taken after their bodies were exhumed in April 1945. Members of the Arrow Cross responsible for the murders stand next to the corpses.

As the Soviet Army closed in on Budapest during the fascist regime's final chaotic months, Arrow Cross **murder squads** intensified their activities. Jewish men, women and children were pulled at random from the ghetto and executed in the street or shot along the banks of the River Danube. Their bodies fell into the water below.

**Hiding the traces**

The Nazis wanted to eradicate Jewish culture across Europe. They destroyed Jewish cemeteries and used the headstones for building materials and road surfaces. This **gravestone** was repurposed as a millstone. The remaining original Hebrew text reads, 'For these I cry; my eyes, my eyes are shedding tears'.

Such traces of Nazi crimes were beyond the reach of their cover-up operations.

The SS forced some new arrivals at Auschwitz-Birkenau to send deceptive **postcards** back home. This was intended to trick victims' loved ones into believing the sender was alive and well. It was meant to make further deportations from the same area easier. Those who wrote the postcards were usually killed before they were sent.

Zdena Isidor wrote this **postcard** to her cousin Olga in Prague on arrival at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Instead of Olga's first name, Zdena used '*Lechem*', the Hebrew word for bread. This coded message indicated she was starving. Zdena was sent to the gas chambers shortly after writing the postcard.

As the Soviet Army advanced towards Auschwitz-Birkenau, SS guards were instructed to destroy the remaining crematoria. Most of these buildings – which contained the gas chambers – were blown up in January 1945. Despite their efforts, physical evidence of the killing facilities remained. This fragment was part of an **oven frame** in the crematoria.

Victims of mass shootings and the gas chambers

were initially buried. The Nazis became concerned these mass graves would be found and used as evidence against them. SS official Paul Blobel was instructed to exhume and burn the bodies. Any remaining bone fragments were crushed in **grinders**. This was done by Jewish prisoners, who were killed afterwards.

**Forced evacuations**

Freddie Knoller took this **badge** from a communist prisoner who died on a death march. Freddie believed
his chances of survival would be higher if he was identified as a political prisoner rather than a Jew. As the Allies drew closer, Nazi guards murdered prisoners
at an increasing rate and Jews were most in danger.

Nathan Pivnik wore this Buchenwald **prisoner number** on his striped jacket on a death march in April 1945. Nathan's march came under increasing air attack from US bombers targeting retreating German forces. Under a particularly intense attack, his column was driven into the Thuringian forest by the accompanying SS. The SS then fled, leaving the prisoners free.

Gisele Friedman was one of 10,000 inmates sent on a death march from Auschwitz. She spent five days travelling in a covered train followed by five days walking in freezing conditions. After another five days in an open truck she arrived at Bergen-Belsen. She wore these **shoes** and carried this **flask** throughout her journey.

This **bag** held small leather boxes called *tefillin* containing texts from the Torah worn by Jewish men for prayers. It was found on the body of an unknown victim of a death march by an American Jewish soldier. Many Jewish prisoners retained a devout level of religious conviction throughout their persecution. Despite the terrible conditions, they found ways to observe religious practice.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of Walter Fried

Mordecai Lichtenstein escaped from a death march passing through Silesia in Poland. Having worked there before the war, he knew the territory well. He found refuge in the house of a Polish woman. After seeing this British-made **razor** on her windowsill, he realised there could be Allied prisoners of war nearby. Mordecai later accompanied them to England.

Most Germans ignored the columns of emaciated prisoners walking through their towns and villages, but there were exceptions. Maria Seidenberger, an 18-year-old photographic laboratory technician, lived near the Dachau concentration camp. She took this **photograph** of prisoners on a death march from Buchenwald to Dachau. Her mother handed potatoes to people in the column as they passed.

**Falling apart**

Jan Hartmann drew this **picture** shortly after surviving a death march from Czechowice to Bielsko in January 1945. Those lying by the roadside have either died from exhaustion or been shot by the SS for being unable to keep up. Up to a third of the 714,000 prisoners who embarked on the death marches did not survive.

The so-called '**Little Camp**' at Buchenwald was designated as a 'death zone'. Despite the appalling conditions, a group of adult male prisoners incarcerated there worked with the communist resistance to make Barrack 66 a 'children's block'. They moved all boy prisoners into this barrack and tried to protect them from disease.

As the camps entered their final phase, guards prepared prisoners for evacuation. In many places they killed those too weak to walk, leaving piles of unburied corpses in their rush to leave. This **photograph** shows the body of a prisoner shot at Ohrdruf, a sub-camp of Buchenwald, before the departure of the SS.

## Afterwards

### Liberation comes

The Soviet Army liberated Auschwitz on 27 January 1945. The camp complex was mostly deserted. The majority of the prisoners had been evacuated on a death march ten days earlier. The 7,000 who remained, like the women in this **photograph**, were too ill to walk. They had been left by the SS to die.

US soldiers liberated 2,500 Jews locked on a stationary train near Magdeburg, Germany, on 13 April 1945. They had left Belsen a few days earlier. The SS guards accompanying them fled as Allied troops approached. A US soldier took this **image** of a woman and two children next to the train. These are their first moments of freedom.

The British Army discovered over 55,000 survivors when they entered Belsen on 15 April 1945. This was the largest number of people in any liberated camp. Desperate overcrowding and SS neglect meant that conditions in Belsen had dramatically worsened in the camp's final weeks. Many survivors, like those in this **photograph**, were on the brink of death.

Many survivors saw their liberators as saviours and wanted to show their gratitude. Stanisława Gadula, a prisoner liberated in Dachau, wrote a message on the back of this photograph. The note reads, 'On this 25th day, 1945 I am offering this **photograph** to an American soldier as an eternal souvenir'.

Eva Nathan's **birth certificate** shows that she was born in Mauthausen concentration camp on 29 April 1945, days before the camp's liberation. Normally babies, children and pregnant women were murdered. But Eva's mother, Anka, managed to hide her pregnancy. Anka weighed 32 kg (5 stone) when she gave birth. Eva weighed just 1.5 kg (3 lbs).

The soldiers who liberated the camps knew they needed to create a permanent record of what they were witnessing. This **sketch** of Belsen was drawn by war artist Bryan de Grineau. De Grineau was working

for the British newspaper, *The Illustrated London News*. The handwritten notes in the margin evidence his struggle to describe what he saw.

The Allies commissioned the **documentary** *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* to show to all Germans. They wanted the film to prevent any future denial of German war atrocities. It was also intended to crush lingering support for Nazism. Expert filmmakers and scriptwriters were employed to accurately capture the Nazis' crimes.

Liberating concentration camps was not a strategic aim for Allied troops. In general, they just encountered them as they advanced. In the confusion, the actual moment of liberation was rarely captured on photograph or film. Sometimes film crews re-enacted it in subsequent days in order to create a record of it. These **photographs** were staged after liberation.

Among the liberated prisoners were a small number of children. Most had lost their parents and were suffering from the effects of medical experiments or forced labour. **Photographs** were printed in newspapers and **radio reports**, like the BBC's *Captive Children*, were broadcast to trace surviving

relatives. Some children no longer remembered their surname or age.
Courtesy of the British Broadcasting Corporation

The liberation of concentration camps was a major news story across the world. **Newspapers** ran images and reports providing details of what had been discovered. The rescue of Europe's Jews had never been a primary 'war aim' for the Allies. But for a war-weary public, the horrifying reports justified the long fight against Nazism.

**After the end**

Soldiers were shocked by the condition of the survivors they encountered at liberation, describing them as 'living skeletons'. They handed out chocolate and other food from their **emergency ration packs** to try and help. However, the effects of starvation meant that survivors could not tolerate rich food. Sometimes soldiers' acts of intended kindness resulted in illness or even death.

Diseases like typhus, tuberculosis and dysentery continued to claim lives after liberation. This **photograph** shows severely ill survivors being washed and deloused in the 'human laundry' in

Belsen. This helped to prevent the spread of disease. To the disgust of some survivors, a lack of Allied resources meant it was partially staffed by German nurses and doctors.

This **photograph** shows women in Belsen choosing clean clothes from the clothing supply store. This store became known by the nickname 'Harrods'. Clothes were donated by relief organisations or taken from nearby towns. Women were also offered lipstick. After years of living in rags this process played a big role in helping survivors to feel human again.

Medical teams in Belsen tried to manage starvation with a special food mixture used during the 1943 Bengal famine. They also introduced intravenous feeding for those too weak to feed themselves. Many survivors became hysterical upon seeing **intravenous feeding kits**. They associated them with the equipment the SS used for medical experimentation.
The Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons

**Surviving survival**

Liberated prisoners had nothing to wear but their camp uniforms or items issued by the Allies. The

need for clothing meant some of them resorted to taking uniforms or garments from the SS. They removed Nazi insignia before wearing them. A survivor in Buchenwald took this **jacket** from a guard after liberation.

This **wooden tack box** was modified to hold a **miniature torah scroll** and ***Siddur*** (prayer book). It was found in a DP camp, but it is likely to have been assembled earlier in the war. For many Jews, being able to practise their religion was important to their survival and critical to their recovery.

This ***hanukkiah***, a candelabrum used for *Hanukkah*, was made from parts of a Sten gun by a soldier in the British Army's Jewish Brigade. He did this to help 83 Jewish children celebrate their first *Hanukkah* in Belsen after liberation. *Hanukkah* is a Jewish festival of light and had a particularly powerful resonance in 1945.

Across Europe, Jewish DPs tried to collect and assemble any remaining Nazi documentation for use in future prosecutions. This process began almost immediately after liberation. The photograph book, ***The Extermination of Polish Jews***, was produced in December 1945. Its editors wanted to show the

world the crimes of the Nazis and their collaborators.

This **booklet** was drawn by 14-year-old Eva Sachselová for Andrew Matthews. Matthews was one of 96 British medical students sent to Belsen to help survivors in May 1945. The booklet was to thank him for his kindness and friendship in helping Eva and her sister Hana to recover in the make-shift hospital.

This **photograph** shows actors from the Katzet-Teater group performing a popular play called *Partisans* in Belsen DP camp. The play was about a cabaret singer who seduces a German officer to steal weapons for partisans. The actors were all survivors. The group performed plays based on their recent experiences as well as classic Yiddish theatre.

This **photograph** shows members of the Friends' Relief Service in Braunschweig-Broitzem DP camp. Kitty Felix (standing in the first row, second on the right) was a Polish Jewish DP and worked in the registration office. The bandage on her arm covers a wound caused by her attempt to remove the tattoo of her Auschwitz prisoner number.

DPs made items like this **doll** and **drawing** to help deal with their experiences. This process

encouraged survivors to recover both mental strength and physical dexterity. At Belsen a group formed an Occupational Therapy Department and set up a three-day exhibition of items created by fellow DPs.

Gena Goldfinger wore this **dress** at her wedding to British soldier Norman Turgel. The couple married within months of meeting at Belsen. Many young survivors were eager to start new families. Allowances were made by some rabbis so that people whose husbands or wives had disappeared could remarry. DP camps soon had the highest birth rates in post-war Europe.

Jewish agencies encouraged the international community to donate clothes and money to help with relief efforts. They also held charity auctions. Barbara Joseph bought this **handbag** to support these efforts in 1946. The bag previously belonged to an unnamed Viennese Jewish woman who had been murdered by the Nazis.

**Building new worlds**

Most child survivors had lost years of education as well as their childhoods. Even older children were

often unable to read or write. In this **photograph** Irene Mandel teaches a group of Czech, Hungarian and Polish children at a make-shift school in Belsen DP camp. *Yeshivas* (religious schools) were also established.

Sports such as football, gymnastics and boxing were popular activities within DP camps. The Landsberg DP **football team** competed against teams from other Jewish DP camps. Sports kept young men busy. They also created a sense of community and improved physical strength. This was particularly encouraged by those who wanted to develop Jews fit to become pioneers in Palestine.

The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) helped DPs to return home. These **Polish DPs** are waving on their departure from Germany back to Gdansk, Poland. But many Polish Jews felt they couldn't return. Antisemitism was still widespread and hundreds of survivors were killed by their fellow citizens in post-war attacks.

The protesters in this **photograph** are demonstrating against British restrictions on emigration to Palestine. Their banner reads, 'We request a cessation of English terror in Palestine'. Zionist movements

became popular in DP camps. These movements called for a Jewish state to be created in the region.

Jewish children with no surviving family were sent to children's homes in France, Switzerland and Britain. Britain was persuaded to accept up to 1,000 Jewish orphans but in the end was only able to find 732. This **photograph** shows them in Prague before their flight to Britain. The group became known as 'The Boys' – even though there were 80 girls amongst them.

Anti-Jewish hostility continued after the war. In July 1946 a pogrom erupted in Kielce, Poland. Local mobs converged on a Jewish committee building after a non-Jewish Polish boy claimed he had been hidden in it after being kidnapped. In the violence that followed 42 Jewish people were killed. This **photograph** shows the coffins of those murdered.

## Responsibility and Judgement

### Evading justice

Senior Nazis carried lethal cyanide capsules to swallow if captured. This **container** belonged to Oswald Pohl, who managed the concentration camp

system from 1942. Pohl was tracked down while in hiding in 1946. The British soldiers who arrested him grabbed his arms before he could put the capsule in his mouth.

Hitler died by suicide as the Soviet Army closed in on his bunker in Berlin. Before his death he dictated his last **political will and testament** to his secretary, Traudl Junge. The final words he ever committed to paper implored the German people to continue 'with merciless resistance against the universal poisoners of all people, international Jewry'.

## The formalities of a trial

Evidence used in the IMT mostly came from captured Nazi documents. These presented a comprehensive record of Nazi crimes. Allied lawyers believed documents were more reliable than eyewitnesses who were too psychologically damaged to reliably testify – and liable to collapse under cross-examination. Huge piles of **documents** were collected for each charge against every defendant.

A team of interpreters translated the Nuremberg trial into English, French, Russian and German as it unfolded. It was the first time this process – known

as 'simultaneous translating' – had been attempted. Hans Frank, the head of the General Government in Nazi-occupied Poland, listened to translations of the trial through this set of **headphones**.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of the IBM Corporation

These **sketches** of the Nuremberg trial were drawn by David Low, a cartoonist from New Zealand. Low attended the trial as an official war artist. Spectators and journalists were fascinated by the sight of the defendants in the courtroom. Many were disappointed at how ordinary the notorious figures looked. Low attempted to capture this unexpected normality.

Survivors of Nazi atrocities followed the trial with interest. A former prisoner of Auschwitz gave this **doll** to Liesl Dales as a token of gratitude for Dales's work at Nuremberg. Dales had previously helped people escape the Nazis over the Austrian mountains as a member of the country's resistance movement.

Otto Ohlendorf, head of *Einsatzgruppe D,* was tried by the US in 1947. In his **testimony** he claimed that his men were only following orders when they murdered 90,000 Jews and Roma in southern

Ukraine. Ohlendorf stated that he was proud of the 'orderly' way his men had carried out the killings.

Between 1945 and 1947, the US conducted a series of trials at the former camp at Dachau. Over 1,600 war criminals were tried during these proceedings. Lieutenant Colonel David Thomas used this **gavel** to close the trial of 19 men who worked at Nordhausen concentration camp. Fifteen of these defendants were found guilty and one was sentenced to death. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, gift of the Estate of Col. David H. Thomas

Initially war crimes trials were packed with journalists from around the world. **Newspapers** brought eyewitness testimony from the concentration camps to the public for the first time. Some perpetrators were given nicknames and became well-known symbols of Nazi brutality. But as the trials continued over many months, public interest began to wane.

After the International Military Tribunal was completed, the US held 12 subsequent trials in Nuremberg. Each of these concentrated on different groups of perpetrators such as doctors, politicians and industrialists. Of the defendants tried, 24 received death sentences, 127 received prison

sentences and 25 were acquitted.

The Soviets began prosecutions before the war ended. These **photographs** show the Kharkov trial in December 1943. This was the first trial of Nazi war criminals by any Allied government. Three of the defendants were German and the fourth was a Ukrainian collaborator. They were all found guilty of the mass murder of Jews in Kharkov and hanged.

This **photograph** was taken at the Belsen camp trial in 1945. Anita Lasker, a Jewish survivor of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Belsen, appeared as a witness. She used this **pass** to enter the court. Anita was unhappy about the way her testimony was received. She felt the court did not believe her because she could not recall certain times or dates.

Unlike the International Military Tribunal, the British military relied heavily on witness testimony during the Ravensbrück trials in 1947. The prosecution used 36 **drawings** by former French political prisoner Violette Lecoq as evidence of conditions in the predominantly female camp. All the witnesses were women, as were 21 of the 38 perpetrators on trial.

Rudolf Höss was a commandant of Auschwitz. This

English translation of his **witness statement** was used as evidence at several post-war trials. He claimed that '2.5 million victims were exterminated... by gassing and burning' under his command. At his own trial in Kraków in 1947, Höss declared that this number was exaggerated. He was hanged for his crimes on gallows overlooking Auschwitz I.
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Crimes without a name**

This scribbled **note**, written around 1944, reveals Rafael Lemkin's thinking around the word 'genocide'. He invented it by combining the words *genos* (from the Greek for 'race' or 'family') and *cide* (from the Latin for 'kill'). Lemkin's ideas were prompted by the mass murder of Armenians by the Ottoman Turks during the First World War.

The **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide** was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 9 December 1948. It was the first modern human rights treaty. It was not until the 1990s that this convention was applied, when two international criminal tribunals were created to address atrocities in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

In towns and cities across Germany the Allies publicly displayed **posters** and **pamphlets** showing the horrors of the concentration camps. They considered all Germans responsible for the crimes committed in the name of Nazism. They called this 'collective guilt'. The headline of the poster reads, 'These atrocities: your fault!'

Raymond wrote this **letter** to the *Spruchkammer* (denazification court) investigating the mayor of Dachau, Karl Dobler. In the letter he describes Dobler as a 'zealous Nazi' who forced all Jewish families to leave Dachau. Raymond states that Dobler should not be given a public sector position in a democratic Germany. Dobler was removed from his role.

**The will for revenge**

Liberation unleashed a wave of violence against any remaining camp staff. These **photographs** show guards who have been beaten and killed by former prisoners and Allied soldiers. This continued for days and weeks. It remains unclear how widespread such events were.

These **photographs** show civilians forced to visit nearby concentration camps and watch films

documenting the atrocities committed there. The Allies did this to shame the German population, especially those who claimed ignorance of the regime's crimes. By the end of the 1940s such efforts were stopped, as former enemies became allies in the developing Cold War.

**Living without**

**Fate unknown**

After the war, Martin Meyer wrote **letters** to many organisations in search of his brother Arthur. Their **responses** confirmed that Arthur was deported from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz in 1944, but nothing else could be found. Letters from Martin stopped in 1950. Information found since reveals that Arthur died in March 1945 in a sub-camp of Dachau.

Herta Müller put up this **poster** asking for information about her missing parents Gottlieb and Elsa and her sister Lily. Herta knew that they had been deported from Vienna to Theresienstadt in 1942 but had heard nothing else. She eventually found out that the Nazis murdered all three in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Julius and Serafine Halpern placed this **newspaper advertisement** in 1982 requesting information about their son Georgy. The eight-year-old had been sheltered in a home for refugee children in France in 1943. He was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau with other hidden children after being discovered by the *Gestapo*. His parents never saw him again.

Marek Kellermann was a brush merchant from Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. In 1939 he deposited this **tie pin** in a branch of Barclays Bank while in London on business. He never returned to collect it. Nothing is known of what happened to Marek and all attempts to trace him have been unsuccessful. There are many like him.

In 1997, IWM was sent a small container holding human remains from Auschwitz. During the development of these galleries, the decision was made to formally pass the remains to the UK's Chief Rabbi for burial. The unknown individuals were laid to rest at Bushey New Cemetery in North London in 2019. Over a thousand mourners attended.
Blake Ezra Photography