

Berta Springut



This is a picture of my partner Renata Zisman's mother - Berta Springut, nee Herschlowitz, taken in the R. Strenger studio in Zywiec in the 1910s. I don't know the exact year the photo was taken, but she wasn't married yet. In the family collection there is a card that Renata's father wrote to his wife-to-be, his fiancée, in German. They lived in Silesia, so they spoke German, like all Germans. It was a progressive family. They would go to the synagogue there when it was Pesach, or Yom Kippur. But other than that they didn't keep kosher. Renata's grandmother had kept a kosher household, but they didn't bother. When the war started Renata was 18. Renata's family was sent

to the Cracow ghetto. Her parents were taken away to Belzec on 28th October 1942. My partner Renata was born in Zywiec and had one sister. She lived there with her parents, and her grandparents were there too. When her parents were taken away to Belzec, a friend called Jerzy looked after Renata and her sister Elzbieta. From the ghetto the two girls were both sent to the camp in Plaszow. While she was in the camp [in Plaszow] Renata managed to cross the wires into the men's barrack. There, before witnesses, she and Jerzy Sussman were married. After that there was kogiel mogiel [made of egg and sugar, the symbolic wedding party, cause they didn't have anything else], but Renata didn't say who ate it. And that was the end of the whole ceremony. I don't know who married them. Soon afterwards Renata and her sister were transferred to Auschwitz-Birkenau. After that Renata was in two more camps in Germany. She stayed together with her sister Elzbieta all the time; they were together in all the camps. Usually families were split up but they managed to stay together until the end. After the end of the war Renata first went back to Zywiec, because it was her hometown. Then she came to Cracow and lived here with her sister, in the home of some servant of her grandparents.