

Seattle, Washington
1st October 1939

[1/1] My Beloved Family!

[1/2] I'm only writing a few words, so that you'll know that I'm alive and [1/3] would like to make contact with you. Copies of this letter [1/4] will go out through normal mail, airmail, special delivery [1/5] (whatever the post office will take), and so on, don't be surprised then [1/6] if sometimes you'll get several same-sounding copies of a letter. [1/7] I've sent these copies to Lwow, to Wisio, to Ala [1/8] Ehrlich¹. I have asked everyone, in case they get this letter, [1/9] to write about it to the others.

[1/10] I will more thoroughly write about myself some other time. Today [1/11] I'll only say that I'd have all the reasons to be content, [1/12] if not for my anxiety about you. The city is beautiful and my post [1/13] at the university suits me well.

[1/14] Please write me, and if possible, send me a telegraph², [1/15] about how you're doing. If you judge that I can do anything [1/16] that might be of significant use to you, then I ask you to [1/17] let me know without any scruples. When sending a telegraph [1/18] Professor Birnbaum, University, Seattle, Washington will suffice. [1/19] Letters should be address to me, Department of Mathematics, University of Washington, [1/20] U.S.A.

Hand kisses and sincere embraces,
Willy

¹ Ala Ehrlich later reverted to her maiden name Manelska. Her correspondence with Professor Birnbaum continued for many decades and is one of the largest fragments of the collection. Several of her letters form one portion of the translations on this webpage.

² During the war telegraphs were the most effective way of communicating because they could escape the close scrutiny of the censors. Very few letters got through. Telegraphs were so expensive that they could not vie as a frequent alternative.