

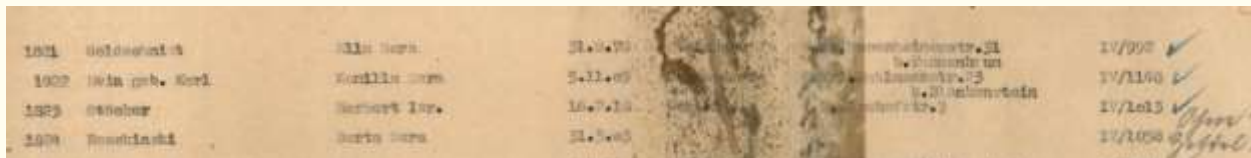
Ella GOLDSCHMIDT

31 August 1878 – 3 Mar 1943

Leo Goldschmidt's sister, **Ella Goldschmidt** was born on 31 Aug 1878 in Stolzenau. She never married, and later resided in the Schöneberg district of Berlin. She did not emigrate.

Records show that Ella was one of the 1750 people who were deported from Berlin to Auschwitz on a transport that departed from the Berlin-Grunewald station on 3 Mar 1943, following the *Fabrikaktion* (the “Factory Action” announced by the Nazis at the end of February 1943) where most of the remaining Jews in Berlin were rounded up and removed from their jobs in arms factories, to be sent away for extermination. The Jewish workers at the arms factories were to be replaced by forced labour from the occupied territories further east. In March 1943 Ella Goldschmidt was 64 years old, so it is unlikely that she was such a factory worker.

A record exists of the names of all the people who were on this transport. Ella was number 1821. An excerpt from the list is shown below with her name, date of birth, place of birth and her address prior to deportation. She was one of the oldest people. Ironically, 65 year-olds and older were not required to report for this particular transport, though no doubt she would have been deported later if she had nowhere to go into hiding.



1821	Goldschmidt	Ella born	31.8.78	Stolzenau	18/11/43	✓
1822	Witzsch. Karl	Karl born	2.11.67	Stolzenau	18/11/43	✓
1823	Steiner	Robert born	16.7.16	Stolzenau	18/11/43	✓
1824	Rosinski	Gertr. born	21.8.60	Stolzenau	18/11/43	✓

A vivid description of that journey was given by a survivor named Alex Deutsch (b. 7 Aug 1913) who was on the same transport. He was number 1255. A video of his testimony (in German) can be viewed on YouTube¹. Following is a translation:

We were taken to the Grunewald freight station. There they loaded us onto cattle cars. We didn't know where we were going, but I hoped I would meet my family again. The doors were bolted and we were on our way. On the night between March 3-4, we arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau. We had no food, no ability to use a toilet, no way to clean ourselves. It was a terrible situation where there were so many people, old, young, children, all with no food. By the time we arrived, after the doors were opened, most of the people had already lost all resemblance to human beings. The situation was indescribable. They were dirty, smeared with their own feces. There were dead people in many of the cars, and after they opened the doors and told everyone to get out, those who were still able to jump out on their own did so. The elderly and dead were dragged out by a unit of workers who were already waiting for us. Those who couldn't stand up remained lying on the ground. We were

forbidden to help them in any way. They kept shouting, "Everyone out! Men on one side! Women and children on the other side!" Some couldn't do it by themselves. It was horrific. It was cold in Auschwitz-Birkenau – it was March – and some of the people who fell there froze to death. It didn't take long. Our transport didn't enter the camp gates. It stopped in front of these gates. There was no ramp to help us jump down. It was a pitiful situation. And then, those who still could... the men stood on one side, the women and children stood on the other. We stood there and I noticed the smell. It was the smell of burnt bones. It smelled awful to me. And yet, all I could think of was my wife and my child. How do I find them, how do I see see them? Later the men had to move to another place where two SS men stood on the left and two stood on the right. As we passed by we had to state our age and our profession. They pointed with their thumb, some to the left and some to the right. I said I was 29 years-old, a baker by profession, and the thumb pointed to the left. I asked people what that meant, but no-one could tell me...

Alex Deutsch was one of only 517 men and 200 women who were selected for work from among this trainload of 1750 Jews on *Osttransport 33* from Berlin to Auschwitz on 3 Mar 1943. He survived the Holocaust and was able to testify. Ella Goldschmidt did not.

ⁱ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ka0vf6yHg_s