

# Warsaw Jewish Ghetto

The Jewish ghetto in Warsaw, the largest in occupied Europe, home to the largest Jewish community, was surrounded by an 18-kilometer wall and sealed to the outside world during November 1940. At its peak, half a million Jews lived in the Warsaw ghetto. Deportations to the Treblinka extermination camp began on July 23, 1942, and continued until September 21; 254,000 Warsaw Jews were gassed to death in that operation. When Nazi forces arrived to liquidate the ghetto on April 19, 1943, the Jewish Combat Organization arose in revolt. The outnumbered and outgunned ghetto fighters carried on their insurrection for three weeks, but were finally defeated on May 10, 1943.

*Above: A June 9, 1941, postal card from a Warsaw ghetto resident to Alfred Schwarcbaum at Lausanne, Switzerland. It was first censored by the Jewish Council, which applied the small boxed "Judenrat Warschau" mark at the upper left, and then by the Nazis, who applied the red roller censor mark at Frankfurt. Below: A February 26, 1941, postal card from Soviet Lithuania to a Warsaw ghetto resident; German postal censorship at Königsberg.*

The double-circular violet "S.P.D.Z" [Jewish Postal Agency] handstamp indicates that a 30-groschen payment was collected on delivery for the carrier's and forwarding fees.

