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Summary

Oscar Freedman was born Tver, Russia on 26 February 1918. His family fled from Riga, Latvia during the First World War. They returned to Riga after the war. He has an older brother, Mori, older sister, Mrs. Rossi Gouvich who moved to Australia in 1939, and a younger sister, Mrs. Sila Alexandrovich, who moved in Israel in 1972. His father's name is Abram and his mother Sara Sonya (nee Vidochik). His grandfather was originally from Krakow, Poland. His father's parents lived next-door to his family in Riga. He lived in a mixed neighborhood. His father worked as a printer and has his own printing factory. He describes his life before the war. Oscar moved to Paris in May 1936 to study civil engineering for three years (1936-1939). When the war broke out, he volunteered in the French Army. He was the assistant postmaster of the battalion. He was stationed near the Belgian border and the Ardennes Forest when the Germans invaded on 10 May 1940. They retreated to Montauban in Southwest France where they stayed until the armistice was signed in June 1940. He went to live in Vichy after he was demobilized, where his aunt and uncle lived. They moved to Nice on 13 December 1940. He later moved outside of Périgueux. He then moved to Gensac to work. Because of his service in the army, he was exempt from being sent to the labor camps. He lost contact with his parents and his sister in Australia in 1942. He was employed by Henri Marlo in a construction company. In 1944, the resistance ambushed a German convoy and killed a high-ranking officer near Gensac. He was a part of the local Marquis (Resistance). While he was at work in a nearby town, Germans rounded up the Jewish community in Gensac, executed some of the men, including his uncle, and sent the rest to Auschwitz. His aunt and cousin were killed shortly after arriving. After liberation, Oscar returned to Paris. When he returned to Perigeaux he heard from his sister in Australia, that his immediate family was alive. His parents were in Omsk, Russia, his brother was in the Red army, and his younger sister was in Leningrad. He moved to Strasbourg shortly after.