

Terezin Money



This is original Terezin money. It was part of the spectacular and absurd life in Terezin.

We were paid for our work and we could from time to time buy something in shops with goods which had been stolen from us.

Terezin money was not converted to real money, it was accepted only in the ghetto. It didn't exist there from the beginning but only after the bank of Jewish municipality was established in Terezin.

My first job in Terezin was in the box-making workshop, where they colored those disgustingly garish bookmarks. I would have liked to do that but I didn't get to do it - what I did was stick cellophane wrappers on powder boxes.

I then became seriously ill. It began with an infection of the middle ear and then I got a high fever, although I didn't know why, and then I got jaundice.

By the time I had got a bit better, I got phlegmon in the neck, and then I got jaundice again. I was let out of hospital in February 1943. I then went on a course for dentist's assistants and worked as an auxiliary assistant at the dentist's.

Later on, my parents wanted me to get more fresh air, so they arranged for me to work in the garden. My brother-in-law was in the disciplinary service, but I don't know what my sister did.

At first, my sister lived apart from her husband, but they later built a kind of closet out of wood-wool slabs in the attic of a house, and there they lived, which was a big advantage. Those who went on the first transports to Terezin had certain privileges.

At first, I lived with mum, but the barrack had to be evacuated later on for the Dutch transports [in 1943]. I was then sent to the youth house. Life in the youth house was the best what you could have in Terezin.

We learned and read a lot, poems by Wolker, Villon, Halas, Seifert and Nezval. We were equal; everyone wore yellow stars. We were visiting lectures, concerts and theatre performances.