



Canadian Jewish Heritage Network



Letter

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Collection: MONTREAL HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL CENTRE (MHMC-01)

Description Level: Item

Material Format: textual record

Physical Description: Letter : Paper : Ink : Beige ; Ht: 26,7 cm x W: 21 cm

Other Title: Documentary Artifact

Information:

Date: August 25, 1941

Physical Condition: Excellent

Language: English

Notes:

1 page, single sided with the date in the upper right corner. Narrative: In the 1920's Serge and Sophie Philipson (nee Orbach) left Berlin for Paris due to rising antisemitism. On July 15, 1930 their daughter Rachel was born. Serge, Sophie and Rachel were Polish citizen, they never got either the German or the French citizenship. In Paris, Serge worked for Les Modes Modernes, the hat factory of his brother-in-law, Henri. When an opportunity to expand the business in Ireland arose, Serge moved to Galway. The new factory opened in July 1938. In August 1939, Sophie, Rachel, and 4 other family members (Rachel's cousin Stéphane, his maternal grandmother Néné, Serge's sister Esther and Serge's sister-in-law Choura) left for Cabourg, in Normandy. After the winter 1939-1940 it became difficult to communicate with Ireland but Rachel and Sophie could still send and receive letter from Serge. At the end of winter 1940, the group moved to Nérès and in July 1940, after the occupation of France by Germany, they settled in the zone libre in the village of Cautelets, on the border with Spain. They were reunited with Robert, Serge's brother. In August 1942, 4 family members (Sophie's sister Ella and her husband Ernest, their daughter Ruth, Serge's siblings Robert and Esther) were arrested by local police and deported. They were not seen again. At the beginning of 1943, Sophie, her mother Augusta and Rachel moved to Maubourguet. In April 1943, they moved to Cannes in Hotel Victoria with Henri, Stéphane and Néné. Henri, Sophie and Augusta went into hiding together while cousins Stéphane and Rachel were taken care of by Néné and returned to Maubourguet. In January 1944, Henri, Sophie and Augusta were denounced and arrested. They were transferred to Marseille before being sent by train to Drancy transit camp from where they were deported. It is believed they were killed in a Polish killing centre. In 1944, Rachel moved from one place to another – under a non-Jewish identity - and continued to correspond with her father. In June 1945, she reunited with her father Ireland. They had not seen each other for 6 years. In 1951, Rachel got married. In 1954, she immigrated to Montreal.

Accession No.: 2002.08.092

Name Access: Levy, Rachel

Places: Europe

Archival / Archival Descriptions

Genealogical:

Repository: Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre