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Summary

Eva Gregus was born in 1927 in Berlin Germany. Her parents were Hungarians. Her mother was from Ungvár (Uzhhorod, Czechoslovakia at the time, now Ukraine), had left her husband and returned to her parents. Eva loved her grandparents. Her grandmother was somewhat religious, but not the rest of the family. When her mother remarried, they moved to Pozsony, (Bratislava, Czechoslovakia at the time). Her stepfather was Lajos Kolis, who was like a real father to her. First, she attended a German school in Ungvár and also in Pozsony, but she left after a year, because "*Heil Hitler*" was already shouted in the school. Her parents managed to transfer her to a French lycee. When the Slovak Republic was proclaimed [March 1939], her parents left for Hungary, Nagysurány where the Kolis family lived. They managed to sign her up for a private [Catholic] high school in Érsekújvár (Nové Zámky).

At the time of the German occupation of Hungary (March 19, 1944), she was still in school. She had to wear the Yellow Star. She remembered that a classmate, Zsuzsi Babó hugged and kissed her on the street when she saw her with the Yellow Star. She was in an ambiguous situation: her German birth certificate did not mention religion, which meant she could be considered non-Jewish. The family thought about organizing a hiding place for her. However, she said she "looked very Jewish" and they were afraid of doing it.

Meanwhile, her stepfather was called up for forced labor, but was exempted as a decorated WWI officer. He managed to escape from the fortress of Igmánd and spent the rest of the war in hiding. With the help of the family's former gardener, Josko Bruschl, he buried the family jewelry, which remained untouched. Her mother and other relatives were in the ghetto in Komárom [It may have been Érsekújvár, if they were ghettoized from Nagysurány]. The night before entrainment, she joined her mother in the ghetto.

They were taken to Auschwitz. She did not recall many details. She remembered that Slovak women were in most of the Kapos and were very angry with the Hungarian women for letting themselves be taken instead of going into hiding. She and her mother were sent to work in Plaszow (Poland), where they had to move huge rocks around for no reason. There was a very cruel Polish woman guard who unleashed her dog on the prisoners. After Plaszow, they were for a while in Auschwitz again, but then, it seems they were transferred to Bergen-Belsen. Her mother died just before liberation when they were again put in a wagon, in a transport organized by the [Swedish diplomat] Folke Bernadotte to take them out of Germany to Denmark. Her mother who was extremely weak was crushed to death in the overcrowded wagon.

At this point she was around 30kg and had contracted TB, spending 10 months in Sweden, in a hospital in Lund. She found out that her stepfather was alive and had returned to him in Slovakia. They lived in Pozsony and Nagysurány (Šurany, Czechoslovakia then, now Slovakia). She needed further recuperation and received

treatment in the Tatra. Later, she had a job in a big city firm Priemko and became an accountant.

She married Miklós Gregus who survived years of forced labor during the war. He taught technical skills and was an engineer. He was very religious, saying his prayers day and night. They celebrated the major Jewish holidays; she cooked the traditional food for her husband on those occasions.

She has a daughter, Klári, who takes good care of her. She has three grandchildren: a girl and two boys.

Asked about emigration, she said that she did not want to go to Israel, because it was not a safe place.

Only the older brother of her stepfather emigrated; after reading *Mein Kampf* in the 1930s, he decided to emigrate and managed to get a British visa.