

Zuzanna Mensz And Her Cousin Esterka Rottenberg



This is a photo of mine and my cousin Esterka Rottenberg. It was taken in my room in Lublin, where I lived with my husband. It was in 1945.

I came to Lublin in 1944 with the army. I soon found Esterka Rottenberg. Her father was Nusyn Rottenberg. He'd lived with his family in Skryhiczyn-Manor, right next to our house. Esterka survived the war in Volodymir-Volyns'kyy. She was 16 in 1939, she came to Volodymir on her own, she was given some training, taught how to make injections and she worked in a hospital. I met her then, we lived together. I later moved to Lwow while she stayed in Volodymir. She worked, went from village to village giving vaccinations. She was later in the ghetto. A group of nurses from the hospital she'd worked in hid all the doctors - Jews from Volodymir. When the deporting action was just about to start in the ghetto Esterka was taken by one of the nurses, her name was Stasia, and hid in a wardrobe in her apartment. Esterka had pneumonia then, she was ill overall. She was the sole survivor from her family.

Short after the war she went to Lodz, because she had used to live there, she had some relatives. Esterka moved in with Hania Lanota, who had already left Lublin. Esterka took care of Hania's child, Malgosia. One day a relative of ours, who'd served in the British army, came to us from Israel and decided to take our whole family from Poland to Israel. He spent a whole night persuading us to go with him. Only Esterka and Hanka Szydlowska joined him.

Esterka got married, her name is now Szlomowicz, she's got two daughters and plenty grandchildren. I met her two years ago, when I visited my family in Israel.