

## Biography of Larissa Cain

Larissa Sztorchan was born on October 8, 1932, in Sosnowiec, Poland, into a family deeply rooted in Jewish traditions and strong political engagement. Her mother, Dorka Tenenbaum, born in 1903 in Czeszochowa, and her father, Jakob Hersch Sztorchan, born in 1904 in Dombrowa, belonged to a generation inspired by Zionist ideals. Dorka immigrated to Mandatory Palestine in 1921, where she worked on a kibbutz before being expelled by British authorities in 1929 for her political activities. Jakob, a laborer, followed a similar path, arriving in Palestine in 1923. He met Dorka through the youth movement *Hashomer Hatsair* before being expelled in 1929 as well.

Back in Poland, Dorka and Jakob married in 1930 and settled in Warsaw in 1934, where they ran a candy shop on Rue Mylna in the Jewish quarter. They led an active and multilingual life, speaking Polish, Yiddish, and Hebrew.

The outbreak of World War II radically changed their lives. During the invasion of Poland in September 1939, Jakob temporarily fled to the Soviet Union but returned to Warsaw shortly before the German authorities established the ghetto in October 1940. Confined to a small two-room apartment shared with seven other people, the family faced extreme conditions: starvation, disease, and relentless oppression. Despite these hardships, Larissa, then nine years old, managed to attend a clandestine school.

In July 1942, the first deportations to Treblinka began. Raids followed one after another, and in September, Dorka was arrested at her workplace. Thanks to her uncle Mayer and his resistance network, Larissa escaped the ghetto in December 1942. Her father also escaped in January 1943, but their paths diverged, and they never reunited.

Larissa spent the remainder of the war in hiding, moving between various refuges, including a farm in Galicia and homes provided by her uncle's network. In January 1945, she was liberated and placed in a Jewish orphanage. Her aunt Sophie and uncle Zanel, along with their daughter Irène, were the only surviving members of her family. They found Larissa in 1946 and brought her to Nancy, France.

In France, Larissa resumed her studies and earned a degree in dental surgery. She married Hubert Cain, an engineer, in 1956, and together they had three children.