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# From Auschwitz to Chicago, detailed Holocaust letters survive

## STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- More than 250 World War II postal documents to be on permanent display in Chicago
- The reported insured value of the collection is \$1 million
- Included is a handwritten Bible scroll in Hebrew used by German soldier for mailing

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CHICAGO (AP) -- The faded papers hint at stark details in the lives of Nazi concentration camp inmates.



AP PHOTO

This undated photo shows the only recorded example of the censor mark of the International Military Tribunal.

Letters secretly carried by children through the sewers of Warsaw, Poland, during the 1944 uprising. A 1933 card from a Dachau camp commander outlining strict rules for prisoner mail. A 1943 letter from a young man, who spent time in Auschwitz, to his parents.

The more than 250 World War II postal documents -- cards, letters and stamps -- have been acquired by an Illinois foundation from a private collector and will soon be on permanent display in a museum in suburban Chicago.

"These artifacts underscore the very personal dimension to this catastrophe," said Richard Hirschhaut, the executive director of the Skokie-based Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, where the exhibit will be housed next year when the museum opens.

"It now will reach an exponentially larger audience and serve as a genuine tool for education and learning," Hirschhaut said.

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- [The Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation](#)
- [Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center](#)

The Holocaust memorial exhibit belonged to longtime postal memorabilia collector and activist Ken Lawrence of Pennsylvania. It was called "The Nazi Scourge: Postal Evidence of the Holocaust and the Devastation of Europe."

The Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation, based in Northbrook, Ill., recently bought the collection and has added to it.

"The insured value of the collection is \$1 million, but the educational value to future generations is incalculable," said Daniel Spungen, a board member of the foundation, in a statement.

The exhibit also includes a handwritten Bible scroll in Hebrew that was used by a German soldier to mail a package. There are also documents sent to a [Nazi](#) doctor on trial for war crimes at Nuremberg.

Lawrence, the former vice president of the American Philatelic Society, meticulously collected the documents for more than three decades. His project was sparked by claims that the Holocaust never occurred.

He has since showcased the collection around the country, garnering awards.

The exhibit, which can also be viewed online, will travel to Billings, Mont., in December, followed by Santa Barbara, Calif., later in the winter. [E-mail to a friend](#) | [Mixx it](#) | [Share](#)

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