

## **RG-50.407.0241**

### **Summary**

Maly Kohn, born on November 15, 1914 in Libau (Liepāja), Latvia. Attended Jewish grammar school and Latvian high school and university to become a teacher. The Germans occupied her town on June 21, 1941. Latvian fascists arrested Jewish community leaders and beat many other Jews. Valuables given up to the Germans and shopping hours restricted. Jews were taken from their homes by Latvian fascists and Germans, taken to squares and driven away in trucks, their homes looted. A famous Dr. Schwab was beaten in the square and his eyes gouged out. Jews developed a "sixth sense" to avoid roundups. Hundreds of Jews were taken to the outskirts of the town and shot. She and her sisters were taken to help bury Russian soldiers and to clean bricks in town. On December 14, 1941, 4000 Jews were taken and shot, effectively wiping out the town's Jewish population. A few escaped but were hunted down and killed. In February 1943, the 740 remaining Jews (175 men, 12 children and the rest women) were herded into a ghetto surrounded by wire fencing and guarded by Latvian soldiers. She worked in Gestapo headquarters doing laundry, washing blood stains out of officers' clothes. At the end of 1943, the ghetto was closed down. The residents were packed on trains and sent to Kaiserwald, a concentration camp in Riga. She learned that 30,000 Jews had been killed in Riga. Again, she worked in a laundry. Her sister went to a camp in the south of Latvia and at some point Maly joined her. At some point, she was sent back to the camp in Riga where she worked in an electrical company during 1944. Eventually, as the front approached, Kaiserwald was closed and the inmates were taken by barge to a camp near Danzig. They had to stand on the barge and some fell overboard they were shot. There were Czech and Polish Jews in the camp. She worked in a factory supervised by Latvian and German women who beat them. She worked with drills and if they broke, she was beaten. In early 1945, she was taken to Stutthof in a march. Along the way, she saw corpses of marchers who had been shot. Amazingly, she met her sister along the way and they escaped the march and hid near a farm until Russian soldiers came. From there, she went to Bromburg (?) but Polish police made the women clean streets. She volunteered to work in Russian hospital but left (escaped?) and went to Lodz. Through Bricbat in Lodz she went to Prague and then Munich where she worked for UNRAA until 1947 when she got a permit to immigrate to Australia. There she joined her sister and brother-in-law in Melbourne.

Acting as a researcher, she says that the history of Jewish losses in small Latvian towns was not well documented, but by researching police files it was discovered that in Bausk(?) 1000+ Jews were killed by Latvian fascist police circa June 28, 1941. Russians and Russian sympathizers were rounded up and jailed. The synagogue was burned. On July 9, 1941, Jews were ordered out of town and made to work on farms. 59 Jewish men were rounded up and sterilized without anesthesia by a Dr. Steinhardt. Two weeks later, the remaining Jews were shot.