

## Eva Cato (by Vivienne Cato)

Eva Cato neé Rotenstein was born in Czechoslovakia 13 years before the outbreak of World War 2. An only child growing up in a small town in Slovakia with her mother and grandparents, she witnessed the encroachment of anti-Semitic hostilities and regulations on the life of her small Jewish community.

Having discovered that her aunt had been transported to Auschwitz, she and her mother decided to escape and made their way illegally to Budapest in Hungary, where they were to remain until the end of the War. Living under false identities, they moved from place to place within Budapest as their situation became increasingly precarious. They survived the Siege of Budapest by sheltering in a basement for weeks with almost no food. By the time the Russians liberated the city in January 1945, they were two of only 15,000 Slovak Jews (out of a pre-War population of 90,000) who had survived the War.

Post-war she returned briefly to Slovakia to pursue medical studies but was forced to leave by the Communists who took over in 1948. She and her mother immigrated to Britain, where she married and had a child, but she was unable to resume her medical career and had to relinquish her dream of being a doctor. She died in 2008 at the age of 81.

The presentation by Eva's daughter, Vivienne, takes us through the key points of this story, using footage of Eva recorded in 1992 by the British Library with Yale University as part of their Holocaust testimony project.