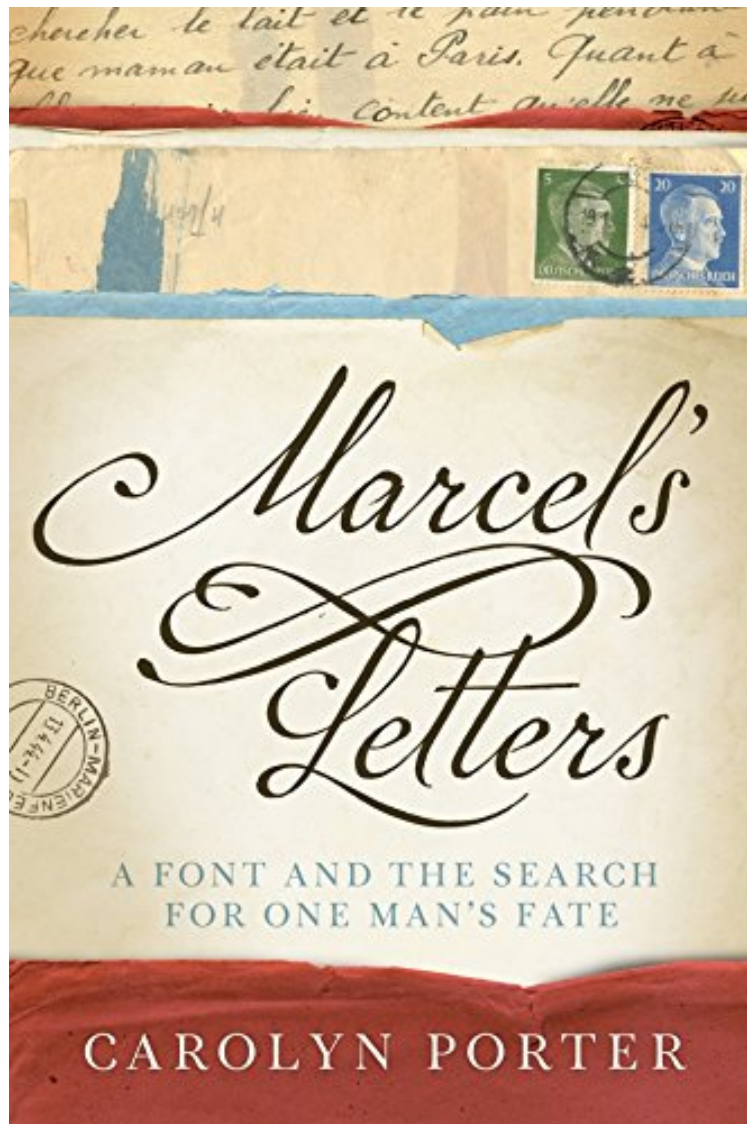


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## Marcel's Letters: A Font and the Search for One Man's Fate

Carolyn Porter

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**Carolyn Porter : Marcel's Letters: A Font and the Search for One Man's Fate** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Marcel's Letters: A Font and the Search for One Man's Fate:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Read this book - you'll love it!By JAMKI read Marcel's Letters: A Font and the Search for One Man's Fate in one day (and night!) - once I started it, I couldn't stop reading. Now, 3 days later, I can't stop thinking about it. Carolyn Porter pulls the reader in with multiple story lines - first the story of a childhood dream, creating a new computer font (Marcel) based on the handwriting in letters discovered in a Stillwater, MN antique shop - then the story described in the letters of a French family torn apart during WWII when the father

was a conscripted laborer in Berlin and the family struggled to survive in France - next, the WWII history to explain their story - and last and most engaging the story of learning what happened to Marcel and to his family as the war ended, and how the letters ended up half a world away in a small town antique shop. I found all of it fascinating. Learning some of the terminology and technical aspects of developing a new font based on handwriting was great for me as a printing hobbyist. (BTW I purchased the new font to use in my printing work, and it is beautiful and complete - using it to the fullest will be a stretch for me, and require learning some new software tools - that's all good!) Learning about WWII and conscripted laborers was new to me. Best was the search for Marcel and his family - so many serendipity moments, seemingly random happenings that help move the search for Marcel along - it reads like fiction - but it's all true. What a story! What a book!

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A design challenge, a WWII primary, a thriller, and a love story

By SFA Graphic designer Carolyn Porter takes her reader along with her as she searches to find out what happened to the man whose handwriting consumes her. While designing a font from handwritten letters purchased at an antique store, Porter is pulled into WWII and one man's testaments of love for his family. I couldn't resist the pull either and read this book in three sittings. A very satisfying read that will not be forgotten.

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Amazing story and full of emotion!

By LouI have never read a book so quickly. The story behind Marcel's letters drew me in so quickly and emotionally. I was fully engulfed in emotions throughout the book from tears to laughter to nervousness. The stories from WWII that we never heard about were heart wrenching. Very well written as it pulls in present day to the past.

A graphic designer's search for inspiration leads to a cache of letters and the mystery of one man's fate during World War II. Seeking inspiration for a new font design in an antique store in small-town Stillwater, Minnesota, graphic designer Carolyn Porter stumbled across a bundle of letters and was immediately drawn to their beautifully expressive pen-and-ink handwriting. She could not read the letters—they were in French—but she noticed all of them had been signed by a man named Marcel and mailed from Berlin to his family in France during the middle of World War II. As Carolyn grappled with designing the font, she decided to have one of Marcel's letters translated. Reading it opened a portal to a different time, and what began as mere curiosity quickly became an obsession with finding out why the letter writer, Marcel Heuzeacute;, had been in Berlin, how his letters came to be on sale in a store halfway around the world, and, most importantly, whether he ever returned to his beloved wife and daughters after the war. Marcel's Letters is the incredible story of Carolyn's increasingly desperate search to uncover the mystery of one man's fate during WWII, seeking answers across Germany, France, and the United States. Simultaneously, she continues to work on what would become the acclaimed P22 Marcel font, immortalizing the man and his letters that waited almost seventy years to be reunited with his family.

Marcel's Letters deftly portrays how a curiosity can grow into a search, and the search into an obsession. Having developed a profound sense of responsibility for one man's lost history, Carolyn Porter follows the clues scattered in his letters to his family. Her story bursts with the excitement of discovery and culminates with the indescribable honor of returning fragments of a forgotten history to the people they were meant for.

Glenn Kurtz, author of *Three Minutes in Poland: Discovering a Lost World in a 1938 Family Film* "Carolyn Porter takes us on her offbeat quest to solve a transatlantic history mystery and unearths an intriguing pocket of our past along the way."

Megan Smolenyak, author of *Who Do You Think You Are? The Essential Guide to Tracing Your Family History* "Quirky, heartfelt, and compulsively readable. Marcel's Letters is an inventive combination of memoir and amateur historical sleuthing. An unforgettable story."

Theresa Kaminski, author of *Angels of the Underground* "We pick a font hoping it says something about us: that we are creative, intellectual, or have business know-how. But what happens when a font picks a graphic designer and turns her world upside down and inside out? In Marcel's Letters, Carolyn rescues one man's legacy, and ultimately gifts us with her own."

Elizabeth Rynecki, author of *Chasing Portraits* In Marcel's Letters Carolyn Porter has plucked a powerful story from the recesses of history. After purchasing a trove of letters because of their elegant script, Porter embarked on a quest to solve the mystery of their authorship and in so doing embarks on a historical awakening of her own."

Cathryn J. Prince, author of *American Daredevil: The Extraordinary Life of Richard Halliburton, the World's First Celebrity Travel Writer* "Marcel's Letters is a gripping page-turner about one type designer's efforts to uncover (and recover) the destiny of a French forced laborer during World War II." —Yves Peters, type writer and producer for Type Network "Fascinated by the handwriting, Carolyn Porter's chance purchase of a few letters led her to a remarkable adventure in font design, research to understand the wartime separation of a father from his wife and children, and a quest to uncover Marcel's fate in the Second World War and that of his family. Marcel's Letters tells a compelling story of romance, perseverance, and discovery."

Professor Kenneth Moureaacute;, historian of modern France, University of Alberta "It's a pleasure to read Porter's romantic dive into the depths of the lost art of letter writing and contained worlds. Porter and Marcel both ask their readers to slow down, look closer, and let passion persist, even if one is alone on a soulful search. The soul, Porter seems to say, isn't seen through the eyes or the hands—no, it's in the handwriting." —Star Tribune (Minneapolis) "Porter's captivating memoir describes her journey to find answers, noting

how her fascination with Marcel proved infectious as she faces obstacle after obstacle and enlists the help of experts to discover the fate that awaited him. . . As impressive as her detective work is, it is Marcel and his letters—real, honest, heartfelt, and brave—that are undoubtedly the star of this marvelous book." —Booklist, starred review "[A] a tribute to the power of curiosity." —Growler magazine "[An] intriguing memoir from a diligent researcher." —Kirkus s