

## Estera Grycman

Wartime Experience: Concentration Camp Survivor

Estera was born July 15, 1921 in Lodz, Poland. She lived with her father, Mordechai, her mother, Chaya, brother Izaak and sister Dina. Her father worked as a textile merchant.

In 1940, she was sent to the ghetto in Lodz with her family. Her brother was in the army. He was in a prisoner of war camp and escaped to Russia. Her sister was deported in 1942. She had been hospitalized and was put into quarantine. She was taken from the hospital and was gassed in a truck.

Estera married Jacob Luxembourg in the ghetto in 1942. They did not have any children. They were deported to Auschwitz, along with Estera's parents, in August 1944. Upon arrival at the camp, Estera was separated from them all. Her parents were gassed immediately and her husband was eventually killed.

She stayed in Birkenau for one week and then was sent to work in an arms factory near the camp of Flossenberg in Chemnitz, where she worked in building anti-aircraft guns for the Germans during the day and returned to the camp each evening. She remained there until February 1945, when all the inmates were evacuated. For ten days, they traveled in an open-car coal train. The SS stopped the train and forced them all into the River Elbe to clean themselves. Then they returned to the train, dirty and freezing. They were forced to walk to Theresienstadt. Many died during this time. Estera remained in Theresienstadt until May 1945, when the camp was liberated by the Russians. At first Estera was quarantined, but then she left for Germany with a friend from the camp. She remained in Germany until March 1946, working with displaced persons through UNRRA.

Estera tried to find any remaining members of her family. She had an uncle who lived in Paris, and he invited her to come and live there. Once in Paris, she worked as a seamstress and began to learn French. However, she returned to Germany to try to locate her brother. While there she met Max Grycman, who was born in Poland but had lived in France since 1925. Max had been married before the war. His wife had been deported and their two young daughters were placed in an orphanage. The girls were deported on July 31, 1944 in the last convoy that left Paris. Paris was liberated one week later.

Estera and Max were married in 1950 and returned to Paris, where Estera lives today. Max worked as a tailor. He died of cancer in 1986. Estera abandoned her pre-war hope to become a doctor and worked with her husband as a seamstress. They had two daughters, Sylviane and Hélène, both of whom live in the United States.

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## Des dossiers du Mémorial de la Shoah–Paris

Estera GRYCMAN

déportée

Estera GRYCMAN née HAMMER le 15/07/1921 à LODZ (POLOGNE) de Mordechai et Chaya HAMMER

Déportée à AUSCHWITZ en Août 1944 depuis la POLOGNE, rescapée

1940 le ghetto de LODZ. Sa sœur déportée en 1942, hospitalisée est gazée dans un camion. Estera se marie avec Jacob LUXEMBOURG dans le ghetto en 1942. Déportés en Août 1944 avec ses parents et son mari. Ses parents sont immédiatement gazés, son mari tué. Affectée dans une usine d'armement près du camp de FLOSSENBERG IN CHEMNITZ, elle y restera jusqu'en février 1945. Puis évacuée du camp, voyage en wagons découverts, et marche à pied jusqu'au camp de THERESIENSTADT. En mai 1945 le camp est libéré par les Russes. Elle part en Allemagne grâce à l'UNRRA, organisme chargé des personnes déplacées. Un oncle vivant à PARIS, l'invite à le rejoindre. Elle apprend la langue française. Elle rencontre Max GRYCMAN, qui, né en POLOGNE est venu dès 1925 vivre en France. Veuf, sa femme ayant été déportée ainsi que ses deux filles le 31/07/1944, toutes tuées. Estera et Max se sont mariés en 1950 et sont retournés vivre à PARIS. Max, tailleur, est mort d'un cancer en 1986. Estera était couturière. Ils ont eu 2 filles qui vivent aux USA.