



## Letter from Anny van der Sluys to Max Bredig, September 21, 1945

Sluys, Anny Van der. "Letter from Anny Van Der Sluys to Max Bredig, September 21, 1945," September 21, 1945. Papers of Georg and Max Bredig, Box 9, Folder 21. Science History Institute. Philadelphia.

<https://digital.sciencehistory.org/works/kvg5ge5>.

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Translated by Jocelyn R. McDaniel

### English Translation

#### Image 1

Anny van der Sluys

The Hague, September 21, 1945

1ste v. d. Boschstraat 172

Telephone: 770817

Dear Mr. Bredig,

Thank you for your letter from August 21st. It's a shame that the letters took so long, but that's not anyone's fault. I haven't heard from Mr. Schnell or Eva's relatives, but that's probably not possible yet. Every day, I think about how bad it must be for the relatives to not see their loved ones again, and whether it was wise to write as extensively as I did. Sometimes you proceed in such matters as you would for yourself, although the details of the matter were rather unpleasant. Yet that's the way it is.

## Image 2

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It is very kind of you to send a package. My Jewish friends here receive a lot of packages from England and America, and I always find it amazing to see what good and practical things there are in the world. You won't believe how poor we've become. I was used to traveling a lot before the war. Six weeks before the German invasion, I arrived home from the Dutch Indies, where I had spent six months with many of my relatives and friends who live there. Hence, the war was especially difficult for me. I felt like I was in a cage. In the first few years, you could bide the time with a lot with reading, but there were eventually no good books available anymore. Last winter was awful. There was no food, no coffee

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no tea, no entertainment, and no light, gas, electricity, or fuel. I just didn't think life could be so utterly bleak. Due to all the upheaval, I have become a regular smoker. What do you think about 70 guilders for 20 substitute cigarettes? Yet I can't complain. My boyfriend, Mr. Sauer, who took such a keen interest in looking after Alfred and Eva, was lucky enough to have beans and peas in his shop (flowers, vegetables, onions, etc.), which, thanks to his skill, did not get shipped to Germany. Hence, we were able to help people and make a living. Sometimes we could exchange something for other edible items. It's improved a lot now. Bread and potatoes (2,400 grams and 3,000 grams per week) are sufficient. Meat (100 grams per week) is still scarce.

## Image 3

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Vegetables and fruit are plentiful. However, a thousand little things that you urgently need are not available yet. Since May 5th, we receive 40 grams of coffee and 20 grams of tea, but no jam or sweets. The men are receive a small ration of cigarettes. When the ladies are offered one, they "no thanks" as a matter of decency. I am one of these ladies. The women had to endure so much more than the men last winter that I feel completely entitled to say: "Sure, thank you"!!

Soap, toothpaste, and cold cream are three very sought-after items. Not being able to care for yourself like you used to is an annoying feeling and creates an inferiority complex. In general, the need is still great. In the working-class district, at least 6 out of every 10 children can be seen barefoot with every weaver. If you go into town with 1,000 guilders and you want to spend it,

## Image 4

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then you return with 999 guilders. For one guilder, you can buy a substitute lemonade in the 2 or 3 pubs that we have left in the city. The others, which are the best ones, have been confiscated by official authorities.

That's all for now. However, we didn't starve and suffer in vain and that's a comforting feeling. Things are gradually getting back to normal and if we can get our hands on pre-and post-war materials,

## Image 5

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we will be able to rebuild what was lost.

I hope I haven't bored you too much with my Dutch story. I would be very interested to hear from time to time how the conditions are there.

Until then, I send you my best regards.

Sincerely,

Anny van der Sluys